

# GWR 2025-26 Winter Doubles: Responses to the request for feedback

## Introduction

This is the unedited (though anonymised) feedback from the post-season questionnaire that I published to team captains. There were **twelve responses** – a reasonable sample size for this season's league of 24 teams. On the basis of those responses, people seem generally happy with the way things ran with no strong groundswell of opinion for change.

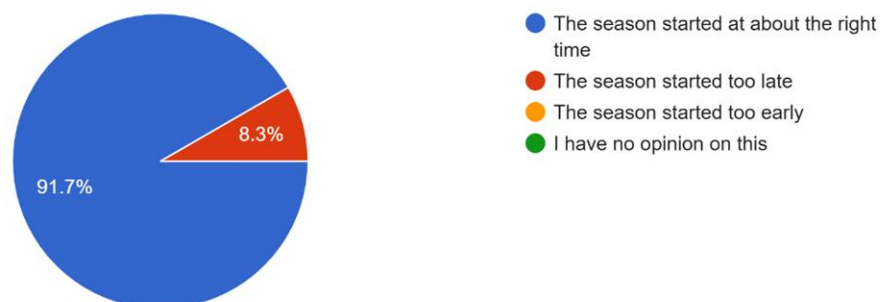
The only significant questions arose in the 'Anything else' section: about the fee and prize structure for future leagues. If we have a new Regional Association in place by October then distribution of monies will be a matter for the new committee, otherwise the league current league committee will debate this nearer the time.

## Season start date and duration

As in previous seasons, the players seemed pretty happy with the basic start date and mainly fortnightly intervals between matches. There was some interest in putting catch-up dates in the middle of the season rather than at the end. This might work if the dates are planned in as part of the initial schedule. The main driver this year though was to try to avoid key dates like Remembrance Sunday whilst fitting in a good number of rounds before Christmas. The slightly later start in January (the 11<sup>th</sup> rather than the 4<sup>th</sup>) might have allowed a catch-up date on the 4<sup>th</sup> – just something to consider for the future, depending upon numbers entering.

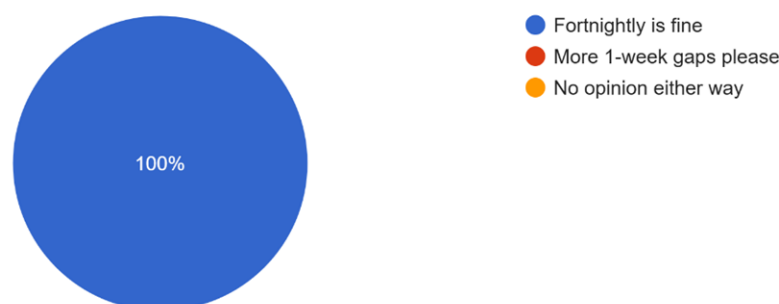
### Start date for the season

12 responses



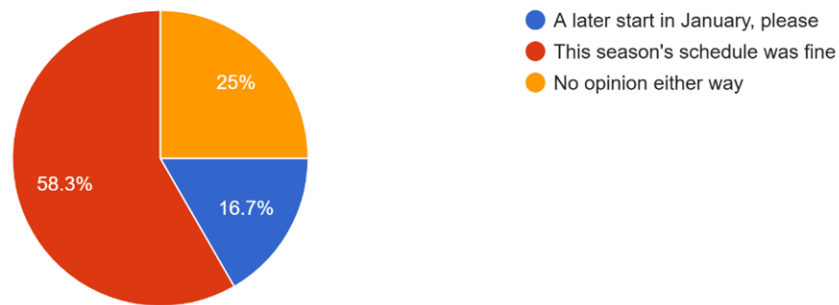
### Rounds of play are typically scheduled fortnightly. Is this about right? Should there be more weekly games, shortening the overall season?

12 responses



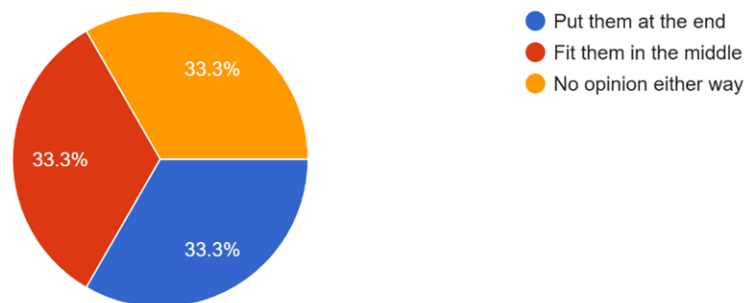
This year's season was only eight rounds with five of them before Christmas so we had scope to restart later in January and finish later in February. Would you have preferred this

12 responses



Should catch-up games be scheduled for the end of the season, squeezed in between other rounds or doesn't this matter to you?

