

EXETER & DISTRICT TENNIS LEAGUE RULES 2019

(as agreed at the 2019 AGM)

LEAGUE MANAGEMENT

- 1) The League shall be known as "The Exeter and District Lawn Tennis League".
- 2) The Headquarters of the League shall be in Exeter.
- 3) The management of the League shall be vested in an Executive Committee, which shall consist of a Chairman, Secretary, Match Secretary, Treasurer, and up to six other members, with power to co-opt as necessary.
- 4) All clubs must be registered with the Lawn Tennis Association before playing in the League.
- 5) Any club seeking election or re-election to the League must:
 - a) Make an application to the Secretary.
 - b) Obtain a two-thirds majority at the Annual General Meeting.
 - c) If accepted start in the lowest Division.
- 6) The Executive Committee shall 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.

If any team falsifies a score card, the captain, or person responsible, will be suspended from the League for a period of one year, or longer at the discretion of the committee.

- 7) a) The Annual General Meeting shall be held before 15th April, upon 14 days' notice being given.
 - b) All clubs shall notify the Match Secretary of the teams they wish to enter during the forthcoming season on the form provided.
- 8) a) Clubs with multiple teams in the league who wish to withdraw a team from a higher division can only do so in exceptional circumstances and with the Executive Committee's approval. If approval is not given, then the lowest team will be withdrawn.
 - b) Unless there are exceptional circumstances, if a Club enters a team, but then withdraws that team before it has played any matches, the maximum number of teams that the Club will be able to enter in the following season will be the number that fulfilled their fixtures in the preceding season.
- 9) One member from each club shall be allowed to vote at the Annual General Meeting.
- 10) The League subscriptions shall be decided at each Annual General Meeting, payable to the Treasurer not later than the Registration date of 7th April for the summer league.
- 11) The League shall consist of such Divisions as the Executive Committee may decide.
- 12) The League shall make awards to the winning teams of each Division.

13) Clubs or individuals holding permanent trophies of the League must provide security for their safe keeping and return when requested.

14) Promotion and Relegation shall be:

a) Automatic two up and two down in all divisions, except when there are only 5 teams in consecutive divisions in which case it will only be one up and one down between these divisions.

b) If moving teams up to create more even-sized divisions, first the team finishing 3rd in the lower division will be promoted. Before promoting a team that finished 4th, the team 2nd from bottom in the higher division will not be relegated, before promoting a team that finished 5th, the team that finished bottom in the higher division will not be relegated

c) A team withdrawing from the League before playing a match will be deemed to have not entered and will not affect promotion or relegation. Other teams may be promoted or relegated where appropriate, to ensure equal numbers of teams in each Division.

d) (1) Teams failing to raise four eligible players for two matches during the season shall be relegated by one Division and teams in the lowest Division must apply for re-election the following season.

d) (2) Teams failing to raise four eligible players for three matches or more during the season, or withdrawing from the league after playing a match, will have all their results expunged and must apply for re-election the next year to join the bottom division. They will be counted as a relegated team for promotion and relegation purposes.

15) In the event of a "Tie" between two or more teams, League placings will be decided as follows:

a) The team with fewer matches forfeited.

b) The team with the most wins.

c) The team with the most draws

d) In the matches played between the teams, the team with the most sets won.

e) In the matches played between the teams, the team with the most games won.

f) If still level - a play off - on a neutral ground chosen by the Executive Committee.

16) The Match Secretary has full power to enforce the League rules with regard to matches.

17) Any proposed amendments to rules must be sent to the Secretary by 25th January each season.

TEAM MANAGEMENT

Fixtures

18) Dates of league matches shall be arranged before the Registration date of 7th April, or the team's first match, whichever is the earlier. **Matches may only be arranged in September if postponed during the season.** Notification to be sent to the Match Secretary, on the form provided, **within 24 hours of 7th April or before the team's first match**, whichever is the earlier. **There will be a 2 point fine for any registration forms received after this date.**

All matches shall be played on the date specified on the fixture list unless both Captains agree to an earlier date. After that date no postponements will be allowed, except by the

Home team due to bad weather or in exceptional circumstances agreed by the Executive Committee.

In the case of bad weather, the Home team must, within five days, inform the Match Secretary of the postponement and offer the opponents (informing the Match Secretary) at least three alternative dates, which must be in different weeks, but not including dates upon which the Away team already has an Exeter & District League match fixed, for the rearranged match. The opposing team must agree a date within two weeks of the postponement and the Match Secretary notified of the new date by the Home team. If dates are not offered or agreed within the above time span, then the offending team will be fined 2 points. In the event of the match never being re-arranged, the offending team will forfeit the match and rule 29 will apply and the fine increased to 4 points. If the circumstances are considered exceptional, a written appeal must be made. This will be considered by the Executive Committee, whose decision is final.

19) Clubs with two or more teams in the same Division must complete their inter-club fixtures not later than 31st May. No points will be awarded for matches played after this date.

20) All matches must be played by 30th September unless otherwise agreed by the Committee.

Player Registration

21) At least four players shall be registered for each team on the form provided, and such registration shall be received by the Match Secretary within 24 hours of registration date (see rule 18) or before a team's first match, whichever is the earlier. Teams must be nominated in merit order.

22) No person shall become a member of the League or qualify to play in a League fixture, or represent a club at a General Meeting, until he/she has become a fully paid up member of the club they represent.

