

PALM BEACH COUNTY PICKLEBALL LEAGUE RULES

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Purpose

To form a Palm Beach County Pickleball Competitive League. It will consist of Divisions of 6-8 teams that will compete during the Fall season, and the Spring season.

1. Requirements for community participation

a. A community must have a minimum of two regulation sized hard surfaced pickleball courts. If they do not, because of repair or other temporary reasons, they will travel each week but provide the balls and drinks when they were deemed the "Home Team".

b. Each community will host the game an equal number of times (approximately), unless their courts are non-playable, and provide bottled water and new balls for the players.

c. Each community must provide a preliminary team roster prior to the start of each season. The roster must have a minimum of 10 eligible players and a maximum of 20 eligible players. The roster will be frozen at least 14 days before the start of the season, or any date as provided by the League Coordinator.

d. The community must be approved by the Board.

2. Eligibility of players

a. A player must be a current resident of the community or live full time in the community in Palm Beach County. Under Rule 1.d. a player must be a resident of one of the merged communities.

b. A player must be age 55 or older by the first day of play of the season.

c. Both Men and Women will be playing interchangeably.

d. Each player can fill only one Line position of the team.

e. A player cannot have been a professional tennis or professional pickleball player, teacher, instructor, coach, referee, or umpire in the past ten (10) years.

3. To prevent stacking, the following procedure has been adopted:

a. An individual may not play up or down more than one Line from one match to the next match. If a player has not played consecutive matches, then his/her allowable court positions are determined by the court he/she last played.

b. In case of rain-outs or other postponements, the last played Line shall be determined by the original scheduled date and not the chronological match date.

c. Any infraction of the No stacking Rule will result in a default of that Line plus the loss of 2 Standing Points if the player played more than 1 line UP, or the loss of 1 Standing Point if the player played more than 1 Line DOWN.

d. For the next match the offending player(s) is/are scheduled to play, the player(s) prior Line position shall be that he/she occupied the last time played prior to the week of the infraction.

e. Exemption to the Rule: The No Stacking Rule may be modified to allow players to move up more than 1 line if required to fill the defaulted line/s due to Forfeitures while keeping the same order in which they are listed on the scoresheet. These players, who were affected by the Forfeiture Rule, will then revert back to their pre-forfeiture Line position for Anti-stacking evaluation.

f. The League will be reviewing all lineups to make sure that this rule is enforced. Captains may notify the League of any presumed infractions within 48 hours from the end of the game. The League will then review the case, and make the determination if any infraction has occurred and impose the disqualification and penalty, if justified.

g. This rule does not apply to the first match of any season

4. Dates and Time of Play

a. The starting date for the Fall shall be the beginning of October.

b. The starting date for the Spring season shall be the beginning of January.

c. Each season shall run 6 - 7 weeks followed by a Playoff for the top 4 teams followed by a Finals for the top 2 teams.

d. The games shall be played on Saturdays starting at 11:00am or 1pm, unless an earlier time is agreed to by BOTH teams.

e. All 5 court positions must be played on the scheduled date. Captains do not have the option to allow one or more courts to be played on a different day. This regulation applies to the original scheduled match play; it is not relevant for rainouts.

f. No match shall start prior to the arrival of all players.

g. The teams will play each other once during the season, and the winning team shall email the results to the Division Coordinator.

h. If necessary, because of the number of teams in the league, a "bye" may be scheduled for each team.

i. For each Division, the four teams with the greatest number of points will play in the Playoffs; (#1 vs #4 at the #1 courts, #2 vs #3 at the #2 courts), and the winners of the playoffs shall play in the Finals 1 week later.

j. The Finals shall be played at a designated venue which allows for ample spectator viewing/seating, but hosted by the League, and determined by the League Coordinator.

k. A team trophy will be awarded to both teams playing in the Finals of each Division at the end of each season.

