



Jnr. NBL Playoffs Format 2020/21 Season and Promotion/Relegation

The decision has been made through advice and support from the three advisory groups: Leagues & Competition, Officiating and Coaching Groups, plus feedback from clubs themselves that the 2020/21 playoffs will follow the same structure as 2019/20 season and the following teams eligible for playoffs:

Premier Level – Playoffs to lead to the Junior Finals Fours.

Regional & Under 12 leagues – No Playoffs to lead to Junior Finals Fours

Conference Level – Playoffs to lead to promotion

For the 2020/21 Jnr. NBL season, we will introduce a playoff style, post-season competition for the top teams in each Conference and the bottom teams in the correlating Premier divisions. These will be known as the 'promotion playoffs' where the winning teams would get a place in the Premier competition the following year at that age group. The format will be devised mid-way through the season pending number of promotion spots that are available for each league.

These new 'promotion playoff' system is to create:

- More clarity of promotion and relegation in the junior competition,
- More teams to be able to play competitive games past the regular season end date

It will also mean that clubs have a clearer pathway on how to earn promotion to the Premier Leagues. Currently only the top team in each conference is eligible to apply for promotion. This post-season competition will mean that more teams will have the opportunity to win promotion each year.

Secondly, this system would mean that more conference teams would be able to play additional games after the regular season concludes. Historically, when there were spots available in the Premier Play-offs available to conference teams, this was restricted to the winners or in some cases best runner up. This system will allow more teams from Conference competitions to continue playing but limiting blow out fixtures and more meaningful competition.

The format:

It is the intention of this competition to be fluid as there is no 'one size fits all' model due to factors such as:

-Number of promotion spots available, i.e. there may be more than two spots available in a Premier League

-Number of conferences feeding into a Premier League, i.e. as illustrated below

-Teams opting out, i.e. teams may wish to be promoted and therefore opt out of the competition.

Therefore, the below is for illustrative purposes only and reflects scenarios that COULD have happened during the 2019/20 season based on the number of teams and the league structure in place. The format could change yearly or between age groups based on the above-mentioned factors. Structures could include, round robin series, knock out series or home and away series.

The conferences leagues would need to be grouped together to see which premier competition they would feed into (three premier competitions), as there are multiple conference leagues and just three Premier leagues.

Example - Under 18 Men would look like this:

Premier North - Conference North East/Conference North West

Premier Central - Conference Midlands/Conference East

Premier South - Conference South Pool 1/South Pool 2/South Pool 3/South West.

How it could work based on 2019/20 season:

Premier League with 2 feeder conferences:

An example of this structure is the Under 18 Mens North Premier league, two spots are available with no relegation as it is currently a 10-team league. We would take the top 4 teams from Conference North East and top 4 teams from Conference North West.

- Teams would be seeded 1 to 8 (seeded by win %)

Eight team playoff series as per below. All games hosted by the higher seed. Three weeks required in order to complete these series of games. The finalists play for the title of 'Northern playoff winners' (example)

Round 1

Game 1: 1 v 8

Game 2: 2 v 7

Game 3: 3 v 6

Game 4: 4 v 5

Round 2

Game 5: Game 1 winner v Game 4 Winner

Game 6: Game 2 Winner v Game 3 Winner

Round 3 - The two 'finalists' win promotion

Game 7: Game 5 Winner v Game 6 Winner.

Premier League with 3 feeder conferences:

We would take the bottom two premier teams, the top of each feeder conference league, then the best 2 second place teams. So, in the case of South Premier, a 12-team league, the bottom two teams would be eligible, this would work as follows:

- South Premier 12th and South Premier 11th would be seeded 1 and 2
- Seed 3-6 we take the winners of South Conference 1, South Conference 2, South Conference 3 and South West Conference (seeded by win %).
- Seed 7 and 8 we take the next 2 conference league runners up, based on win %.

The eight teams playoff series is listed below. We would require three weeks in order to complete these series of games. As an incentive the 'finalists' could play for the title of 'southern playoff winners'(example)

Round 1

Game 1: 1 v 8

Game 2: 2 v 7

Game 3: 3 v 6

Game 4: 4 v 5

Round 2

Game 5: Game 1 winner v Game 4 Winner

Game 6: Game 2 Winner v Game 3 Winner

Round 3 - The two 'finalists' win promotion

Game 7: Game 5 Winner v Game 6 Winner

Premier leagues where multiple spots available due to league size of 10 or less.

Where spots are already available in the premier leagues ie Under 14 age group where multiple spots are available, we will look to allow more conference teams into the knock out competitions.