

HIGHLANDS TENNIS

Rules For Inter-Club League Competitions 2023

1. The competitions shall be called:

THE GALBRAITH HIGHLANDS TENNIS LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIPS

2. There shall be Senior and Junior sections of the Championships:

- a) The Senior section shall comprise:

- i) The Highlands Mixed Doubles League
- ii) The Highlands Ladies Doubles League
- iii) The Highlands Men's Doubles League

- b) The Junior section shall comprise:

- i) The Highlands Boys Sixteen and Under League
- ii) The Highlands Girls Sixteen and Under League
- iii) The Highlands Fourteen and Under League
- iv) The Highlands Twelve and Under League
- v) The Highlands Ten and Under League
- vi) The Highlands Nine and Under League
- vii) The Highlands Eight and Under League

3. The competitions shall be open to all clubs that are members of Highlands Tennis. The leagues shall be competed for annually in accordance with the Laws and Regulations of the LTA.

4. A club wishing to compete in the Leagues must give written notice to the League Secretary by the Saturday immediately prior to the March Board Meeting .

- a) Teams must compete in the Division they are assigned to, based on the previous season's Final Placings
- b) A club's request for rule 4a to be waived will only be accepted if there are extreme circumstances involved.

5. Team Membership

The aims of this rule are to allow fair competition and the participation of as many club members as possible. Captains and Match Secretaries are encouraged to support the spirit of these aims as well as following the sub-rules given below to uphold these aims.

- a) The qualification to play for a club shall be a full paying membership of the club. Any club infringing this rule shall lose all rubbers in which an ineligible player has taken part.
- b) No individual member shall be eligible to play for more than one club competing in the same league during the season.

- c) The composition of each team may be changed from match to match.
- d) A club may enter more than one team for any league competition. These shall be named 'A', 'B' etc. in order of merit.
- e) Clubs must name four players, for each team entered, before the leagues' first round of matches are scheduled.
 - These players shall not be allowed to 'play down'
 - Clubs have the right to alter the name order if a stronger player becomes available during the season.
 - A revised list, ranked on ability, must be sent to the League Secretary. His/her decision on whether to accept the revised list, or not, is final.
 - Players listed shall be restricted to playing as follow
 - i) Players 1 – 4: 1st team only
 - ii) Players 5 – 8: Cannot play below the 2nd team
 - iii) Players 9 – 12: Cannot play below the 3rd team
 - There is no restriction on 'playing up'.
- f) The competition a junior player will compete in for the upcoming season will be determined by their age on the last date of that calendar year, i.e. 31st December
 - Juniors are eligible to play in both junior and senior leagues.
- g) No players of opposite sex can play in the Ladies, Men's, 16 and Under Boys or 16 and Under Girls Leagues.
- h) Where clubs have more than one team playing in a League, players should be allocated by the club such that the fixture involving the higher team (e.g. Team 'A') has priority over the next higher (e.g. Team 'B') unless there are exceptional circumstances (e.g. late call offs) in which case the League Secretary should be informed.

6. Senior Leagues

- a) Format:
 - (i) Leagues shall consist of six teams playing Home and Away fixtures. If there are seven to nine entries to a league, teams will play each other once; if there are ten or more entries, a new division will be formed
 - (ii) Teams for senior leagues shall consist of
 - Mixed League – Two mixed pairs
 - Ladies League – Two ladies' pairs
 - Men's League – Two men's pairs
 - (iii) Each team shall list their players, on the score sheet, before the match begins. The stronger player shall be ranked No 1
 - (iv) Fixtures may go ahead with a reduced team of one pair one: the match can be drawn

- The order of play shall be decided prior to the visiting team setting off. This means that only one pair of the opposing team need be present when the fixture begins
- (v) Order of play:
The captains shall toss a coin to decide which of the two rounds of rubbers shall be played first.

