

LEAGUE RULES

1. The management of the League shall be by the Committee.
2. All clubs affiliated to the Association shall be eligible to enter teams in any competition organised by the Association. An entry fee shall be payable for each team entered and the amount of the fee shall be decided at the Annual General Meeting.
3. All matches played in any competition shall be subject to The Constitution and within the general rules and Code of Conduct of the Lawn Tennis Association of Great Britain.
4. a) Leagues shall be organised in four groups as follows:
Group 'A' - Men's Doubles
Group 'B' - Ladies' Doubles
Group 'C' - Mixed Doubles
Group 'D' - Juniors.
b) The Committee shall decide the formation in each group.
c) Each group shall have a Results Secretary appointed from within the Committee.
5. Qualifications to play in any club team in the League shall be bona-fide membership of that club.
6. Where a club enters more than one team in any group it shall be recognised that team 'A' shall be the club's strongest side and team 'B' the next strongest side and so on, where there are more than two teams. In the event of a player in any team being unavailable, then a player from a lower team may be promoted with the proviso that should such a player be used more than twice in the higher team, he/she shall not be allowed to return to the lower team for the remainder of the season. Players nominated for higher teams shall not be allowed to play in lower teams unless the Committee gives approval. The Committee may sanction permanent changes in any team.
7. a) Clubs are required to nominate players for all their respective teams (except the lowest).
b) All such nominations shall be made to a group Results Secretary not later than three days prior to the opening of the Summer and Winter League seasons.
c) Failure to do so may, at the discretion of the Committee, result in the deduction of up to nine match points (Summer) or **eight** match points (Winter).
8. No player may play for more than one club in any one group during the season.
9. Matches shall be played on a home and away basis in each group. In some instances, as decided by the Committee, Group 'D' matches shall be either home or away. In all cases, the home team shall be responsible for the provision of three new Lawn Tennis Association approved balls per court.
10. The Committee shall issue the fixture list and all arranged dates must be strictly adhered to. Matches shall not be postponed except for the following:
a) Bad weather prevailing at the home venue at the actual time laid down for starting.
b) Unavailability of courts - clubs should make every attempt to hire alternative courts in order to fulfil fixtures if their own are unavailable.
c) Teams must fulfil fixtures or forfeit points. Any appeal for postponement must be made to League Secretaries and shall only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
11. Match score cards must be completed, checked and signed by both team captains. The home team shall be responsible for forwarding the card to the appropriate group Results Secretary to reach him/her not more than five days after the match has taken place. Failure to do so may, at the discretion of the Committee, result, in respect of each failure, in either forfeiture of the match points by the offending team or deduction of up to nine match points (Summer) or **eight** match points (Winter) from the offending team. In the event of persistent failure by a team, the Committee may impose a fine of up to £10.
12. In the event of a team conceding two or more walkovers during the season, the Committee shall give serious consideration to making all the matches of that team void.

13. SUMMER LEAGUE

- a) The Summer League season shall open on Monday of the week in which 1st May falls and shall close at the end of the week in which the last Monday of July falls, unless the Committee decides otherwise.
- b) All matches shall be played on at least two courts. By mutual agreement, a third court, and three good quality balls, may be used for any part of the match.
- c) A match shall consist of nine sets, with teams of three pairs, and each pair shall play all other pairs of the opposing team over one set. A tie-break (see 16a) shall come into affect at 6-6.
- d) All matches start at 18:30 except by mutual agreement. Match Secretaries should make the starting time quite clear when arranging their fixtures. Actual match play (excluding the knock-up) shall commence within 15 minutes of the time laid down for starting.
- e) A team not having its full side present when play is due to commence must arrange pairings from the available players. Such pairings shall remain operative for the entire match.
- f) 2 sets must commence within 15 minutes of the agreed starting time. Failure to start within the stipulated time shall result in the non-defaulting team being awarded either or both of the sets 6-0.

- g) If thirty minutes after the time laid down for starting a match, fewer than two pairs of a team have arrived, the match shall be abandoned and awarded to the non-defaulting team as a walkover.
- h) If not all members of a team have arrived on completion of the second set, the non-defaulting team shall be awarded one set for every incomplete pair. In addition, if all players are not present within one hour of the starting time, the non-defaulting team shall be awarded the remaining sets.
- i) Match points shall be awarded on the basis of 1 point to each team for each set won; e.g. winners get 9 points for a 9-0 win, losers get 0 points; winners get six points for a 6-3 win, losers get three points, etc. In the event of a team giving a walkover, the opposition is awarded 9 points and the offending team is penalised 4 points. If count back is required at the end of the season, then Rule 13(n) will apply for games.
- j) If any set is not played because of default by both teams, that set shall be void.
- k) In the case of a match having to be abandoned after play has commenced, the match shall be deemed to have been completed if seven or more sets have been played. The points for the unplayed sets shall be shared; e.g. if a match is abandoned at 8-0, the winning team shall be awarded 8.5 points and the losing team shall be awarded 0.5 points. If a set is unplayed or curtailed due to bad weather or lack of light, any games played in that set shall be counted if a count-back is required at the end of the season.
- l) Any set claimed shall be regarded as played for the purposes of Rule 13(k).
- m) Where seven or more sets have not been played, the match shall be rearranged and completed by the end of the season. In such rearranged matches, both teams shall start at scratch. Postponed matches must also be completed by the end of the season.
- n) Where a team fields an incomplete team in a match, any sets not played shall be conceded to the opposing team, each set to score 0-6 against the offending team.
- o) At the end of the season the two top teams in each division, except the highest, shall be eligible for promotion to the next highest division, and the two bottom teams in each division, except the lowest, shall be liable to relegation to the next lowest division in their respective groups.
- p) In the event of a tie on points in any division, promotion and relegation issues shall be settled on games won.
- q) In the event of a dispute, the matter shall be referred to the Committee whose decision shall be final and binding.
- r) In bad weather, away teams must turn up to play, unless advised otherwise by the home team.

