

Purpose of revision: We have re-ordered and re-worded the rules with the aim of making them easier to read and to understand. It has not been the intention to alter the meaning of any rule.

NORTH DEVON LTA LEAGUE RULES 2018, amended 2023.

1. TITLE.

The League shall be called 'The North Devon Tennis League'. It will be administered by the General Committee elected by the A.G.M.

2. AFFILIATION.

The League is open to all clubs located within the North Devon and Torridge District Council areas and affiliated to the North Devon Lawn Tennis Association, and registered with the Lawn Tennis Association.

3. SECTIONS AND TEAMS.

The league has three separate sections – Men's, Ladies' and Mixed. No mixed matches are permitted in Men's or Ladies' competitions, unless ineligible player(s) is(are) fielded (see rule 18). Clubs may enter one or more teams in each section.

4. FEES.

Each team entering shall pay the entry fee set by the League at its Annual General Meeting.

5. PLAYERS.

Players may only represent one club and should be a bona fide paid up member of that club. A club found to be in breach of this rule would be fined £20, and all points from matches using a non-eligible player would be deducted.

6. MATCHES.

a) Dates of League matches will be arranged by ND LTA before 1st April.

b) Matches may be rearranged before the CLUB'S first match. After that date there can be no postponements except for bad weather, but, with the agreement of both captains, matches may be played before the fixed date or, in exceptional circumstances, at a later date, if approved by the Committee.

c) Clubs with two or more teams in the same division must complete their intra-club fixtures not later than 30 June. No points will be awarded for matches played after this date unless there have been extenuating circumstances and permission given by the Fixtures Secretary.

More flexibility can be given to dates in Vet's and Mixed leagues.

7. PAIRINGS.

Each team shall consist of two doubles pairs. (See also Rule 18).

8. NOMINATIONS.

Where a club enters more than one team in a section, all teams other than the lowest must be nominated. A minimum of 4 players must be nominated in each team. Nominations must reach the Fixtures Secretary before a club's first match.

In the event of no nominations being received prior to the club's first match, the players appearing in the team will score no points until nominations are received. If a nominated player doesn't play in at least ONE match during the season, the team will be fined 12 (division 1)/ 8 points (other divisions) at the end of the season. Nominated players may be replaced during the season.

9. STATUS.

Any player nominated for a team may not play in a lower team during that season unless he/she is transferred (see Rule 10). Any player may play in a higher team TWICE in a season without altering his/her status. If a player plays THREE matches for any higher team(s), he /she shall not be eligible to play for a lower team in the current season. If a player has played up three times then plays for a lower team, their points won't count and the team will be fined 3 points in division 1, or 2 points in all other divisions unless they have been declared as an ineligible player beforehand, in which case the team will not be fined. (See Rule 18).

10. CHANGES TO NOMINATIONS.

Should a club decide a player has been nominated for too high a team, that player may be transferred to a team below provided that (a) he/she has not played more than twice for the higher team, (b) where fewer than four players remain in the higher team another player is nominated in his/her place. The Fixtures Secretary must be informed of the transfer BEFORE the player plays for a lower team. A transferred player may not play for a higher team during the current season.

11. COURSE OF PLAY.

Each match will consist of 4 rubbers.

Division 1 – Each rubber being the best of three sets, with a tie-break at six games all in the first two sets. Third set to be a championship tie-break set.

Other divisions - Each rubber being the best of two sets, with a tie-break at six games all in each set.

12. BALLS.

The home team must provide a minimum of six new balls for each match. All balls must correspond to LTA standard.

13. ORDER OF PLAY.

Each pair will play two rubbers (one against each opposing pair). Visiting team captains have the choice of court and order of play. The home team changes courts after the completion of the first rubbers (i.e. after four sets have been completed). In the event of a club with floodlights, the home team will make the decision as to whether or not they will be used; if a decision has been made to use them, a time must be stated before the match starts as to when they will be switched on.

