

WEST CUMBRIA TENNIS LEAGUE RULES Updated 2024

The purpose of the League is to play tennis between the clubs comprising the West Cumbria Tennis League.

1. Men's, Ladies and Mixed Doubles Leagues will be arranged. The Men's and Ladies Doubles Leagues will run concurrently in the first part of the season (usually 10 weeks) followed by the Mixed Doubles League.
2. A team shall consist of either 4 or 6 players, i.e. 2 or 3 pairs. Each pair of a mixed doubles team will consist of 1 man and 1 lady, or two ladies.
3. Clubs may enter as many teams as they can sustain. If sufficient teams are entered, each league may be divided into two or more Divisions. The number of Divisions will be decided at a pre-season meeting, usually held in March, when each club must indicate the number of teams it will enter.
The winners of the lower divisions will be promoted to the next higher division. Varying the number of teams relegated rather than promoted will be the means of evening up the numbers in each division. At the same meeting the charge for each team will be agreed.

a) If the teams in the league remain the same in successive years there will be 1 promotion and 1 relegation between Divisions.

b) If the number of teams in a league increases then any new team enters the lowest division, the previous years Division champions are promoted, but the number relegated will depend on the number of teams entered. There should not be more than 7 teams in a Division and no Division should contain more teams than Division 1.

For Example

i. If 19 teams one year (7:6:6) and 1 new team, the subsequent year the Divisions would be (7:7:6) with no relegation from Division 2.

ii. If 20 teams one year (7:7:6) and 2 new teams, the subsequent year the Divisions would be (6:6:5:5) with 2 relegated from Division 1, 3 relegated from Division 2 and 3 relegated from Division 3.

c) If the number of teams in a league decreases the previous year's champions are promoted, but the numbers relegated will depend on the total numbers entered.

For Example

i. If 19 teams one year (7:6:6) and 1 team drops out, the subsequent year the Divisions would be (6:6:6): if the team drops out of Division 1 there will be 1 relegation from Divisions 1 and 2: if the team drops out of Division 2 there will be 2 relegated from Division 1 and 1 from Division 2: if the team drops out of Division 3 then 2 teams will be relegated from both Divisions 1 and 2.

ii. If 11 teams one year (6:5) and 1 team drops out the subsequent year the

Divisions would be (5:5): if the team drops out of Division 1 there will be 1 relegation from Division 1: if the team drops out of Division 2 there will be 2 relegations from Division 1.

4. If a club enters more than one team in a league, it will be necessary to operate a starred players system. The number of starred players will depend on the number of teams entered.

If the teams contain 6 players, the four best players are to be starred as able to play for the first team only.

Four players are to be starred as able to play for the second team (and the first if necessary), but not for the third or lower teams.

And so on.

If the teams contain 4 players, the best 2 players will be starred as able to play for the first team only, with 2 players starred for each of the subsequent teams below the first team. Starred players are permitted to play down a team to make up numbers but are not entitled to count the score, i.e. if a starred player plays for a lower team the score must be awarded 6-0 6-0 to the opposition.

The Fixtures Secretary must receive the names of the team's starred players either before the season starts or on the first score card returned for a match involving that team. The latter applies whether or not all the starred players took part in that match. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the club being fined £2 for each match that the information is missing.

5. For divisions that involve 6 players per team, a match will involve each pair playing the other sides pair so giving 9 events.

i. All events to be two sets.

ii. Unless there is some reason for choosing an alternative (see iii and iv) the sets should be the first to 6 games with a tie break at 6-6.

iii. Early and late in the season, and on dark evenings, the captains may shorten matches by agreeing before the match commences, to start sets at 1-1 or 2-2.

iv. If a match started in good light conditions playing to 6 sets becomes:

Long running because of evenly matched pairs, or Threatened by significant changes in the weather Then the captains may agree to shorten the second round and/or third round of events starting sets at 1-1 or 2-2: such an agreement must be made before a round of events starts, not during a round of events. If there is no agreement between the captains, start at 1-1.

v. The result of a match will depend on the number of sets won. If there is a tie on sets, then games will be taken into account. A tie on both sets and games gives a draw.

6. For divisions that involve 4 players per team, each couple will play each of the opponents pairs in the best of 2 sets. The sets will be the first to 6 games with a tie break at 6 all.

The result of the match will depend on the number of sets won. If there is a tie in sets, then games will be taken into account. A tie in sets and games gives a draw.

If light becomes an issue, then the above rules apply [see section 5.]

7. The normal starting time for evening matches is 6:30 pm: at that time the prematch knock-up should be underway and by 6:40 pm play should have started. Any pair not ready to start by 6:40 pm shall forfeit the first set. Any pair not ready to start by 7:00 pm shall forfeit both sets of the first match.

