

# PORTSMOUTH DISTRICT MASTERS LEAGUE

## COMPETITION RULES

### 1. MANAGEMENT

The management of the league shall be in the hands of the committee of the P & LTA (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 all clubs affiliated to the Portsmouth and District L.T.A., situated within a 30 mile radius of Portsmouth and subject to Committee approval. Clubs desiring to take part should forward their application to the League Secretary.

### 4. ENTRIES

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

### 5. TEAMS

All teams shall consist of four players (2 pairs) in all leagues – ladies and mixed – summer and winter.

### 6. MATCHES

(a) A match will consist of four rubbers. In the mixed masters, one round of mixed doubles matches (two matches), and one round of ladies doubles/mens doubles (two matches). In the ladies masters, two pairs to play each of the opposing two pairs.

(b) 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 sets are equal the team winning the majority of games shall be declared the winner, if the games are also equal the result shall be declared a tie.

(c) Three points will be awarded to a team winning a match on rubbers (eg, 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. (eg, rubbers, sets and games equal)

(d) All matches will be the best of 3 sets. The first TWO sets will be normal sets with a first to 7 point tie-break at 6 games all. The third deciding set (if required) will be a match (or championship) tie-break (FIRST to 10 POINTS) as opposed to a normal set. This tie-break will count as a normal set won or lost and scored by 1 game to 0 when adding up the results.

(e) All matches summer and winter must have start times between 9.30am and 12.30pm

(f) 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.

(g) The order of play for 4 rubber matches shall be as follows:

Mixed Masters

Round 1 – 1<sup>st</sup> mixed pair plays 1st mixed pair. 2nd mixed pair plays 2nd mixed pair.

Round 2 – One Ladies match, one Mens match.

Ladies 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.

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

(i) If a player endures 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 championship 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 League Secretary to arrange for teams to play on a home and away basis against each other. In deciding the amount of teams in a division, the League Secretary will be mindful of attempting to keep numbers as even as possible.

b) No more than two teams from the same club will be allowed to play in any one division.

(c) 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 League Secretary.

(d) 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 League Secretary on request. Trophies and Cups remain the possession of The P&D LTA at all times.

## **8. FIXTURES**

(a) All fixtures will be set by the league. Dates for fixtures will be mutually agreed between clubs or be designated by the League. There will be no more than 8 fixtures per team in any one season. The fixtures and results will be displayed on the Associations website.

(b) Start times for each match will be determined by the home team.

(c) All summer fixtures will be played between April and August, except with the consent of the League Secretary. All winter fixtures will be played between October and March, except with the consent of the League Secretary.

(d) Clubs with two teams in the same division must play their fixture by 31<sup>st</sup> May in the Summer Leagues and by 30<sup>th</sup> November in the Winter Leagues.

(e) Once the initial fixtures are published clubs have until 31<sup>st</sup> May in the summer and 30<sup>th</sup> November in the winter to rearrange allocated fixtures as appropriate subject to complying with 8(b), 8(c) and 8(d) after which rule 9(f) will apply to any postponements.

((f) 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 a walkover score against themselves, and possibly gaining a “losing” point.

(g) Clubs with only one court will play their home matches away and pay the expenses of these matches.

(h) The Home captain should confirm by phone, text or email a forthcoming match no less than three days and ideally at least seven days in advance clearly stating venue and time of match. This should be acknowledged by the away side within 24 hours of receiving such confirmation.

(h) It is the Home Captain's responsibility to call off the match if it is clear it cannot be or is unlikely to be able to be commenced due to adverse weather conditions. Consideration should be given to the travelling time and length of journey of the visiting team.

(i) If either captain will not be supervising a fixture they must notify the opposing captain with an alternative name, giving contact details.

## **9. POSTPONEMENTS/RE-ARRANGEMENTS OF FIXTURES**

(a) Fixtures may only be rearranged by mutual agreement of the clubs involved AND with the consent of the League Secretary. NO fixtures can be rearranged after the end of MAY in the Summer Leagues or after the end of NOVEMBER in the Winter Leagues, except in the case of bad weather.