7. Junior Leagues

Format:

- a) Any club infringing Rule 5 f) or any other rule in which an ineligible player has taken part in a match shall lose the rubbers in which the rule has been infringed.
- b) Each team member shall play one singles and one doubles rubber
- c) For singles rubbers, players shall be ranked according to ratings, if appropriate. There shall be no restriction on partnerships for doubles, but these shall be declared before the match begins
- d) If four players are not available, a club should contact the opposition who shall field the same number of players. The defaulting team shall concede un-played rubbers. With three players a match can be won; with two players a match can be drawn.
- e) The Sixteen and Under Boys League shall consist of four boys and the Sixteen and Under Girls League shall consist of teams of four girls.
- f) The Fourteen and Under, Twelve and Under, Ten and Under, Nine and Under and Eight and Under Leagues shall consist of teams of four. Teams can comprise all boys, all girls or can be mixed.
- g) The Leagues may have two divisions of different standards. There shall be no automatic promotion or relegation.
- h) Order of play:
 - (i) If four courts are available, play singles first
 - (ii) If three courts are available:
 - Play two singles and one doubles to be followed by the remaining singles and doubles rubbers. The captains shall decide which singles shall be played first

OR

If the doubles pairings do not allow this:

 - Three singles must be played first, followed by the fourth singles and one doubles. Finally the second doubles rubber.
 - Teams shall not alter the singles order merely to help expedite matters.
 - (iii) If two courts are available play doubles first, then singles 1v1 and 2v2, then singles 3v3 and 4v4.
- i) On a trial basis for 2023 the 16s and 10s leagues will be played after the summer holidays. The 12s will be split, with the first half of fixtures played prior to the summer break and the second half played after the break.

8. Time Limits

- a) A time limit for the termination of a fixture must be set by the captains before play commences. The captains shall agree which clock or watch shall be the official time piece
- b) Play shall cease on each court on conclusion of the game in progress when the time limit has been reached. However, if light permits, where a tie break has started it should be played to a conclusion.
- c) The captains may, in the event of bad light or inclement weather, that play is no longer possible: in which case play in each rubber shall cease on conclusion of the game in progress or, if it is impossible to complete the game, at the conclusion of the last completed game.
- d) Play shall commence not later than 6.30pm on any day of the week, unless permission to start later has been granted by the League Secretary.
- e) Teams shall arrive at least 15 minutes before the start time to ensure the fixture begins promptly at 6.30pm.

9. Late Arrivals

- a) A player or couple, who arrives late, shall forfeit a set:
 - (i) On completion of a set by the other players
OR
 - (ii) If the other pair has played for thirty minutes per set (and consecutive sets)
- b) A team arriving thirty minutes late must concede the first set. If one hour late, both first round rubbers must be conceded.
- c) If the opposing team has not arrived one hour after the agreed starting time, the non-defaulting team may claim the match. This will only happen if no contact has been made providing a reason for the lateness or confirming that the team is en-route,
- d) Each forfeited set shall be scored 6-0 (4-0 for 12 & Under and 10 & Under)

10. Match Scoring

- a) In all competitions each rubber shall consist of the best of three sets with a tie-break, at 6-6. If necessary, a champion's tie-break shall be played as the third set.
Twelve & Under and 10 & Under Leagues shall play a tie-break at 4-4. If necessary a champion's tie-break shall be played.
- b) The team which wins most sets played shall be declared the winner. Only completed sets, according to Rule 10a) shall count towards the result
- c) (i) If each team has won an equal number of sets the match shall be declared a draw and the teams shall receive equal points.
(ii) In the Junior Leagues, to meet Tennis Scotland's ratings requirements, a match result shall be reported to Tennis Scotland according to the actual games played in sets

- d) If a team has travelled to compete and the first round of rubbers has not been completed - for this purpose a draw (one set all) is counted as a complete rubber – the match is null and void and must be rearranged in accordance with Rule 15c)

11. Match Results

- a) A win is awarded three points. A draw is awarded two points. A losing team is awarded one point.
- b) Cancellation of a match other than allowed in the League Rules shall result in a penalty of one point and the defaulting team shall additionally forfeit the one point awarded for playing a match
The non-defaulting team shall be awarded the three points for a win and the following score-line will be recorded in its favour:
 - (i) Senior Leagues: 5-0
 - (ii) Junior Leagues: No penalty points shall be awarded against the defaulting team.
- c) In the event of a cancellation, the home team must give three possible dates for rearrangement. If the visitors reject all three proposed dates, they will be deemed to have forfeited the match. The Home team will lose the points if they fail to contact the opponents within five days of the scheduled play date.
- d) If two or more clubs are equal on points after the last match of the season has been played, the League Championship, promotion or relegation shall be decided on the percentage of sets won to sets played, for each team, over the season.
- e) If this does not separate the clubs, the issue shall be decided (in descending order of priority as follows):
 - (i) Most points
 - (ii) Sets won, to sets played percentage
 - (iii) Games won, to games played percentage
 - (iv) A play-off