8. Captains should observe the following guidelines:

i. The first round of events should start before 6:40 pm.

ii. The second round of events should start at about 7:30 pm.

iii. The third round of events should start at about 8:30 pm.

iv. On clear evenings in mid June, starting the second round may slip to about 7:45 pm and the third round to about 9:00 pm.

v. Early and late in the season, and on dark evenings, the second round should start by about 7:15 pm and the third round about 8:00 pm. The number of games per set should be reduced to meet these approximate timings.

vi. Captains should have spare balls ready to replace any lost.

vii. Captains should ensure that play is not held up by unacceptable behaviour.

9. Two points will be awarded for a win, one for a draw and none for a lost match. If in accordance with rules 10 and 15 a team has a walkover then they will be awarded 2 points as well as full sets and games. The opposing team will be deducted 2 points.

In the event of two or more teams finishing the season with the same number of points, then the league position will be determined by the greatest number of sets won overall. Should sets also be equal then the total number of games won overall shall be considered.

However, if any of the tied teams has had a walkover awarded during the season or has had a match with a result where not all the sets were completed, then the league position must be decided by a match to be played between the 2 teams. This will be the case for the top and bottom of the league table.

10. Each match must be played to a result. When no result is available for a match that has not been finished due to bad weather/poor visibility, the match must be completed at a later date to be agreed by the captains. Incomplete events must be continued from where they left off. Normally matches should be completed using the

same players. Should this prove impossible due to work/holiday commitments the captains should try and negotiate mutually acceptable substitutes. Should no agreement be possible, the matter must be referred to the League Management Committee (Para 16).

a) Matches should only be postponed due to bad weather or in accordance with Rule 15.

b) Postponement due to bad weather must be provided to the opposing team's captain no later than 5pm on the day of the match. If this does not occur then it will be considered a no show and a walkover may be claimed.

If the postponement is due to bad weather the home captain must offer at least 2 alternative dates, (at least one must be a week day) that doesn't already clash with any of the away team's current league fixtures.

Every effort should be made to complete matches and full fixtures particularly when they effect the championship and relegation positions.

11. Whenever possible Division 1 matches will be played on a Tuesday evening and Division 2 to be played on a Thursday evening. However, each club must indicate, to the Fixtures Secretary, a second evening on which they can stage their home matches: the need for this obvious when a club enters more than two teams, but it is sometimes helpful in preparing a sensible fixtures list.

12. Clubs should provide at least two courts for matches, drinks and snacks.

13. Most clubs have three courts available for matches. When only two courts are available the home team captain must inform the away team captain and offer to start the match earlier than 6:30 pm in order to maximise the possibility of completion on the night. The away team captain has the right to choose how many pairs he can get to the venue by the agreed time. At the beginning and the end of the season, captains can negotiate an earlier starting time if they wish.

14. If the captain can only raise two eligible pairs for a match the match may proceed with the missing pair forfeiting their sets 6-0. To increase the amount of tennis played, a captain may use 1 ineligible pair, but they will be deemed to have lost all their events. Ladies making up men teams will be deemed as eligible.

15. If a captain cannot raise a team for the scheduled night he may approach the opposing captain, at the latest by 6pm the previous night, requesting a postponement. Failure to inform the opposing captain of inability to raise a team will result in a £2 fine.

If a postponement is requested, then bearing in mind (i) The purpose of the League and (ii) the last sentence of Rule 10, the opposing captain may either (a) offer to lend player(s) to enable the match to go ahead (in this case all the sets and games involving the lent player(s) will be assumed to be won by the opposing team), (b) claim a walkover or (c) offer 3 other dates which 1 can be at the weekend. In the event of further problems the opposing captain may claim a walkover.

If a walkover is to be claimed then both captains should notify the Fixtures Secretary.

16. Match results shall be entered on the approved score cards and signed by both captains. The winning captain shall forward a copy of the score card to the Fixtures

Secretary within 24 hours of the match being completed either by email or whatsapp. The Fixtures Secretary will enter the results as set out on the approved score sheet (so eg if the sets or games totals are not completed they will be entered as 0). If the match is not completed on the day scheduled, or postponed, the Fixtures Secretary should be informed.

All communications to the Fixtures Secretary should be by email or phone.

17. A League Management Committee consisting of the League Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Fixtures Secretary will decide on any disputes arising during the season. In the event of the officers' club being involved, independent arbiters will be appointed.

18. All clubs taking part in the West Cumbria Tennis League must be registered with the LTA.

The above rules were agreed at the West Cumbria Leagues' AGM on Tuesday 5 March 2024