

WIRRAL TENNIS LEAGUE RULES

18 November 2013
Following AGM

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CONSTITUTION

1. CONSTITUTION:

- 1.1 **Name:** The league shall be known as **Wirral Tennis League**. A sponsors name may be added with approval of the A.G.M.
- 1.2 **The league will comprise of a mixed, mens and ladies league. For mixed league playing rules see sections 5-8. For mens and ladies playing rules see sections 9-12**
- 1.3 **Clubs:** The league shall be open to tennis clubs, affiliated to Cheshire LTA in the district, subject to acceptance by the Committee.
- 1.4 **Teams per club:** There shall be no limit to the acceptance of teams a club may enter in the league, subject to compliance to rule 1.2 and to the discretion of the Committee.
- 1.5 **Subscriptions:** Subscriptions agreed at the AGM will be due for payment by 28th February before the season starts. A 100% surcharge will be imposed in the event of late payment.
- 1.6 **Applications/Resignations:** Applications by new teams and resignations from the league must be received by Fixture Secretary and acknowledged using email, by 1st December.

2 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

- 2.1 **Quorum:** A quorum for any General Meeting shall be 50% of member clubs. Each club will be required to send at least 1 representative to attend the AGM (for the purpose of reaching a quorum, members of the EC will not be permitted to represent their respective clubs who will be required to ensure at least one other member attends). If any member club fails to provide a representative for the AGM they will be fined £10.00 for each team in the Mixed, Men's & Ladies Leagues.
- 2.2 **Reports:** The AGM shall receive reports on the year and adopt accounts.
- 2.3 **Voting:** Each Club represented shall be entitled to one vote. No club shall be entitled to vote unless its subscriptions have been paid. The Chairman shall be entitled to a casting vote.
- 2.4 **Notices of motion:** The AGM shall consider any notices of motion which must be made in writing and received by the Hon. Secretary by 1st October.
- 2.5 **Election of officers, committee members and auditors:** The AGM shall elect Officers, Committee members and Auditors.
- 2.6 **Annual subscriptions:** The AGM shall agree subscriptions for the coming season.

3 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

- 3.1 **Composition:** The league shall be administered by an Executive Committee consisting of Chairman, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, Fixture/Results Secretary, 3 Committee members, plus one member from each club.
- 3.2 **Quorum:** A quorum for committee meeting is 4.
- 3.3 **Responsibilities:** The EC to conduct the affairs of the league and fill casual vacancies.
- 3.4 **AGM date:** The EC to call the Annual General Meeting not later than 30th November.
- 3.5 **EGM:** The EC have power to call Extraordinary General Meeting or do so at the request of 5 clubs. Such requests must be made by email to the Hon. Secretary and should specify the reason for the same.

4 INFRINGEMENT & INTERPRETATION OF RULES:

- 4.1 **Dispute procedure:** Any dispute on any matter connected with the league shall be reported to the Hon. Secretary or Fixture Secretary, by email. The executive committee shall consider such disputes and their decision is final.
- 4.2 **Penalties:** The committee shall at its discretion penalise clubs appropriately for any infringement of the rules primarily based on the standard penalty tariff (see appendix A).
- 4.3 **Authority for interpretation of rules:** The executive committee shall be the absolute and sole authority for the interpretation of these rules. The decision of the executive committee upon any questions of the interpretation or any matter affecting the league and not provided for by these rules shall be final and binding on all clubs.
- 4.4 **Ineligibility to vote:** When a matter arises in Committee which relates to the infringement of a rule by a club or which is specific to the interests of an individual club, then if the Chairman is a member of that club, the meeting will elect a Chairman from amongst its members present who do not belong to that club for the duration of the particular matter at the meeting. When a vote is required, a member of the committee belonging to that club shall not vote and cannot be considered as part of the quorum required.

5. MIXED LEAGUE PLAYING SECTION (see Sections 5-8):

- 5.1 **Composition of divisions:** Each division of the league shall consist of 8 teams or less except the lowest division, which may exceed this number at the discretion of the committee. Matches to played on a home and away basis.

