

## HLTC Winter Tournament 2024-25 – Rules and notes

***To enter the tournament, you must be available to play on both Finals Days, the weekend of Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th April 2025. Finals will only be moved in the event of snow, or torrential rain (or Government diktat !)***

You must be up-to-date with subscription fees at the date of the draw and remain so throughout the tournament. Entry is available to all Adult playing members (apart from Off-peak), Students and Upgraded Juniors.

Each match consists of one long set, which is won by the first player/pair to get 8 games but you must also win by 2 clear games. Eg 8-6 or 9-7, but not 8-7. There are no tie breaks; normal deuces are played as required.

The draw is displayed on the Tournaments Board in the Clubhouse. In early rounds losing players get one second chance by following the RED arrow to the next round while winners follow the GREEN arrow. If there is no RED arrow only the winners go through (following the GREEN arrow) and the loser(s) tournament is over for this year.

Matches must be played by the 'Play by' date shown on the draw. All players are responsible for arranging their matches proactively but if another player/pair has already completed a previous round the SECOND player/pair progressing to the same box is primarily responsible for arranging the match for that round. The 'Chasers' will take this into account when resolving disputes over difficulties arranging matches. Players may appeal to the Chasers for an extension which may be refused at the Chasers' sole discretion. If you need to go beyond the play-by date, please check that this can be accommodated by the person/people waiting to play the winner before approaching the Chasers.

The first 3 or 4 players in each category may be seeded so that they don't play each other in the early rounds.

The handicapping committee (namely Richard Bothwell, Jon Warren, Chrissie Eastmond) has allocated a handicap to each player/pair, based on our knowledge of relative playing standards. The idea is to even things up, but it is not a perfect system (grumbling about the harshness of your handicap is all part of the fun - but will not change anything !). Recording your scores for each match will help us in future years. If we don't know much about you we will tend to err on the side of not making it too difficult. Paper copies of the draw will be in the clubhouse, so please record your scores there as soon as you have played and then contact your next opponents.

### SAFEGUARDING

For Safeguarding reasons singles matches against players aged under 18 (there are some !) must ONLY be played when other adults are present (eg chaperone, or during club play or coaching). The Court Booking system may help you find out who will be there at other times.

### Note

When entering this tournament, you must add your mobile phone number (or best contact number) and email address to the sign-up sheet or the contact list on the board, and note that by doing so you agree to that number and address being shared with other entrants and the tournament "chasers" by being displayed on the tournament board in the Clubhouse. This is the only purpose for which we will gather this information by this method.

Thank you

Tournament Committee

## HANDICAPS EXPLAINED

Here are some notes on the handicapping for those who are less familiar with this format.

The more negative the number, the heavier the handicap. You have to win some points before getting back to zero and then scoring in the normal way.

If you have a split handicap, like -15/0, the heavier (ie more negative) handicap applies in the games when you are serving, but see below. The split handicaps are only ever one point different, so when we write -30/-15 we mean -30 when serving and -15 when receiving. A handicap of -30 means you have to win two points just to get back to zero; -15 means you have to win one point to get back to zero etc.

The lightest handicap available is +30 or +15. We have not always written the + sign, but that is what it means if there is no – (minus) sign at the beginning.

If both players/pairs have negative handicaps then you need to cancel them down as much as possible until at least one of the handicaps is zero. There has always been some uncertainty around what to do when both sides have split handicaps; this year please just cancel the handicaps down and play as follows:

Example 1: -40/-30 plays -30/-15; first the -15 cancels to zero which is just one point. Therefore one point needs to be cancelled off all the other handicaps as well, so you end up with -30/-15 playing -15/0. This should then be treated as **one point difference between you for every game**, so that player 1 starts serving at -15 Love and player 2 starts serving at Love -15; in this case all games start in the Advantage court (ie on the left).

Example 2: -40/-30 plays -40/-30: in this example both players are deemed to be the same standard, so just cancel everything out and play every game from Love All.

Example 3: +15 plays -30/-15: in this example player 1 is already above zero so no cancelling can be done. Player 1 serves starting at +15 to -15 in the deuce court. Player 2 serves starting at -30 to +15 in the advantage court (ie every time they serve, the game starts on the left hand side).

A colourful chart to providing more guidance will be displayed on the board and website.

We are having two divisions of **men's singles**, as follows:

*Elite group*: handicaps will be limited to the range +15 to -15. As the name suggests, this group is recommended for the club's best players. You should only enter this group if you are prepared to play the top players with at most 2 points separating you.

*Standard group*: handicaps will be awarded in the usual way and will typically vary from +15 to -50. The 'elite' players can also enter this division but may receive handicaps as heavy as -60 or -70 as a result.

This is being done because the range of standards leads to prohibitively large handicaps for the top players otherwise.

If you are not sure how to enter or score your matches, ask us or another member. **It is extremely easy to forget the score (or that a game needs to start on the left hand side), so do call it out after every point.**