

EXETER AND DISTRICT LAWN TENNIS LEAGUE

RULES

(Updated at AGM, March 2012)

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.
- 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 If approval is not given, then the lowest team will be withdrawn.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 the 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 1st June.
- 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) Two up and two down, except that the team finishing second in Division 2 has the option of not being promoted, in which case the team finishing second from bottom in Division 1 will remain in that Division.

- b) If moving teams up to create more even-sized divisions, 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 at any time will not affect promotion but will be counted as one of the teams relegated from that Division. Other teams may be promoted or relegated where appropriate, to ensure equal numbers of teams in each Division.
- 15) In the event of a "Tie" between two or more teams, League placings will be decided as follows:
- a) The team with the most wins.
 - b) The better results in the two games played against each other.
 - c) 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 1st March each season.

TEAM MANAGEMENT

Fixtures

- 18) Dates of league matches shall be arranged before 21st April each season and notified to the Match Secretary, on the form provided, by 1st May, or the team's first match whichever is the earlier. 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 at least three alternative dates for the rearranged match, which must be in different weeks **but not including dates upon which the Away team already has a match fixed**. 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 31 will apply and the fine increased to 8 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 by 1st May or before a club'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 player shall only play for one club during the current season.
- a) 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.
 - b) 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.
 - c) Players in clubs with two or more teams in the same Division may only represent one team within that Division.
 - d) Should a club 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.
- e) Additional players may be registered, and the Match Secretary must be informed before such players play their first match. Contravention of this Rule will result in the offending team being penalised as in Rule 24.
- 24)** The Match Secretary shall report to the Executive Committee every case of a team playing an unregistered or an ineligible 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.

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.
- (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)** Teams failing to raise four players for two matches during the season shall be relegated by one Division and teams in the lowest Division shall be expelled from the League and must apply for re-election the following season.
- 27)** 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

- 28)** 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.
- 29)** 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, e.g 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.
- 30)** 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) 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 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. 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. Failure of a team 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 8 points. 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 8 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.

- 31)** a) In the event of rain, bad light, or any other unavoidable cause, uncompleted matches shall be continued at a later date where they are left off.
- b) The away team shall decide on whether the match is called off for bad light but will forfeit any unplayed 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.