5.2 How position in division decided: Points won shall determine the final position in each division. In the event of a tie on points, the number of matches won shall decide. If the position remains tied then the number of matches drawn shall decide. In the event of a decision still not being reached, the ratio of sets won to lost shall decide. In the event of a decision still not being reached, the ratio of games (in completed sets) won to lost shall decide.

5.3 Promotion & relegation/re-election: At the end of the season the top team in all divisions shall win promotion to the next higher division (also see 5.3.2). The bottom team in all divisions shall be relegated to the next lower division (also see 5.3.2). The bottom team in the lowest division shall be considered by the committee for re-election to the league.

5.3.1 If as a result of failing to fulfil fixtures a team is penalised 16 points (equivalent to two complete fixtures) or more during a season then that team shall automatically be up for re-election at the AGM following the end of that season.

5.3.2 There will be a play off between the team finishing 2nd in each division and the team finishing 2nd to bottom in the division higher. The winners will play in the higher division the following season. The format will be:

5.3.2.1 To be played on the 1st Saturday after summer bank holiday (subject to confirmation) at one venue.

5.3.2.2 Rubbers of 2 tie break sets. If 8 sets all then team winning most games wins, if still equal then team winning most games in 1st mixed, then 2nd mixed etc.

5.3.2.3 ~~Player qualification: played 4 matches in team~~ **Player qualification: played 4 matches in team minimum of 25% of matches for club in team (or lower team). Normally 4 in 14.**

5.4 Team Format ~~Specific to mixed league:~~ Teams in the mixed league will consist of 4 gents and 4 ladies. They will play 2 gents doubles, 2 ladies doubles and 4 mixed doubles. Substitutes will not be allowed and no player may play in more than one gents/ladies doubles and one mixed doubles. A higher team cannot turn out a player or players short whilst at the same time a lower team has a full complement of players. Failure to comply with this rule may result in the loss of all points gained by the lower teams. The league may also take further action against the offending team if it is deemed appropriate.

~~**5.5 Specific to ladies & mens leagues:** Teams in the ladies and mens leagues will consist of 4 players. They will play 2 crossover doubles. The 1st pairs of each team will play each other before crossing to play the 2nd pair.~~

5.5 Format of rubbers: Each rubber will consist of the best of three sets with the tiebreak operating at 6 games all in all 3 sets. ~~However there is an option, which if taken will apply to all rubbers in the match, for the 3rd set to be a match tiebreak (1st to 10 with 2 clear points) providing both captains agree before the start of a match.~~ First round rubbers may not be left uncompleted to allow second round rubbers to be played.

5.6 Points scored (also see 13.5 Result cards):

Rubber score (sets)	League points
2-0	2-0
1-1	1-1
1-0	1-0
2-1	1 ¹ / ₃ -2 ² / ₃

All sets must be played correctly to count.

Teams must not agree to halve an unplayed rubber.

5.7 Match result: The match result is decided on points.

6. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY/REGISTRATION:

6.1 All players must be bona fide playing members and no player shall be allowed to play for more than one club in the mixed league and more than one club (which may be a different club) in the men's/ladies league in any season, unless special dispensation has been obtained by email from the league.

6.2 Registration: To be eligible to play in a match a player must be registered before a match or if they play at bottom of club then the day after the match.

6.3: Registrations:

6.3.1 New registration: It is the clubs responsibility to ensure the player is not registered with any other club.

6.3.2 Transfer: The player's new club to notify Fixture Secretary and CC all contacts from previous club at least 48 hours before match in which they play.

