



**England Netball**  
Netball House,  
9 Paynes Park,  
Hitchin,  
Herts SG5 1EH

## **PREGNANT PLAYERS / UMPIRES**

**Players:** 'Pregnant players may not take part in competition beyond the 12<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy'

**Umpires:** 'Umpires who officiate at National Events are expected to confirm to a standard of physical fitness, which allows them to keep pace with the speed and variability of the game(s). If age, injury, illness or pregnancy is likely to affect the umpire's movement and positioning to the detriment of the game, she / he is required to withdraw from officiating'

The above regulations are applicable at all England Netball events and this includes Super League, Premier Divisions and Challenge Cup and all National Tournaments. All counties, leagues and other groups are asked to consider inserting these into their own local regulations.

A league, county or other group may however choose not to include them (or even amend it to suit their requirements. They are quite within their rights to do this as they are autonomous bodies. However this does not often happen but every consideration should be made to ensure that any additional regulation does not put the pregnant player or opposing players at risk

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

England Netball Association made the decision to prevent pregnant players playing in national competition from the 12th week of pregnancy for the following reason:-

It has been argued that the team which includes a pregnant player may gain an unfair advantage as an opponent will inevitably modify her play to ensure that no bumping occurs. Hazards exist even in a well controlled game of netball. The speed of movement, sudden stops, close marking and energetic jumping following a fast run means that contact, sometimes with a considerable impact on the players concerned could adversely affect the pregnancy.

This is arguably against the spirit of the rules whose intention it is to make conditions equal for both teams.

The Association intends to ensure that caring players are not disadvantaged and is taking responsible attitude in acknowledging the dangers inherent in competitive netball.

No pregnant woman who is happy in her pregnancy would want any harm to come to the foetus. There is no danger in a healthy, physically fit women continuing to train for the duration of her pregnancy with the approval her medical advisers but this is a competitive team sport in which accidents can easily happen.