12 responses



***Please add any other comments on the start date, gap between rounds, split of rounds across pre-Xmas / New Year, catch-up games, etc.***

Responses:

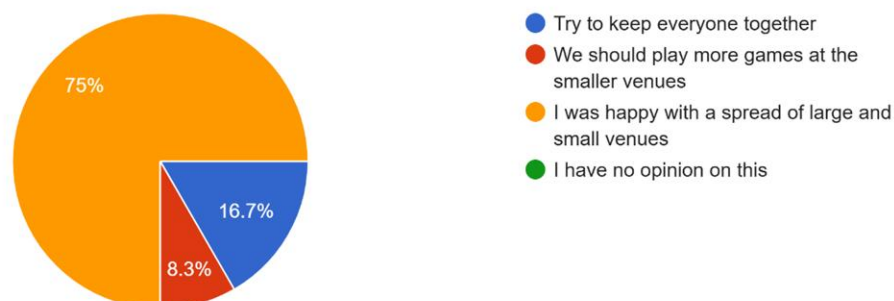
- 1. I would prefer that the catch-up games are completed before the final round of matches so that we have a clear "Final day" where we can see the winners etc*
- 2. Really good experience for a first-time entrant. All games played in such good spirit.*
- 3. 2 catch ups mid-season and end of season.*
- 4. More money to the players. Later start to games*
- 5. Would prefer a final day with all in attendance and the reduced games hopefully would allow for players to watch and just wait if finished to have a presentation*

## Venues

People seemed generally happy with the split of venues this season, with a mix of large and small venues.

Should we try to keep the teams all together or to split them across multiple venues?

12 responses



***Please add any other comments about venues, splitting games across multiple venues, etc.***

Responses:

1. *Ironic for me as I was "pushing" for more games for my venue! But I found that, because I was in the "host group", I had more games at home than I wanted and didn't get to visit some of the other venues e.g. Lansdown, etc.*
2. *Using the smaller venues allowed reduction for longer distance travel which is great.*
3. *The best venue is Larkhall in terms of facilities, parking and ease of getting to but to visit other locations has its benefits too but it would have been really helpful to have maybe a small portable gazebo or similar to provide somewhere to place bags etc out of the elements where the venue had no static building or cover. Nothing grand.*
4. *I think the fee<sup>1</sup> of £60 is too high.*
5. *Personally, for us we were happy to play on a larger variation of venues so we could experience the different pistes as we are still new to competitions*
6. *If the games are to be split, smaller venues have to support the days that they are hosting.*
7. *Works well to encourage new clubs to try and grow*
8. *The split worked ok.*

***Any other comments on game format & length, session start times, team size, rules for substitutions, etc.?***

Responses:

1. *All good - works well I think*
2. *Start times were about right to allow enough of the day left for other arrangements.*
3. *Do not have 45 the 2 ends 45 plus 1 end is fine or 45 the end*
4. *5 min comfort break between rounds*
5. *Works ok for me*

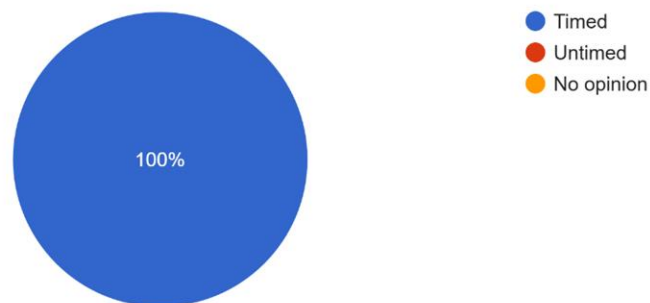
<sup>1</sup> This is the ex-gratia payment shared by the venues hosting each round of play

## Format of play

Generally positive feedback about the format of play and most people seemed happy with the early start, though the use of more local venues and reduced travel times may have helped here.

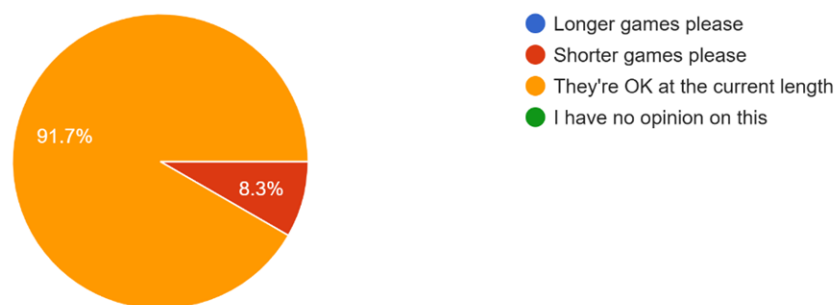
Should games be timed or untimed?