6.3.3 Deregistration: The players club to notify Fixture Secretary.

6.3.4 Format: Details to be emailed to fixture secretary in following format:

(Register/Transfer/Delete) player's Forename and Surname (to/to/from) Club name (from Club name)

7. RANKING:

7.1 Order: Players must be played in order of doubles ability.

7.2 Ranking by club in advance: A club may submit (via email) players ranking to the fixture secretary:

7.2.1 Before the start of a ranking period: a list of players in ranking order.

7.2.2 Before a player plays their first match, the players name and whom they are ranked immediately below.

7.2.3 A player not ranked by 7.2.1 or 7.2.2 will be automatically ranked

7.3 **Automatic ranking:** For the mixed league players will be ranked automatically according to the position they play in the first match in which they play for each half of the season. The automatic ranking will start from the beginning of season and start again for second half of season (normally league match 1 and league match 8, adjusted if not 8 teams in division). A new player will be ranked above the highest ranked player who plays below him/her in his/her first match.

7.4 **Position a player can play within club team:** Players must be played in order of ranking with the exception that a player may be swapped for a match with the next higher ranked player playing.

8. MATCH DATES:

8.1 **Match dates:** Matches must be played on the date stated, weather permitting. In the case of inclement weather, captains may agree to postpone the match. Where captains cannot agree it will be at the discretion of the home captain as to whether play can take place or continue due to bad weather or unplayable courts. Where a club has more than one team playing at home and a teams match is postponed then it must be the lowest teams match. In exceptional circumstances a match may be played earlier than scheduled providing both clubs agree and the new date is emailed to the fixture secretary before the match is played.

8.2 **Order of play:** All rubbers will be played in numerical order except where agreed by the Captains. Gents and ladies doubles will be played first. The mixed doubles pairings will be played in numerical sequence i.e. the No. 1 man on the night will play with the number 1 lady on the night etc. If a player has not turned up by the time the mixed are played then it will be the lowest mixed that is forfeited and players move up as appropriate to replace the absent player.

8.3 **Start of play: Mixed league:** All games in the mixed league should commence at 6.15p.m. If a couple are not ready to start play 20 minutes later and their opponents are, they shall forfeit the 1st set to their opponents 6 games to 0 and if they are still not ready to play after a further 20 minutes they shall forfeit the second set 6 games to 0. If a mixed pairing is not available to play when their opponents are, they shall forfeit the event (subject to 8.2 above). This rule will still apply irrespective of the availability of courts unless the Captains have agreed otherwise. The provisions of this rule shall also apply to re arranged matches.

~~8.3.1 **Ladies/mens league:** All games in the ladies and mens league will be played on the home teams chosen time. Evening matches start as outlined in rule 8.3.1. Sunday morning matches will start at 10.00am or 10.30am as notified to the fixture secretary prior to fixtures being arranged. If a couple are not ready to start play 20 minutes after scheduled start time and their opponents are, they shall forfeit the 1st set to their opponents 6 games to 0 and if they are still not ready to play after a further 20 minutes they shall forfeit the second set 6 games to 0.~~

8.4 **Balls:** The Home club will provide a minimum of three new I.T.F. approved balls per 1st round rubber. The committee shall have the power, at their discretion, to fine offending clubs with the appropriate fee.

8.5 **Match considered completed:** A match will be considered to be completed if weather or bad light causes play to be suspended and either a minimum of 16 sets have been completed or both captains agree (indicated by offered/agreed rearranged dates left blank). If not completed the uncompleted rubbers only must be replayed. Rubbers/sets may only be conceded in the event ~~of illness or injury a player being~~ **unable to continue** and with the consent of the opposing captain or his nominated deputy.

8.6 **Unstarted/unfinished matches:** In the event of a match being postponed or unfinished in the mixed league then 3 dates (at least 2 dates must be on different days of the week) must be offered by the home club on the night of the match and the away club must accept one of the 3 dates offered within 3 days, otherwise they receive nil (zero) points for uncompleted rubbers and the home club receive full points for rubbers not completed.

The agreed date or the three offered dates must be filled in on the results card. If not on the card the agreed date must be communicated to fixture secretary and home club by the away club within 3 days. All postponed or unfinished matches, other than the final match, must be rearranged to be played within 3 weeks of scheduled date. The final match, if postponed, must be rearranged within 2 weeks of the last scheduled match.

8.7 **Player eligibility for rearranged match:**

In the event of a rearrangement of an unfinished match, no player ranked higher than the highest ranked player in the original fixture can play in the re arranged match.

