

NATIONAL LEAGUE – MILEAGE CAP RULINGS 2021

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATE & GUIDANCE

- As we have mentioned before clearly this season will still be very different and fixtures won't be played in the same way as they were back in 2019. From 29 March, outdoor tennis can resume in England in line with Government and LTA guidance, with no limit on the distance that teams can travel to participate and toilet facilities are permitted to open. No overnight stays are permitted at this stage.
- One point that has now been clarified by the Government is that car sharing is **not permitted** with anyone from outside of your household or support bubble for the purposes of participation in sport, and this is likely to be the case until 17 May at the earliest.
- Guidance will no doubt change during the season and although we will do our best to keep teams updated throughout the season, it will be the team's responsibility to check the relevant guidance at the time of their fixture. The LTA Coronavirus webpage is regularly updated via www.LTA.org.uk/coronavirus
- Outdoor tennis has also been permitted to resume in Wales in line with Welsh Government, Tennis Wales and LTA guidance. Please note that although travel between Wales and England will be permitted from 12 April, organised adult sport cannot resume until 3 May meaning that teams based in Wales or travelling to Wales for a fixture will not be able to resume until this date onwards.

WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN FOR THE 2021 SEASON?:

- As previously confirmed, the season will commence as planned on Sunday 11 April
- Due to the issues around car sharing (which we know a lot of teams normally do), we have introduced a 'mileage cap' for the Open National League season for any fixtures taking place before 17 May.
- To clarify, we do not anticipate that the 'mileage cap' will apply to any fixtures after 17 May, if the Government's roadmap proceeds as planned – these fixtures must continue on the set fixture dates already published
- This new 'mileage cap' will be applicable for all adult fixtures taking place prior to 17 May, where the distance between the two clubs **exceeds 100 miles**
- If car sharing to a fixture is not required for the away team (where the fixture exceeds 100 miles) please do continue as planned on the original fixture date – this is our preference
- However, if a requirement for car sharing is a serious issue for the away team and the distance to the home venue exceeds 100 miles, the fixture may be rearranged for a later

date. In this instance, the home team must provide two alternative dates for the fixture to take place, **no later than Sunday 27 June** (for the National tier) and **no later than Sunday 25 July** (for the Regional tier). This provides additional weekends for those fixtures to be played.

- An additional alternative option, prior to a new date being agreed is that if the current home team are happy to travel as car sharing isn't an issue and can play the fixture at the away teams venue (court availability permitting) on the original match date – this would also be our preference, with rearranging the fixture to a later date being the last resort
- The home team must offer at least two alternative dates on a Sunday for the rearranged fixture to take place – the away team must accept one of these dates. Please avoid the rain date when making these arrangements. Our preference is that fixtures remain on a Sunday at 12pm, however, if both teams agree a Saturday in late June can be used.
- We do however, only want teams to take up this option in extreme circumstances, our expectation is that fixtures remain on the current dates. However, we feel we do need to give an element of flexibility where fixtures do exceed this distance, given the car sharing restrictions. As you know these fixture dates are published to teams and players well in advance to help with team selections so our preference is strongly to stick to the original date where possible
- In the majority of cases this option will not be applicable for matches, for example, it may only impact 15% of fixtures in the National tier
- To decide if a fixture falls into this category, the distance must be measured on Google Maps from the Away team's venue to the Home team's venue via the fastest route shown. For example, in the Women's South West tier, East Gloucestershire Club are travelling to West Hants on 11 April – on Google Maps, the fastest distance between the two clubs is 119 miles – therefore East Gloucestershire Club may enforce the 'mileage cap' if they wish and the fixture can be rearranged for another agreed date prior to 27th June
- If any away teams do wish to take up this option they must contact the home team ASAP, but **no later than Monday 19 April** (obviously earlier than this for fixtures scheduled for 11th April / 18th April). Any change of dates must then be agreed **by Friday 23rd April** and we must be informed via nationalleague@LTA.org.uk so the fixture date can be updated online
- Again for clarity, the government guidance allows all fixtures in England to be played as normal, however, the 'mileage cap' can now be used for any fixtures prior to 17th May that exceed 100 miles as a last resort if the car sharing restrictions are a problem for a particular team
- Fixtures involving teams from Wales, on 11 April, 18 April and 25 April, must follow the same logic as explained above regarding the 'mileage cap'
- Please note we are expecting the Home teams who are contacted by an Away team to try and be as flexible as possible during this difficult time. As said before, we know it's not an ideal situation but from 17 May we are hoping for a more 'normal' season and hope the car sharing ban will minimally impact the teams across the league. Similarly, for those away teams that do take up this option, they must be prepared to play on one of the alternative dates offered by the home team.

TEAM CAPTAIN CHECKLIST

Your team have been scheduled as Away and the travel distance exceeds over 100 miles, your fixture is scheduled before 17 May



A couple of your nominated players are struggling to travel alone i.e. don't own a car, are not able to drive or take public transport and so may not be able to attend based on the current guidelines



You check to see if other players are available in your squad who you hadn't initially selected for this fixture, or try to find solutions around the players struggling to travel alone



If you have no other players to attend the fixture and cannot find a way around the issue, you contact the opposition ASAP to request a re-arranged fixture before **Sunday 27 June** (for the National tier) and **no later than Sunday 25 July** (for the Regional tier) OR see if the current home team would be prepared to travel to the current away team to play the fixture on the current fixture date



If all options have been explored and the fixture is to be rearranged, you and the opposition find a mutually agreeable date (with the home team providing two options) and contact nationalleague@lta.org.uk to confirm the new fixture date, which will then be updated online **by Friday 23rd April**

We thank you for your understanding and patience during these difficult times. We are still looking forward to what will be a great season and if you have any queries please don't hesitate to contact us on nationalleague@lta.org.uk