12. Team Responsibilities

- a) The **home team** shall be responsible for:
 - (i) Confirming the fixture at least one week before it is scheduled to be played.
 - (ii) Providing a minimum of THREE new balls per court where three or four courts are used and FOUR balls per court where fewer courts are used
 - (iii) Providing light refreshment for the visitors
 - (iv) Rearranging dates if there are fixture clashes. Any such request should be made on receiving the fixture lists. The League Secretary must be notified of the rearranged date.
 - (v) Ensuring an adult is present at Junior matches.
- b) The **away team** shall be responsible for:
 - (i) Notifying the home team if there is a change in contact

- (ii) Making every effort to accommodate a legitimate change requested by the home team
- (iii) Arriving 15 minutes before the match is due to begin

13. Floodlighting and Indoor Courts

If available, and if required due to bad light, floodlights should be used to enable the completion of a match within the time limit

If available and when necessary, indoor courts shall be used for match purposes

14. Fixture Dates

- a) All matches shall be played by or on the date shown on the fixture list distributed by the League Secretary
- b) Play by dates are:
 - (i) Mixed – Mondays
 - (ii) Ladies and men – Thursdays
 - (iii) Juniors – Sundays
- c) Clubs may arrange to play fixtures out-with these specific days, by mutual agreement:
 - (i) In situations where clubs enter more teams than the number of courts can cater for, clubs may arrange to play fixtures prior to the scheduled date. These dates must be agreed before the leagues begin as per rule14d)
 - (ii) Where there are obvious difficulties, e.g. school holidays, home fixture clashes or travel distance, a club is free to seek an alternative date. The opposing club must be contacted before the league commences and the League Secretary informed, as soon as possible, of the agreed rearranged date
 - (iii) Clubs are expected to be flexible in their response to a request to play a fixture out-with the scheduled Monday or Thursday
 - (iv) Three options, for the rearranged fixture, must be offered [see Rule 15e]
 - (i) The team requesting an alternative date must email the League Secretary with the new mutually agreed date. This MUST BE DONE before the first round of fixtures is scheduled to be played

15. Postponement

- a) A match can only be postponed due to Scottish Cup or inclement weather conditions. The match shall be awarded to the non-defaulting club in other circumstances.
- b) The League Secretary may, however, allow a fixture to be postponed, at short notice, in certain extreme circumstances. The club seeking a postponement must contact the League Secretary, as soon as possible, with full details of the reason for the request.
- c) If a match is abandoned before the first round has been completed, a re-play must be arranged within five days and played on a mutually convenient date, at the same venue, within two weeks. The League Secretary must be informed of the abandonment and the rearranged date.

- d) A match postponed due to weather conditions, Scottish Cup or as a result of exceptional circumstances before a team has travelled must be rearranged within five days and played, at the same venue, within two weeks.
- e) Regarding Rules 14c(iv),15c and 15d:
 - (i) The home team must offer three dates to play the fixture
 - (ii) If the visitors refuse to accept all three, they will be deemed to have forfeited the match
 - (iii) If the home team fails to contact the visitors within five days, they will be deemed to have forfeited the match
- f) The League Secretary must be informed of the rearranged date.
- g) Teams playing less than 50%of the scheduled matches will be excluded from the league the following year.
- h) All matches must be completed within one week of the last date on the fixture list.

16. Settlement of Disputes

- a) The Disciplinary committee of the Board of Highlands Tennis should be referred to for settlement of disputes in the foregoing rules. Should any member of the committee be a member of a club involved in the dispute the matter should be resolved by the other members
- b) Any complaint/dispute regarding the leagues must be made in writing to the League Secretary within 72 hours of the event.

17. Knock-out Competitions

The above rules apply equally to knock-out competitions organised by Highlands Tennis.

18. Clubs are responsible for their own press releases

19. The overriding principle in applying any of these rules is for all concerned to attempt to play matches and only at the very last resort claim a match by default (updated 12 Nov. 2013)