Ranking for a rearranged match is taken from the ranking period of the original match. I.e. a match postponed in 1st ranking period (1st half season) must use ranking from 1st ranking period even though it may be played in 2nd ranking period (2nd half season). Subject to previous statement, ranking at the time the match is played will be used.

Subject to the above a rearranged match will be used for ranking purposes.

8.8 Sunset/bad light and floodlights:

8.8.1 **Sunset/bad light:** Subject to rule 8.8.2, play will continue for 30 minutes after sunset (subject to any game being completed) unless all 4 players are in agreement to continue after this time. (A game is defined as including a tiebreak). Play can only cease prior to this time if all 4 players agree.

8.8.2 **Floodlights:** Clubs having the use of floodlights may use floodlights to play or complete unfinished rubbers. Rubbers started on a court not having floodlights can only be switched to a floodlit court if one is available at the time at which it is unable to continue that rubber on an unlit court. In no circumstances may a rubber be switched in preference to an unstarted rubber. Once a club has advised the league of its intentions to use floodlights, it must do so for all clubs on a consistent basis. The league will advise all clubs (via website) of those clubs who will be using floodlights prior to the start of the season.

The fixture secretary must be advised of any change of use from the previous season by 31 March.

9. MENS and LADIES LEAGUES PLAYING SECTION (see Sections 9-12):

9.1 **Composition of divisions:** Each division of the league shall consist of 8 teams or less except the lowest division, which may exceed this number at the discretion of the committee. Matches to played on a home and away basis.

9.2 **How position in division decided:** Points won shall determine the final position in each division.

In the event of a tie on points, the number of matches won shall decide.

If the position remains tied then the number of matches drawn shall decide.

In the event of a decision still not being reached, the ratio of sets won to lost shall decide.

In the event of a decision still not being reached, the ratio of games (in completed sets) won to lost shall decide.

9.3 **Promotion & relegation/re-election:** At the end of the season the top team in all divisions shall win promotion to the next higher division (also see 9.3.2). The bottom team in all divisions shall be relegated to the next lower division (also see 9.3.2). The bottom team in the lowest division shall be considered by the committee for re-election to the league.

9.3.1 If as a result of failing to fulfil fixtures a team is penalised 8 points (equivalent to two complete fixtures) or more during a season then that team shall automatically be up for re-election at the AGM following the end of that season.

9.3.2 There will be a play off between the team finishing 2nd in each division and the team finishing 2nd to bottom in the division higher. The winners will play in the higher division the following season. The format will be:

9.3.2.1 To be played on the 1st Saturday after summer bank holiday (subject to confirmation) at one venue.

9.3.2.2 Rubbers of 2 tie break sets. If 4 sets all then team winning most games wins, if still equal then team winning most games in 1st pairings, then 2nd pairings, then 1st pair from team finishing 2nd to bottom v 2nd pair from team finishing 2nd to top, then remaining rubber. If still level then a match tiebreak (1st to 10 with 2 clear points) with 1 player from each pair.

9.3.2.3 Player qualification: played 4 matches in team - minimum of 25% of matches for club in team (or lower team). Normally 4 in 14.

9.4 **Team format:** will consist of 4 players. They will play 2 crossover doubles. The 1st pairs of each team will play each other before crossing to play the 2nd pair.

9.5 **Format of rubbers:** Each rubber will consist of the best of three sets with the tiebreak operating at 6 games all in all 3 sets. However there is an option, which if taken will apply to all rubbers in the match, for the 3rd set to be a match tiebreak (1st to 10 with 2 clear points) providing both captains agree before the start of a match. First round rubbers may not be left uncompleted to allow second round rubbers to be played.

9.6 **Points scored** (also see 13.5 Result cards):

Rubber score (sets)	League points
2-0	2-0
1-1	1-1
1-0	1-0
2-1	1 ¹ / ₃ -2 ² / ₃

All sets must be played correctly to count.

Teams must not agree to halve an unplayed rubber.