23) a) A player may only play for one club during the current season.

b) No registered player may play for a lower ranked team than the one registered for. A registered player may play in higher ranked teams within their club on a maximum of two occasions and remain eligible for inclusion in their original team.

c) If a player plays three matches for teams in higher Divisions, he/she shall not then be eligible to play for the team with which he/she was initially registered during the current season. He/she must then be re-registered in one of the higher teams played for, with the decision made by the club, and the Match Secretary notified. He/she can then only play for that team. A player may only be re-registered once in a season.

d) Players in clubs with two or more teams in the same Division may only represent one team within that Division.

e) Before a club has played its first match if they decide a player has been registered for the wrong team, that player may be re-registered to another team without penalty.

f) Once the club has played its first match should they decide a player has been registered for too high a team, that player may be transferred to a team below provided that:

- (i) He/she has not played more than twice for the higher team.
- (ii) The higher team have played at least three matches, but have not completed their fixtures for the season.
- (iii) Where fewer than four players remain in the higher team another player is registered in his/her place.

The Match Secretary must be informed of the transfer before the player plays for the lower team. A transferred player may not play for a higher team during the current season.

g) Additional players may be registered, and the Match Secretary must be informed before such players play their first match. Telephone registrations must be confirmed in writing inside 24 hours. Contravention of this Rule will result in the offending team being penalised as in Rule 24.

24) (a) The Match Secretary shall report to the Executive Committee every case of a team playing an unregistered player in a League fixture. The offending team shall forfeit the League points scored by that player and his/her partner, the points being awarded to the opposing team. The offending team shall also be fined 2 points.

b) If an ineligible player is played the match is conceded as in Rule 29b) iii) & iv)

COMPLETED MATCHES

25) (a) The Team Captains shall forward the completed score sheets in respect of all home matches played to the Match Secretary, within five days of the match being completed. Home teams whose score sheets have not been received after seven days will be fined 2 points. **An additional 5 point fine will be imposed for a scorecard not received after fourteen days.**

(b) Following an initial warning, a fine of 1 point may be imposed on both teams for any scorecard that is substantially incomplete or incorrect.

26) Any appeals against decisions of the Match Secretary must be made within two weeks of the Club having been informed of the decision or the match results having been posted on the web. Appeals must be submitted to the Chairman, in writing or by email and will only be accepted from either the Team Captain or the nominated Club Contact.

CONDUCT OF MATCHES

27) One 'Home' and one 'Away' match shall be played between each team within the same Division. Matches shall consist of four doubles rubbers, there being four players in each team. Each rubber shall be the best of three sets, a tie break (first to seven by two clear points) to operate at six games all. If a rubber goes to a third set, that set will consist of a championship tie break (first to ten by two clear points). Each set shall count as one point.

28) The Home team must provide a minimum of six new balls for each match. All balls must correspond to LTA standard and must be of the current year of manufacture. The Home team decides which courts (surface) a match is to be played on. The away team Captain may choose the order of play, eg 1st pair vs 1st pair, or 1st pair vs 2nd pair and which pairs play on which court. At the end of the first rubbers, the away team shall stay on the same courts. The match must be completed on these courts unless otherwise agreed by the Captains.

29) Evening matches shall normally commence at 6.30 pm and all players shall be in attendance at that time. However matches may commence at a different time, if this is agreed by the clubs before the beginning of the season. The Match Secretary must be informed by the home and away team on the fixture confirmation form (see Rule 18) if the agreed starting time is anything other than 6.30 pm. Unfinished or un-played sets will be scored 6-0 in the event of matches being unfinished due to:

a) The late arrival of one or more members of one of the participating teams.

b) (i) A player being unable to continue due to injury or other unavoidable cause.

If one or more members of one of the participating teams are not able to commence play within 30 minutes of the appointed starting time, the offending team or teams will forfeit one set for each affected rubber. If play does not commence within 60 minutes of the appointed starting time, the affected rubber(s) will be forfeited.

ii) The match will be forfeited if any player(s) is (are) not available to play either 60 minutes after the appointed start time or by the time that the first rubber has been completed, whichever is the later.

iii) Failure of a team or teams to fulfil a fixture, due to the non-arrival of one or more members or by failing to comply with Rule 18 in respect of postponed fixtures shall result in the non-offending team being awarded the match 8-0, sets being scored 6-0. In addition the offending team shall be fined 4 points for the first such occurrence of the season, 8 points for the second.

iv) If neither team has four eligible players able to play within 60 minutes of the scheduled start time, no points will be awarded for the match and both teams shall be fined as above.

The Executive Committee, however, has the right when a written appeal is made on the basis of exceptional circumstances to either (a) order the match to be re-arranged or (b) waive the deduction of points. The decision of the Executive Committee is final. Matches unfinished at the end of the season will be scored on the number of completed sets.

30) a) If in the event of rain, bad light, or any other unavoidable cause, a match cannot be completed, then

(i) Where both the first 2 rubbers (see rule 27 for definition) have not been completed the match shall be deemed to have not started and shall be re-arranged as per rule 18.

(ii) If the first 2 rubbers have been completed the match will be treated as unfinished. Uncompleted sets shall be continued at a later date, re-starting where they are left off. The date for the match to be completed must be mutually agreed so that the same players participate.

b) After arriving at the venue, the away team shall decide on whether the match is called off for bad light or extreme weather conditions once the match has started, but will forfeit any un-played or incomplete sets should they not return to finish the match.

c) If a player involved in the match becomes injured and is unable to play for the rest of the season, then, in agreement with the opposition captain, a substitute may be used but must be

from a lower team unless this is the club's lowest team. The Match Secretary to be notified of the date the match is to be completed or replayed, as in Rule 18.