

Future Arrangements for Internal WPS Competitions

FAQs

Why change things?

Feedback to the competition secretary and the recent questionnaire showed that there was dissatisfaction among several members about the way the internal leagues were running, with some “stagnation” particularly in the intermediate league. The intention of the proposed changes is to give members a more competitive experience and to hold interest in the leagues right the way through the season.

Surely we should “reward” members for taking the trouble to enter – why abolish the single point for entering?

The intention is to ensure that members are considering and entering their best available work for the competition, not just anything available. There is little effect on the overall ranking by allowing all entrants one point. The increased number of “highly commended” marks (20% of entrants) should in turn lead to more being held back – and hence a greater chance of an image being rewarded on its merits. These measures should make the leagues more competitive and with more opportunities for members to gain some recognition for their work.

Why are the leagues not set up to allow demotion as well as promotion?

There are insufficient marks in a season to allow the lowest few scorers to be properly and confidently identified. There could be several members with very similar marks, leading, potentially, to a considerable churn of members from one league to another each season. It would be like choosing the football league promotions and demotions after half a dozen games!

Those in the lower portion of each league will, however, be offered the chance to drop down a league *if they wish* at the end of each season, so as to feel they are in a league where they can be competitive.

Won't the top league become “over full” again quite quickly?

By making the top league smaller, initially, than the others there will be room for carefully controlled promotions each season for several seasons before

having to carry out a further “re-balancing”. We do not have enough competitions each season to allow a simple promotion/demotion system that will be self perpetuating and fair.

How will I know what effect the change to 4 leagues would have on my own position?

Before the proposals are voted on, the Competition Secretary will publish a “shadow” table showing which league everyone would be in if we were to adopt the new 4 league system.

I won’t be able to attend the SGM – but this is important so how can I vote?

The committee have agreed a simple proxy system. You can notify the Secretary of a nominated proxy who will be present and whom you trust to vote according to your instructions – they will be able to vote on your behalf at the SGM

Why is there an option to delay the move to 4 leagues?

Some members might feel that they would compete differently in the coming season if they knew that there was to be a rearrangement of the leagues for the following season. Though in truth due to the way that the current, draft list was developed there are unlikely to be significant differences in a year’s time.

Does the whole Committee back all of these proposed changes?

The Committee voted by a clear and significant majority for these proposals to be put to the members. It is also fair to say that there has been considerable debate about the proposed changes.

At the last AGM the Competition Secretary said he would bring forward proposals for consideration by the membership; the committee recognizes the considerable work that has gone in to this, involving representatives from across the different competition levels. The committee does feel that these proposals should now be considered and voted on by the membership.

I still have questions and suggestions about this whole process – who can I speak to?

Any member of the committee would be happy to discuss this with you. In addition, Gordon as Competition Secretary has publicized the names of those who were on the working group (Deborah Gordon, Alan Thompson, Tony Smith and Roger Dixey), and they also would be happy to explain further the rationale and proposed changes.

How will the time be managed during a competition evening?

Initially the plan is to do two in each half, the Beginners and Intermediates in the first half then the Advanced and Gold in the second half. If the number of entries we receive per League suggests a different split then this approach will be reviewed and changed if necessary.

How was I allocated to my League?

The Working Group took the merit point results from the two Leagues and sorted the Leagues in descending order. The top 25 or so from the Advanced formed the new Gold League, the rest of the Advanced and the top few from the Intermediates formed a new Advanced League and then a similar split for the Intermediates. The Beginners ended up smaller to accommodate this year's new members. Having looked at the results of this exercise, and knowing the photographers in the Society well the group felt that the results were fairly accurate. If there are any anomalies they will be ironed-out naturally as the better photographers will prevail over the coming season.

How have these proposals been framed? Why hasn't there been a wider debate?

The intention was to react to the questionnaire responses, trying to improve the league structure and the competitive experience. This was announced at the AGM in May 2019, and volunteers were sought to work with the Competition Secretary and a then Members Rep (Tony Smith) – a member from each league was selected and worked hard with 3 meetings and considerable online discussions over the summer. Their proposals were presented to the Committee who also debated the issues. The proposals are now to be set before the members, who will all have a vote on whether or not to implement these. The committee do not feel that setting aside Tuesday

meeting time to allow extensive debate would be a sensible use of our programme of events; extensive work has been done – we would now like to see the membership decide whether or not to accept this.