9.7 **Match result:** The match result is decided on points.

10. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY/REGISTRATION:

10.1 All players must be bona fide playing members and no player shall be allowed to play for more than one club (which may be a different club to the mixed league) in the men's/ladies league in any season, unless special dispensation has been obtained by email from the league.

10.2 **Registration:** To be eligible to play in a match a player must be registered before a match. NB New mixed registrations will also be taken as mens / ladies league registrations, therefore if a new registration, then to play for a different club in the mens/ladies league a transfer is required.

10.3 Registrations:

10.3.1 New registration: It is the clubs responsibility to ensure the player is not registered with any other club.

10.3.2 Transfer: The player's new club to notify Fixture Secretary and CC all contacts from previous club at least 48 hours before match in which they play.

10.3.3 Deregistration: The players club to notify Fixture Secretary.

10.3.4 Format: Details to be emailed to fixture secretary in following format:

(Register/Transfer/Delete) player's Forename and Surname (to/to/from) Club name (from Club name)

11. RANKING:

There is no official ranking in the mens/ladies leagues, however a gentlemans agreement that only one player from a normally higher team will play in a lower team.

Players may only play for 1 mens/ladies team in any specific week number.

12. MATCH DATES:

12.1 Match dates: Matches must be played on the date stated, weather permitting. In the case of inclement weather, captains may agree to postpone the match. Where captains cannot agree it will be at the discretion of the home captain as to whether play can take place or continue due to bad weather or unplayable courts. Where a club has more than one team playing at home and a teams match is postponed then it must be the lowest teams match. In exceptional circumstances a match may be played earlier than scheduled providing both clubs agree and the new date is emailed to the fixture secretary before the match is played.

12.2 Order of play: All rubbers will be played in numerical order except where agreed by the Captains. ie 1st men will play each other and 2nd men will play each other before crossing over. The away pairings stay on same court.

12.3 Start of play: All games in the ladies and mens league will be played on the home teams chosen time. Evening matches start at 6.15. Sunday morning matches will start at 10.00am. If a couple are not ready to start play 20 minutes after scheduled start time and their opponents are, they shall forfeit the 1st set to their opponents 6 games to 0 and if they are still not ready to play after a further 20 minutes they shall forfeit the second set 6 games to 0

12.4 Balls: The Home club will provide a minimum of three new I.T.F. approved balls per 1st round rubber. The committee shall have the power, at their discretion, to fine offending clubs with the appropriate fee.

12.5 Match considered completed: A match will be considered to be completed if weather or bad light causes play to be suspended and either a minimum of 8 sets have been completed or both captains agree (indicated by offered/agreed rearranged dates left blank). If not completed the uncompleted rubbers only must be replayed. Rubbers/sets may only be conceded in the event of ~~illness or injury~~ a player being unable to continue and with the consent of the opposing captain or his nominated deputy.

12.6 Unstarted/unfinished matches: In the event of a match being postponed or unfinished in the mens/ladies league then 3 dates (at least 2 dates must be on different days of the week) must be offered by the home club on the night of the match and the away club must accept one of the 3 dates offered within 3 days, otherwise they receive nil (zero) points for uncompleted rubbers and the home club receive full points for rubbers not completed.

The agreed date or the three offered dates must be filled in on the results card. If not on the card the agreed date must be communicated to fixture secretary and home club by the away club within 3 days. All postponed or unfinished matches, other than the final match, must be rearranged to be played within 3 weeks of scheduled date. The final match, if postponed, must be rearranged within 2 weeks of the last scheduled match.

12.7 Player eligibility for rearranged match:

While there is no official ranking in the mens/ladies leagues the gentlemans agreement should be adhered to (see 11).

12.8 Sunset/bad light and floodlights:

12.8.1 Sunset/bad light: Subject to rule 12.7.2, play will continue for 30 minutes after sunset (subject to any game being completed) unless all 4 players are in agreement to continue after this time. (A game is defined as including a tiebreak). Play can only cease prior to this time if all 4 players agree.

