

**PORTSMOUTH AND DISTRICT LTA  
MASTERS LEAGUE COMPETITION RULES**

**1. MANAGEMENT**

The management of the league shall be in the hands of the committee of the Association (The Committee)

**2. L.T.A. RULES**

All matches shall be played according to the current rules of the Lawn Tennis Association

**3. ELIGIBILITY**

The League shall be open to any club situated within a 20-mile radius of Portsmouth. Clubs must be affiliated to the Portsmouth and District L.T.A. Clubs desiring to take part should forward their application to the league secretary. Acceptance is subject to Committee approval. (Minor rewording)

**4. ENTRIES**

A club may enter one or more teams at a fee decided by the Committee.

**5. TEAMS**

A full team shall consist of four players (2 pairs) in all leagues – men's, ladies, and mixed - summer and winter. If unable to field a full team, clubs are encouraged to field at least one legitimate pair to enable a fixture to be completed with two rubbers played.

**6. MATCHES – GENERAL**

(b) The order of play for shall be as follows:

Ladies and Men's Masters

Round 1 – 1<sup>st</sup> pairs play 2<sup>nd</sup> pairs. Round 2 – 1<sup>st</sup> pair play 1<sup>st</sup> pair. 2<sup>nd</sup> pair play 2<sup>nd</sup> pair.

## Mixed Masters

Round 1 – 1<sup>st</sup> mixed pair play 1<sup>st</sup> mixed pair, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mixed pair play 2<sup>nd</sup> mixed pair

Round 2 – Men's pair play men's pair, ladies pair play ladies pair

(b) Eight new L.T.A. approved balls must be provided for each match by the home side.

(c) If a player is absent at the start of play, at the expiration of 15 minutes from the agreed time of commencement, the opposing team shall be awarded one set, and a set thereafter for each consecutive 15 minutes delay.

(d) A match will consist of four rubbers, two pairs to play each opposing pair. The team winning the majority of rubbers shall be declared the winner of the match. If the rubbers are equal the team winning the majority of sets shall be declared the winner. If the rubbers and sets are equal, the team winning the majority of games shall be declared the winner. If the rubbers, sets and games are also equal the result shall be declared a tie.

(e) Three points will be awarded to a team winning a match on rubbers (e.g. 4-0 or 3-1); two points will be awarded to a team winning a match on sets or games after a 2-2 score in rubbers: one point will be awarded to a team losing a match on sets or games after a 2-2 score in rubbers: One and a half points will be awarded to both teams in the event of a tied match. (e.g. rubbers, sets and games equal)

### **6.1 MATCHES – ALL LEAGUES**

All matches will be the best of three sets. The first TWO sets will be normal sets with a standard 7-point tie-break played at 6 games all. The third set (if required) will be a standard 10-point tie-break (with a two-point gap after 9-9). A third set tie break will count as a normal set won or lost and scored by 1 game to 0 when adding up the results.

### **6.3 INJURIES DURING A MATCH**

If a player suffers an injury during a match and is unable to continue, then he/she must concede that rubber and any subsequent rubbers still to be played involving him/her. The result shall be recorded to include the score up to the time of the injury and then shall be considered a loss of 6-0 for each un-

commenced set. So, for instance at the time of the injury if the score was 3-1 in the first set to the injured player, the score would be recorded as 3-6 0-6. If the score was 6-2 3-1 to the injured player, the score would be recorded as 6-2 3-6 0-6, in the case of a three full sets match or 6-2 3-6 0-1 in the case of a two set match with a 10 point tie-break. Rubbers, sets and games are then calculated in the normal way to determine the match result.

## **7. LEAGUE DIVISIONS**

(a) A Division shall consist of not more than 9 teams, each team to play one match against each team in the division. If there are 6 teams or less, it is at the discretion of the Committee to arrange for teams to play on a home and away basis against each other. In deciding the number of teams in a division, the Committee will be mindful of attempting to keep numbers as even as possible across all divisions in each category. No more than two teams from the same club will be allowed to play in any one division.

(b) At the end of each season, in the case of divisions with six teams or more, the top two teams will usually be promoted and the bottom two teams will usually be relegated. In the case of divisions with five teams or less one team will usually be promoted and one team will usually be relegated. However, promotion and relegation decisions will be at the discretion of the Committee.