14. WINTER LEAGUE

- a) The Winter League season shall open on Saturday of the week in which 1st October falls and shall close at the end of the week in which the last Saturday of February falls, unless the Committee decides otherwise.
- b) A pyramid system shall be operated in the Winter and the League shall consist of a Premier Division, Division 1, Divisions 2a and 2b, Divisions 3a and 3b, Divisions 4a and 4b, etc.
- c) A match shall consist of four rubbers, with teams of two pairs, and each pair shall play all other pairs of the opposing team over the best of three sets. A tie-break (see 16a) shall come into effect at 6-6 in the first two sets. In the Mens League the 3rd set is a long set. In the Ladies League the 3rd set is a Deciding Match Tie-break (see 16b).
- d) All matches start no earlier than 10:00 am except by mutual agreement. Match Secretaries should make the starting time quite clear when arranging their fixtures. Actual match play (excluding the knock up) shall commence within 15 minutes of the time laid down for starting.
- e) A team not having its full side present when play is due to commence must arrange pairings from the available players. Such pairings shall remain operative for the entire match.
- f) All 4 players of each team must be present and ready to play within 15 minutes of the agreed starting time. If only 1 pair is present within this stipulated time, the 2nd pair shall forfeit the 1st rubber. Unless the 2nd pair is present on completion of the 1st rubber, they shall then forfeit both rubbers.
- g) If no pairs of a team have arrived within 30 minutes of the agreed starting time, the match shall be awarded to the non-defaulting team.
- h) In the formation of the Winter League, teams promoted/relegated from (a) divisions shall be liable to promotion/relegation to the next highest/lowest (b) division and teams promoted/relegated from (b) divisions shall be liable to promotion/relegation to the next highest/lowest (a) division. The remaining teams may also be crossed over, and, where possible, teams from the same club, in the same division, may be separated, at the discretion of the Management Committee.
- i) Match points shall be awarded on the basis of 1 point for each set won. In the event of a team giving a walkover, the opposition is awarded 8 points and the offending team is penalised 4 points. If count back is required at the end of the season, then Rule 14(n) will apply for games.
- j) If any rubber is not played because of default by both teams, that rubber shall be void.
- k) In the case of a match having to be abandoned after play has commenced, the match shall be deemed to have been completed if three or more rubbers have been played. The points for the unplayed rubber shall be shared, **1 point each**. If a rubber is unplayed or curtailed due to bad weather or lack of light, any games played in that rubber shall be counted if a count-back is required at the end of the season.
- l) Any rubber claimed shall be regarded as played for the purposes of Rule 14(k).
- m) Where three or more rubbers have not been played, the match shall be rearranged and completed by the end of the season. In such rearranged matches both teams shall start at scratch. Postponed matches must also be completed by the end of the season.
- n) Where a team fields an incomplete team in a match, any rubbers not played shall be conceded to the opposing team, each rubber to score 0-6, 0-6 against the offending team.
- o) At the end of the Winter season the two top teams in each division, except the highest, shall be eligible for promotion to the next highest division, apart from Divisions 2a and 2b where one team shall be eligible for promotion. The bottom two teams in all divisions, except the lowest, shall be liable to relegation to the next lowest division.
- p) In the event of a tie on points in any division, promotion and relegation issues shall be settled on games won.
- q) In the event of a dispute, the matter shall be referred to the Committee whose decision shall be final and binding.

r) In bad weather, away teams must turn up to play, unless advised otherwise by the home team.

15. WINTER MIXED LEAGUE

The rules for Winter Mixed League shall be applied in conjunction with the existing Winter League Rules, except 14(c) and the first sentence of 14(d), in addition to the following.

- a) The Mixed League format shall consist of 2 mixed pairs playing 2 tie-break sets (at 6 all) against each of the opposing pairs.
- b) Fixtures are home and away with the option for the home team to elect to play either weekday evenings under floodlights or daytime at the weekends.
- c) Start time to be the home team's choice, but no earlier than 10:00 weekends or 18:30 weekdays (Match Secretaries should allow enough time to complete evening matches).

16. TIE-BREAKS

a) In a tie-break, the next player to serve shall have one service only (from the right hand court). Thereafter, service shall continue in the original order, each player having two services, one from the left-hand court followed by one from the right hand court. After every six points scored, players shall change ends, the service order remaining unchanged. The first pair to score seven points, with a lead of at least two clear points, shall be the winner of the set. If this requirement is not fulfilled, play shall continue until one pair is two clear points ahead, when that pair shall be the winner. The opening game of the set following a tie-break set shall be served by the side which received the first point in the tie-break game.

b) A "Deciding Match Tie-break" is when the players who win the first ten points shall win the match tie-break and the match, provided there is a margin of two points over the opponents. When using the deciding match tie-break to replace the final set the original order of service continues. In doubles the order of serving and receiving within the team may be altered as in the beginning of each set (i.e. it counts as a new set). After every six points scored, players shall change ends, the service order remaining unchanged. This will count as 1 game in the event of games countback at the end of the season. The scorecard should show the 3rd set as 1-0 or 0-1.