12.8.2 Floodlights: Clubs having the use of floodlights may use floodlights to play or complete unfinished rubbers. Rubbers started on a court not having floodlights can only be switched to a floodlit court if one is available at the time at which it is unable to continue that rubber on an unlit court. In no circumstances may a rubber be switched in preference to an unstarted rubber. Once a club has advised the league of its intentions to use floodlights, it must do so for all clubs on a consistent basis. The league will advise all clubs (via website) of those clubs who will be using floodlights prior to the start of the season.

The fixture secretary must be advised of any change of use from the previous season by 31 March.

FIXTURES/RESULTS ADMINISTRATION:

13. COMMUNICATION:

- 13.1 **Method:** All communication with every club is via email except for sending out and receiving result cards.
- 13.2 **Club contacts:** Every club to have one or more nominated contacts with email addresses (maximum 5).
- 13.3 **Website:** The league to have a website which will contain fixtures, results, league tables and other information, such as sunset times, rearranged match dates, floodlight usage, rules, problems, committee decisions and other league news.
- 13.4 **Match numbering:** Matches to be numbered as per fixture list; 1 to nn (normally 14) in order scheduled, NOT in order played
- 13.5 **Result cards:** A result card showing the names of all selected players must be submitted for all matches, including matches which are postponed or rearranged or part played.
Result cards for all matches (played, postponed or rearranged) to be received by fixture secretary within 48 hours of match. The rubber score to be recorded on the result card, the fixture secretary will calculate the league points score.

Appendix A:

Nbr	Problem	Standard Penalty
1.	DID NOT FULFIL FIXTURE	Team awarded match 16/8-0 (max win). Opponents penalised 8/4 points (50% max)
1A	DID NOT FULFIL PART OF FIXTURE (does not apply if player is late)	Team awarded unfulfilled rubbers 6/0 6/0. Opponents penalised fraction of 8 (or 4 points for Men) (which is 50% max points). Eg 2 rubbers = $\frac{1}{4}$ (or $\frac{1}{2}$ for Men) = 2 (or 2 points for Men)
2.	PLAYER NOT REGISTERED:	All points won by unregistered player (plus 2 points for 1 st discrepancy by club). Penalty increases by 1 point for each discrepancy by club). Rubbbers played by unregistered player awarded to opponents 6/0 6/0. Any unregistered player will continue to be penalised each week until they are correctly registered in accordance with rule 6.3.
3.	RANKING: player playing out of position	All points won by higher ranked player (plus 2 points for 1 st discrepancy by club). Penalty increases by 1 point for each discrepancy by club). Rubbbers played by higher ranked player awarded to opponents 6/0 6/0
4.	ORDER: player playing out of position as specified in rule 7.1	Player to be ranked by WTL Committee and then penalty applied as for RANKING problem
5.	RECORDING AN UNPLAYED SET AS PLAYED (contravening rule 5.7 / 9.6 – also see 8.5) or RECORDING A TIEBREAK INSTEAD OF A FULL SET	The unplayed set of tiebreak scores deleted plus both sides penalised 8 points.
6.	LATE CARD	Home team penalised 1 point Penalty increases by 1 point for each occurrence for a specific team Penalty increases by 2 points for each week late
7.	INCOMPLETE / INCORRECT CARD: For any of: No team names, No Team numbers, No division, no date, no totals, not signed	Home team penalised 1 point Away team penalised 1 point Penalty increases by 1 point for each occurrence for a specific team
8.	WRONG CARD: Not on official card issued	Home team penalised 1 point Penalty increases by 1 point for each occurrence by club
9.	INCOMPLETE CARD: No players names for unplayed match	Home team penalised 4 points. Away team penalised 4 points.
10.	IMPORTANT RESPONSE REQUIRED FROM CLUB (within reasonable time)	Penalty 1 point per week late until reply received. Points deducted from all teams from club
11.	APPEAL AGAINST PENALTY WITHOUT REASONABLE GENUINE GROUNDS.	The penalty to be doubled, or increased to a lesser degree, depending on the unreasonableness of the appeal