(c) Trophies or Cups will be awarded to Divisional Winners. These will be retained by the relevant club for one year and then returned to the Committee on request. Trophies and Cups remain the possession of the P&D LTA at all times.

## **8. FIXTURES**

(a) All fixtures and playing dates will initially be allocated by the Committee. There will be no more than 10 fixtures per team in any one season. All fixtures and results will be displayed on the Association's web site – [portsmouthlta.info](http://portsmouthlta.info)

(b) Summer fixtures will be allocated dates between 1 April and 30 September, Winter Fixtures will be allocated dates between 1 October and 31 March. Matches must not be played outside these dates except with the permission of the relevant league secretary.

(c) Start times for each match will be determined by the home team but must be between 9.30 and 2.30 unless agreed by the relevant league secretary.

(d) Clubs with two teams in the same division must play the fixture between those two teams by 31 May in the summer and 30 November in the winter.

(e) Clubs unable to provide two playable courts will play their allocated home matches away and will bear any costs involved.

(f) The home captain will confirm a forthcoming fixture with the opposing captain a minimum of three and preferably at least 7 days beforehand. The match venue, start time and any special arrangement for post-match refreshments should also be clarified.

(g) Responsibility for calling a match off in the event of adverse weather conditions rests with the home captain. Consideration must be given to the time and cost involved for the travelling team. Conditions can vary widely across the area, and it is recommended that the captains agree a “weather check” deadline for the morning of the match to avoid unnecessary travel if at all possible.

(h) If either captain will not be supervising a fixture they must notify the opposing captain of their nominated deputy, providing appropriate contact details.

## **9. REARRANGEMENTS – GENERAL**

(a) The general premise is that every effort should be made to ensure that matches are played wherever possible, with conceded matches being reduced to a minimum. In the event of a team being unable to field a full complement of players, the league encourages teams to fulfil an arranged fixture by playing with one pair, thus avoiding the possibility of the application of penalty points through conceding a match.

(b) Fixture dates may be rearranged by mutual consent and in general a first request to change from the original allocated date, made before 30 April in summer and 31 October in winter will be accepted without question, provided a minimum of 7 days notice is given.

(c) Second or subsequent requests for changes made before 30 April/ 31 October November will generally be looked upon favourably. However, the

requestee has the option of declining to accept such changes if they are unable to find a suitable alternative date and in any event such changes will be subject to proviso detailed in rule 9 (d) below.

(d) If a match which was changed under rules 9(b) or 9(c) above is subsequently not played for any reason, including adverse weather conditions, then the original requestee has the option of agreeing to a further rearrangement or to simply claim the match. If the match is claimed, then points will be awarded under the concession rule 11.

## **10. WEATHER AFFECTED MATCHES**

### **10.1 Match called off before either team travel**

(a) The match should be rearranged as soon as possible. Both captains are equally responsible for making contact. The home captain should provide three alternative dates on which the opposition are not already committed to play.

### **10.2 Play interrupted after both teams arrive at the venue, and the captains agree to abandon**

(a) If both teams have arrived at the venue every effort should be made to complete at least one round of rubbers, at which point a match will be declared as “played”, the result being decided on the rubbers/ sets/ games completed in the first round. Any rubbers, sets and games played in the second round will be ignore.

(b) If both captains agree that conditions make it impossible to play to the completion of the first round of rubbers then, bearing in mind the travel time and costs involved, the default position is that the match will be declared “abandoned”. The points will be shared equally, with the rubbers, sets and games recorded as 2-2, 4-4, 24-24 respectively.

(c) If both captains agree, then they have the option of arranging to play the match on a new date. More than one attempt can be made to rearrange the match, but with the proviso that if the match is subsequently not played for any reason, then the result reverts to the default position of “abandoned”

### **10.3 Play interrupted after both teams arrive at the venue but the captains cannot agree on whether to abandon or not**

(a) Hopefully such situations will be rare, but if the captains cannot agree about the playability of conditions once a match has started then play should be suspended and a “sitting out” time period commenced. If play is curtailed for a period of more than 30 minutes – in one or more spells – and the captains can still not agree, then the match will be declared abandoned and the match decided on the position at the time of abandonment.

(b) If the first round of rubbers has not be completed, then the rules as detailed in 10.2 (b) and 10.2 (c) will apply.

