

In light of the current Coronavirus situation, the SHAB Management Committee has discussed the best way of concluding the 2019-2020 season, with a handful of matches still to be played.

The most recent Government and NHS guidelines, issued an hour ago, have advised against social contact and non-essential travel. I'm conscious that there are matches planned over the next couple of weeks and that there are some Clubs, and their members, who intend to honour those commitments. However, I would stress that bowlers' safety is my paramount concern, particularly given the demographic of those deemed at higher risk of the virus.

Therefore, any Clubs who feel unable to honour their remaining fixtures at this time due to insufficient bowlers or in light of any premises closures, will NOT be penalised. For that reason, and given the fact that many Clubs now play short mat throughout the summer months, we are extending the 2019-2020 playing season through to 31st July 2020, although this will be regularly reviewed and updated when more guidance is issued by the Government.

I am also aware that some Clubs move solely to outdoor bowls so the season extension will be of no benefit to them. In this scenario, and with the agreement of both participating Clubs, we are allowing the match to be cancelled. The result will be two points awarded to each side and there will be no change to the shot difference. You should, at the earliest opportunity, confirm in writing to Steph Taylor (SHAB Match Secretary) if your Club wishes to cancel a match.

The situation we find ourselves in is unprecedented and, in perspective, there are more pressing concerns that people need to address. Nonetheless, our intention is not to see seven months' excellent competition go to waste.

I sincerely trust that this decision will be taken in the spirit in which it is intended but should there fail to be agreement between Clubs on any given fixture that remains, the SHAB Management Committee will adjudicate on a case-by-case basis.

I wish you and your bowlers continued good health through these difficult and testing times.

Best wishes,
Jason Reynolds
Chairman, SHAB League.