14. SCORING.

Division 1 – Each match is worth 24 points – 2 points per set, 6 points per rubber. A straight set win is worth 6 points (2 points per set plus 2 for the win). The championship tie-break set is worth 2 points, thus a win on a championship tie-break is worth 4 points (2 per set to winning team, 2 to the opposing team for their set won).

Other divisions - Each match is worth 16 points – 2 points per set (i.e. 4 points per rubber).

15. STARTING TIMES.

Matches shall start at 6.30pm, (or earlier/later if agreed). If players arrive between 6.45 and 7.00pm, the late pair(s) shall forfeit the first set. If the arrival is between 7.00 and 7.15pm, the first rubber(s) shall be forfeited. If the arrival is after 7.15pm, the offending team shall be deemed to have given a walkover.

16. BAD WEATHER/ BAD LIGHT.

a) BEFORE THE MATCH- The only reason for postponement shall be bad weather. The decision shall be made by the home captain with due regard for the safety of players. An alternative venue can be offered to the away team. Only if they are in agreement can the match be played. If costs are involved, they shall be shared between the teams. The change of venue should be indicated on the score card.

The home team captain is responsible for making sure that the Fixtures Secretary is notified of any postponement within one week. Failure to do so will result in the home team being fined two points.

The rearranged match must be played as soon as possible (see also rule 19). Three dates are to be offered by the home captain, (at least two of these dates must be over separate weeks) and the agreed date notified to the Fixtures Secretary within two weeks of the original fixture. Failure to do so may result in the match being awarded to the away team. This would be regarded as a walkover (See rule 17).

If there is no response from the away team, the home team should notify the Fixtures Secretary. They shall be awarded the match at the discretion of the committee. This would be regarded as a walkover (See rule 17).

b) DURING THE MATCH- FINISHING TIME AGREED. In the event of bad light or weather threatening to prevent the completion of a match, a decision regarding the time to stop play MUST be reached BEFORE the commencement of the second rubbers. Where a set is not completed, and the agreed finishing time is reached, play shall stop as soon as

i) at the completion of a game, each pair has had an equal number of completed service games in that set, OR

ii) at the completion of a game, one pair has a lead of 2 or more games.

The points for that set shall then be determined by the number of games won – 2 points to the leading pair or 1 point each if the games are equal.

The points for any sets not begun shall be shared.

Division 1 – If the championship tie-break set has been started, then a minimum of 8 points must have been played, and a total of 5 points, with a margin of at least 2 points, will win the set. If this is not reached – or the championship tie-break set has not been started - the points shall be shared.

c) DURING THE MATCH- FINISHING TIME NOT AGREED OR NOT REACHED. An abandoned match is one in which bad weather forces play to be stopped before its completion and before an agreed finishing time (see rule 16b). The decision to abandon must be by mutual agreement between the captains and must be made with due regard for the safety of the players.

If the captains are unable to agree whether or not to abandon a match, then the match will be stopped and resumed from the same point at a later date with the same players. The Fixtures Secretary must be informed. Captains should then follow the same procedures as for postponed matches (see Rule 16a).

If the match is abandoned with the agreement of both captains then EITHER

i) Where two rubbers of a match have been completed at the time of abandonment, points won in completed sets shall stand. Remaining, undecided points shall be shared, including unfinished sets, even if one pair is leading. OR

ii) Where fewer than two rubbers have been completed at the time of abandonment, the match must start from scratch at a later date, mutually agreed by the clubs. Players in the rearranged match do not necessarily need to be those that played in the abandoned match. Captains should follow the same procedures as for postponed matches (see Rule 16a).

17. WALKOVERS.

Should, on the day of a match, a team fail to turn up; a walkover shall be given to the opposing side. Division 1 – The team giving the walkover shall have 12 points taken from its League total. The team offended against shall receive 12 points, or the number of points won in the return fixture, whichever is the greater.

Other divisions - The team giving the walkover shall have 8 points taken from its League total. The team offended against shall receive 8 points, or the number of points won in the return fixture, whichever is the greater.

It is the responsibility of both teams to notify the Fixtures Secretary within one week of any walkover. If notification is not received within the given time, the offending team(s) will be fined two points.