(c) If the first round of rubbers has been completed, but not the second, then any rubbers, sets, and games played in the second round shall be ignored and the match decided on the completed round in accordance with rule 10.2 (a) above.

## **11. CONCEDED MATCHES**

(a) If a match is NOT played on the arranged date and not rearranged in accordance with sections 9 and 10 above then the team responsible for the failure to play must concede the match to their opponents.

(b) The match score for such a concession will be recorded in favour of the non-conceding team as 4-0, 8-0, 48-0 in rubbers, sets and games respectively. In addition, the team making the concession will be deducted 1 point and, at the discretion of the Committee, they may be relegated at the end of the season.

## **12. WITHDRAWAL**

If a team withdraws from the league during the season, all matches involving that team will be declared null and void irrespective of whether they have been played or not.

## **13. PLAYERS**

(a) All players must be enrolled members of the competing club, or otherwise affiliated to the club where no formal or direct membership scheme exists. The club must be affiliated to the Portsmouth & District L.T.A.

(b) In any one season, a player who has played more than twice for the same team or played more than twice for any "higher" teams may not play for any "lower" team from the same club. A "higher" team being defined as follows:- a team from the same club that is competing in a higher division OR if two teams from the same club are in the same division, the team with the higher title status and a "lower" team being defined as follows:- a team from the same club that is competing in a lower division OR if two teams from the same club are in the same division, the team with the lower title status.

(c) No player may play for more than one club in the same season except that a player who has played in the men's or ladies for one club may represent another in the mixed league.

(d) All players must be aged 50 or over on 31 December in the year in which a match is played, with the exception that any female player who had played a P & D Masters league match before 31 March 2023 will be exempt from this rule and will remain eligible to play

#### **14. CONDITION OF COURTS**

(a) It is the home club's responsibility to ensure that the courts to be used do not pose a threat to the health and safety of the players. All courts used for matches must be in a reasonable state of repair and be free of any loose materials. All lines must be clearly marked. The courts must be safe to play on.

(b) Although not mandatory, all clubs are encouraged to use centre net bands secured or weighted at the bottom of the net.

(c) It is the home captain's responsibility to ensure that the nets are of the correct height before start of play and that a winder and measuring stick or tape are available throughout

#### **15. LEAGUE POSITIONS**

In the event of two or more teams being equal on points they shall be placed in the table in order according to the highest percentage of rubbers won to rubbers played. If that is equal then in order according to the highest percentage of sets won to sets played. If that is equal then according to the highest percentage games won to games played. If two teams are still equal then the order shall be decided on the result between the two teams during the season in question.

## **16. MATCH RESULTS**

(a) The FULL DETAILS of each match, signed by both captains, shall be forwarded to the relevant league secretary on the appropriate match cards (available from the website) within 48 hours of completion.

(b) The match details must be recorded in FULL, including the player's full names

(c) If a match is conceded, the relevant league secretary must be informed by BOTH clubs.

## **17. DISPUTES**

(a) Any complaints in connection with a match should be raised by the complaining team's captain with the opposing team's captain as soon as possible. If this is not possible, or inappropriate or the matter is not settled between the teams, the complaint should be made in writing within 7 days of completion of the match and sent to the relevant league secretary and copied to the opposing club.

(b) The Committee reserves the right to decide any question or dispute and its decision is final.

## **18. SPIRIT OF THE COMPETITION**

The overriding guideline is that all teams should play and conduct themselves in a fair and sporting manner, complying with this set of rules and playing within the "spirit of the competition." This particularly applies to team selection. It is hoped that in deciding team selection clubs will note the general standard of the division being competed in and will select players in accordance with that standard. If the Committee feels a team has selected a player (or players) of such a higher standard to gain "unfair" advantage it reserves the right to intervene and either void or reverse the result of affected rubbers and/or matches even if the team selection does not contravene rule 13. This does not apply to the top divisions in each category of the leagues.

## **19. VARIATION OF THE RULES**

These rules will apply to both summer and winter leagues and are available on the Association's website or from any committee member.



Any variation of these Rules must be put before the Annual General Meeting of the Association and be agreed by a majority of clubs attending. Each affiliated club will have one vote regardless of the number of representatives at the meeting.

Post AGM 2023