12 responses



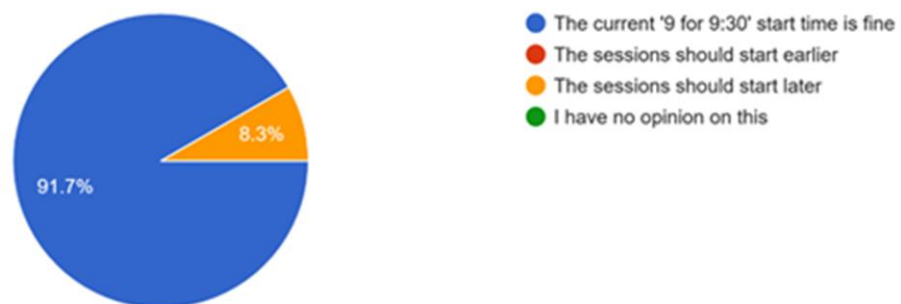
The length of games this season was set at 45 minutes plus two ends. Was this about right given the impact upon the overall length of the session?

12 responses



The current sessions have registration at 9am ready for a prompt start at **9:30** (with local variations for some smaller venues). If we have shorter games we might be able to start the sessions later. Alternately, an earlier start allows more time for longer games. Have we got the start time about right?

12 responses

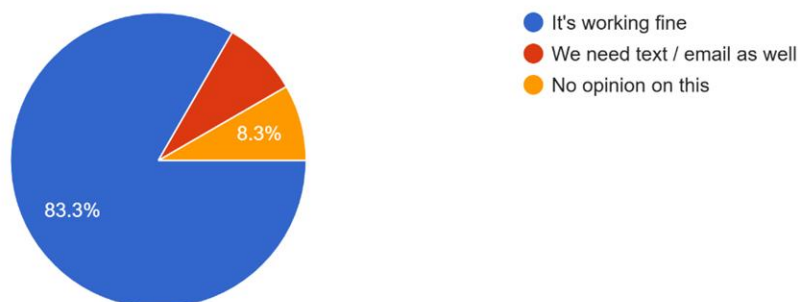


## Communications

The use of WhatsApp for the majority of communications seems to have been a success. Most venue hosts post the score sheets to the WhatsApp group where all of the teams can see them. Doing this for all score sheets would allow everyone to review the state of play ahead of the updates to LeagueRepublic. It also gives everyone the information they need when questioning those updates – luckily mostly accurate updates this season! 😊

Should we major on the WhatsApp group once the league is up & running?

12 responses



***Please add any other comments about the format, tone & style, frequency or any other aspect of communications***

Responses:

6. *We should require the "host" put the results on the Captain's WhatsApp group so we all get to see immediately the scores for the day. Some people do this, some don't. I think a lot of people are keen to see what other teams have done on the day, especially if we have multiple venues*
7. *Results ideally quicker in LR, so score sheets sent from venue to help organiser format & upload*
8. *Seems about right to me*

## Anything else

The main subject here is the fee and prize structure:

- Should there be a team-based fee rather than a fee per person?
- Should there be more flexibility in using stand-in players if they are playing only a couple of matches in the season?
- Time to rethink the allocation of prize money now that 50% of the entry fees are no longer being allocated to the Juniors fund?

These are all matters worthy of consideration for future leagues. For information:

- The original allocation of money was:
  - 50% to the Juniors Fund
  - 10% retained for administration costs
  - 40% paid out as prize money
- The allocation of monies this season was:
  - 23% paid to hosting venues<sup>2</sup>
  - Of the remainder:
    - 40% was retained by GWR
    - 60% was paid as prize money.

### ***Is there anything else you'd care to share that might help improve future league seasons?***

Responses:

1. *Just a thought... maybe if the few people who are used as "stand in" for a day were allowed to act as "stand in" for another team, say 3 times / season it would help with flexibility. Might be more admin, but might encourage some people to take part more and thus form their own team for next year*
2. *If the GWR website could be updated or improved that would be awesome*
3. *Just wanted to thank you Trevor for all your time and organising skills to arrange such a fun and well-run competition.*
4. *Not to improve anything as this is our first WD season but we'd just like to say a personal thank you to you Trevor for organising this competition. We look forward to participating again!*
5. *GWR can't keep all of the entry fees need to put more back to players not to GWR.*
6. *Prize money review...Once junior fund topped up to 5K..10% to admin rest in prizes for top 4 only 50:25:15:10 ratio*
7. *Unfortunately, I can't comment too much as I didn't play very much this season due to family commitments. I guess, on this note alone, I could suggest that a fee of £35 <sup>3</sup>per player is a bit steep having only played twice - although in previous seasons I have played most games and therefore 'got my money's worth'!*
8. *Could a consideration be a 'team' entry fee - covering up to 3 players perhaps? Not sure what this amount would be and obviously it wouldn't go down well with those that only register 2 players. Another option could be reduced fee per player if there are more than 2 - £30 each for 3 £25 each for 4? I'm not sure I'm happy to be one of 3 or 4 in a squad again next season at the current cost.*
9. *Thanks once again for running it - I appreciate the effort you put in.*

<sup>2</sup> This is a £60 per round ex-gratia payment given to the venue(s) hosting play for that round. It is modelled on the payments made by PE to venues hosting PE competitions.

<sup>3</sup> The fees this year were £30 for the whole season or £6 per session for occasional/substitute players.