

SPFL Board approve new policy to help Scottish clubs in Europe

The SPFL Board has approved a new policy which will allow William Hill Premiership clubs to postpone one specific league match next season to enhance preparations for UEFA Play-Off round qualifiers.

The move allows clubs to postpone their William Hill Premiership fixture in matchday three, which is scheduled to take place on the weekend of 23/24 August, between the first and second legs of the UEFA Play-Off round fixtures in the 2025/26 season.

The SPFL's Competitions Working Group had been exploring how the league could best support clubs aiming to reach the league phase of UEFA competitions amid an extremely congested fixture calendar, due to the additional dates required for UEFA club competitions from this season.

The Competitions Working Group – which includes a number of top flight clubs – has now unanimously made a recommendation to the SPFL Board to introduce a policy allowing any club participating in a match in a UEFA Club Competition Play-Off round to apply to the SPFL for a postponement of its William Hill Premiership round 3 match without the consent of its opponent. To date, any such postponement would have required the agreement of the opposing club and the league.

The new policy, which has the support of the SPFL's broadcast partners, has been approved by the SPFL Board for season 2025/26.

Calum Beattie, SPFL chief operating officer, said: "We are understandably very keen to support our clubs in qualifying for the league phase of UEFA competitions. There are huge benefits in having our clubs in the latter stages of European football. Not only does it help Scotland's UEFA coefficient ranking and the reputation of our league, but there are clear commercial benefits for the competing clubs, as well as important solidarity payments for our non-participating clubs.

"It is possible we will have a number of clubs participating in the play-off round for UEFA competitions in season 2025/26 but due to the extremely congested nature of our fixture calendar, our options to support clubs are unfortunately very limited.

"This new policy has received extremely positive feedback from our clubs on the SPFL Competitions Working Group, which believe it will be beneficial in their aims of reaching the league phase of UEFA competitions, and we're pleased to be introducing it for next season."

In season 2025/26, William Hill Premiership winners will enter the Champions League in the Play-Off round, while Premiership runners-up will enter in qualifying round 2. The team in third place will enter at Europa League qualifying round 2, and the fourth placed team will enter the Conference League in qualifying round 2. The Scottish Cup winners – or the club which finishes third, if the Scottish Cup is won by the William Hill Premiership winners – will enter the Europa League play-off round.