If a team gives two walkovers during the season, it will be automatically relegated at the end of the season. No other team will be automatically relegated from that division (See Rule 21).

If a team gives more than two walkovers during the season, it shall be suspended from the League for the rest of that season and all points won or lost by it shall be declared void and there will be no automatic relegation from that division (See rule 21). That team will have to re-apply for admittance to the lowest division the following season.

18. INCOMPLETE TEAMS.

If a team is unable to provide a complete team, they may field one pair plus an ineligible pair (DECLARING THIS BEFORE THE MATCH) whose scores would not count. Alternatively, division1 – they may field only one pair, and start the match 12 points to nil down, and they would also be fined 6 points.

Other divisions - they may field only one pair and start the match 8 points to nil down, and they will also be fined 4 points.

19. SEASON DEADLINE.

Where matches have been postponed as a result of bad weather, the re-arranged matches must be played before 30th September. This may be extended by the Fixtures Secretary in extenuating circumstances.

20. SCORE CARDS.

The captain of the home team is responsible for submitting the result of the match on-line to the League Planner. You will need full names of the players and the full score of all rubbers, sets, and games won or lost.

This should be done as soon as possible, but definitely within two weeks of the conclusion of the match.

No results will be accepted if names of all players are not included. A record of the score and names of players should be retained by both captains. The captain of the away team should confirm the result on-line.

21. LEAGUE PLACINGS, PROMOTION AND RELEGATION.

a) LEAGUE PLACINGS- League placing shall be decided by the points scored during the season.

In the event of a 'Tie' between two or more teams, League placing will be decided in the following order:

i) the team with the most wins:

ii) the team who has the best game average (games won divided by games lost).

iii) the results from the two matches played against each other; and finally

iv) if still level – a play off on neutral ground arranged by the Fixtures Secretary under North Devon Knock – Out Cup rules.

b) PROMOTION AND RELEGATION- Promotion and relegation shall be

i) one automatic up and one automatic down in all divisions

ii) the second placed team in each division may challenge the second from bottom team in the immediate division above for a place in that division the following season, the loser will play in the division below.

Each challenge match in all divisions will be played under KO/Pete Stacey rules i.e. one point will be awarded for each rubber won, making a total of four points. Each rubber will be the best of three sets – the third set being a championship tie-break. If the number of sets is equal the winner shall be the team with the most number of games won. If the match is still drawn, then the challenge will be deemed to have failed and the team in the higher division will retain their place for the following season.

Pairs will have to consist of players who have played at least two of the team's fixtures that season, or players from a lower team who have played two matches, except the lowest, or only, team, when players need only to have played once.

A player eligible to play for a team at the completion of that team's matches shall remain eligible to play for that team in any future challenge match, regardless of which team he/she has played for after the said completion.

A challenged match declined leads to relegation for that team.

All challenge matches will be played at the Tarka Tennis Centre, date(s) to be confirmed at the Pre-Season Meeting.

Once the divisions have been set, a team withdrawing from the League at any time will be counted as the team being automatically relegated from that division.

22. RESTRUCTURING.

Varying numbers within the League may require restructuring of the divisions. Division sizes shall be as large as possible, but no larger than 8 teams per division. Where smaller divisions are unavoidable, those divisions, where possible, shall be placed below larger divisions.

23. TROPHIES.

League division winners shall hold the respective trophies for one year. They will be signed for, and the club will be responsible for returning them to the Fixtures Secretary by the date specified by the NDLTA committee.

24. MOBILE PHONES

Phones must be switched off during matches (unless otherwise agreed beforehand).

25. The Fixtures Secretary has full powers to enforce the League rules with regard to matches. A written appeal may be made to the Committee regarding the enforcement of the rules. The decision of the Committee is final.

26. The Committee have the power to suspend or expel any team or member of the League whose conduct in their opinion is detrimental to the interests of the League.

27. ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS.

A penalty of £20.00 per meeting will be incurred by any club not represented at either the AGM or the Pre-Season Meeting. Any fine must be paid within 14 days following non-attendance or that club could be suspended from the League (for that season) - subject to the committee's discretion.