

**Derbyshire County Netball**  
**Yardley League**

The Yardley League was originally started with just four teams in 1993, and was created to provide a safe, non-threatening environment for players returning to netball to enjoy the game and develop as players.

Over the years the league has grown and developed, and now has a senior section and a junior section, but the thinking behind the league remains the same, and Derbyshire is committed to providing a league that allows players to develop.

**What makes the Yardley League different?**

- We try to put teams in a division that is appropriate to their standard of play, so new teams will not necessarily start in the bottom division, or even their real age group in the case of Juniors - **WHY** - because beating teams easily doesn't challenge the winning team, and certainly disheartens the losing team - we want all players to be able to participate .
- Umpires are asked to stop penalising players who continually break rules, if it is obvious that it is because of the skill level of that player, such as footwork, foot on the line at a throw it - **WHY** - the player will either be taken off court, or bypassed by her own players, which means that she will be denied the opportunity to develop as a player - the player needs to know, but not penalised
- Teams are discouraged from closing down space when defending ("blocking" for those who prefer old terminology) - **WHY** - less experienced players contact, and some players see this as an easy way of gaining possession of the ball, which is against the spirit of the league. Applying any sort of pressure as a defender is intended to **delay play** only, so umpires will not award penalties in these circumstances - we want to encourage open play to allow players to develop. Obviously players need to protect their space for rebounds in the shooting circle, but this should only be around the post area.
- The league provides an umpire - **WHY** - so that all umpires, including youth umpires that have been on a course, can develop, knowing that there is a qualified umpire on the other side of the court to give them help and feedback. Should teams take advantage of an inexperienced umpire, the league umpire can step in and take appropriate action. Please note that Youth umpires cannot umpire above their age group.
- Whilst recognising that some teams may have been started by an experienced player, i.e. being someone that plays regular netball at a competitive standard, that player will not be allowed to participate in matches - **WHY** - because it is a grass roots league, and experienced players can greatly influence a match, and disadvantage the opposition
- Teams/players who play in other leagues are discouraged from entering - **WHY** - the league wants to provide match opportunities for teams who do not have that opportunity elsewhere, it is to develop teams/players.
- Registration forms and score cards need to be completed - **WHY** - to ensure that teams only field players registered to that team. If a team is short, they have the option of borrowing players, but the game is played as a friendly.

Any team that enters the league has to fully appreciate and support the above, in order to ensure an enjoyable experience for all!