(b) If a fixture is not played due to BAD WEATHER, the HOME team must contact the away team within ONE WEEK in order to rearrange the match otherwise the fixture is forfeited to the away side as in rule 9(f) except no points will be deducted. If the two teams cannot agree on a new date, then the home side must offer THREE different dates to the away team. Should the away team not accept one of these, then the HOME team will be offered a walk over as in rule 9(f) except no points will be deducted.

Rules 9(c)(i) and 9(c)(ii) should not be needed but will remain part of these rules.

(c)(i) If a fixture is not played due to a team being unable to fulfill the original fixture (“non-appearing team”) other than for bad weather and it has been agreed with the league secretary to re-arrange the match, it is incumbent on the “non-appearing” team’s captain to contact the “appearing” team within ONE WEEK in order to rearrange the match otherwise the fixture is forfeited to the “appearing” team as in rule 9(f). If the two teams cannot agree on a new date, then “appearing” team will offer THREE different dates to the “non-appearing” team. If the “non-appearing” team is unable to accept one of these dates, then the “appearing” team will be offered a walkover as in rule 9(f). BOTH teams must advise the League Secretary of the new date or their failure to agree.

(c)(ii) If a fixture is re-arranged in accordance with 9(c)(i) due to a team being unable to fulfil a scheduled match, the new date shall constitute the agreed fixture date. If, however, the fixture is subsequently not played due to adverse weather conditions the side who were unable to fulfil the original fixture shall forfeit the match as detailed in 9(f) except no points will be deducted. If either side are unable to fulfil a re-arranged agreed fixture date, the side not appearing on the new date shall concede the match as detailed in 9(d) irrespective of whether they could have fulfilled the original fixture date.

(d) For matches interrupted by weather after commencement, the decision to attempt to complete them or to abandon would ideally be made jointly by both captains. However, if captains cannot agree then a “sitting out” time limit will be imposed. Therefore, if play is curtailed (no matter how many times) and teams are off court for more than 30 minutes in total and play cannot be resumed at that time, then the match is abandoned and the current score used to determine the outcome in accordance with rule 9(e).

(e) If at the cessation of play all four rubbers have not been completed, then in the event of first round matches being completed, all rubbers, sets and games played in the second round shall be ignored and the match decided on the completed round with rubbers, then sets, and games won deciding the result. In the event of the first round not being completed, the match is to be rearranged.

(f) If a fixture is NOT played (other than for bad weather) the team responsible for the fixture not being played (eg: by not being able to field a team or the home side not providing courts available for the match or any other reason that could have reasonably been avoided) must award a walkover to their opponents. A club receiving a walkover shall be awarded a winning score of 4-0 in rubbers, 8 - 0 in sets, and 48 - 0 in games. The team conceding the walkover will have the result recorded against them of 0-4 0-8 0-48 and have ONE point deducted per walkover given. In addition they may be relegated at the end of the season at the discretion of the Committee.

## **10. 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 remain unplayed

## **11. 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) Ladies must be 45 years old or older, Men must be 50 years old or older at the commencement of a match

(c) In any one season, a player who has played more than once for the same team or played more than once 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

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

(d) No player may play for more than one club in the same season except that a player who has played in the ladies league for one club may represent another in the mixed league and visa versa.

## **12. 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 club's 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\_

## **13. LEAGUE POSITIONS**

In the event of two or more teams being equal on points they shall be placed in the table firstly according to the percentage of rubbers won to rubbers played, then according to the percentage of sets won to sets played, then according to the 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.

## **14. MATCH RESULTS**

(a) The FULL DETAILS of each match, signed by both captains of both teams, shall be forwarded to the League Secretary on the appropriate match cards (available from the website) within 48 hours of completion. BOTH CAPTAINS MUST SEND IN A MATCH CARD.

(b) The match details must be recorded in FULL.

(c) If a match is conceded, the League Secretary must be informed by BOTH clubs.

(d) Failure to complete the match details correctly will mean that the result will be void.

## **15. 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 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.

## **16. 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 11. This does not apply to the top divisions in each category of the leagues.

## **17. VARIATION OF THE RULES**

(a) These rules will apply to both summer and winter leagues and are available on the Associations web-site or from the League Secretary

(b) 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.

**9th March 2017**