5. Play of the Game

a. Each team will simultaneously submit completed line-ups to each other before the start of the match.

b. Each team will consist of 5 lines of two players each. 10 players will be needed for each team match.

c. Each line will play best 2 of 3 games.

d. Each game will be first to 11 points, win by 2.

e. Each match will begin with a coin toss. The winner of the toss shall choose either to serve or receive; or side. The second game will be opposite.

f. If a third game is necessary another coin toss will be done. Whenever the first team scores a total of 6 points, the teams will switch sides of the court. They shall NOT change sides anytime thereafter.

g. In communities with 2 courts, Line 5 and Line 4 will be played first. When they finish their first game, Line 3 and Line 2 will play their first game, then rotate to Line 1 and Line 5 (who will be playing their second game). This will continue on a rotational basis till all Lines have finished their matches. If any Line splits sets, they will play a third set tiebreaker to 11 points, also in a rotational basis. In communities with more than 2 courts, only two courts will be used in a rotational basis as above.

h. Competition shall not begin until all participating players from both teams are present. If all players are not present at the designated starting time, a 15 minute grace period shall be given.

i. If a forfeit is necessary the Line forfeited shall be the lowest Line of the team roster. If more than one forfeit is required, the same rule shall be applied.

j. Time-outs: Two 1 minute time-outs shall be allowed per team per game. Coaching shall be allowed during these time-outs. In addition, one Medical time-out shall be allowed per player per match. This Medical Time-out may be up to 15 minutes. No coaching shall be allowed during Medical time-outs. In addition, hydration time outs may be called by any player, as long as it does not appreciably prolong the game. A Time-out can only be called by one of the four players or the Team Captain or Co-Captain.

k. Playoffs: A player must have played at least one game during the regular season to be eligible to play in any playoff game.

l. Calling out the score before serving: The server must announce the score before serving so all the players can hear. The first time a server does not announce the game score, the returning team should catch the ball and give the opponent a warning to call out the score. The next time that team fails to call out the score, the exchange ends, that server loses his serve, and then it becomes the second serve or side out.

6. Match Point Scoring

a. Scoring will be weighted by position of Line to prevent "stacking": Line 1 win = 6 Standing Points Line 2 win = 5 Standing Points Line 3 win = 5 Standing Points Line 4 win = 4 Standing Points Line 5 win = 3 Standing Point

b. At the end of the match both Captains will sign the score sheets.

c. At the end of each match, the Captain of the winning team shall scan and email or fax their scores to their Division Coordinator. The scoresheets shall be sent to the Division Coordinators no later than 5pm on Saturday for 11am matches, and no later than 7pm for 1pm matches. Rain delay matches shall be sent in no later than 5 hours after the match.

d. If two or more teams are tied for a playoff or winning position at the end of the regular season, the team with the most points in head-to-head competition shall be declared the winner.

7. Rain delays

a. Before teams have assembled: The home team captain shall contact the visiting captain no later than 1 hour before the match time to spare the players an unnecessary trip.

b. After teams have assembled: They shall wait for 45 minutes unless both captains agree to a longer or shorter wait.

c. After play has started: Continuation of play can be delayed up to 45 minutes unless both captains agree to a longer or shorter wait. If play is postponed, all games and points played before interruption stand and play resumes from that point, with the same player line-up.

8. Rescheduling of postponed matches

a. When postponement is necessary, the next rain date shall be according to these rules:

1. if the match was scheduled for 11am, the next time shall start at 2:30pm of that Saturday. If still unplayable, the next time shall be Sunday at 11am. If still unplayable the next time shall be 2:30pm of that Sunday. If still unplayable the next time shall be Monday at 11am. If still unplayable the next time shall be at 2:30pm of that Monday.

2. if the match was scheduled for 1pm, the next time shall be 4pm of that Saturday. If still unplayable, the next time shall be Sunday at 1pm. If still unplayable the next time shall be 4pm of that Sunday. If still unplayable the next time shall be Monday at 1pm. If still unplayable the next time shall be at 4pm of that Monday.

3. If both captains agree to an earlier time or different venue, and conditions are acceptable, that will be allowed by the League. Any Lines not played within those dates and times will be considered 'no contest' and no points will be awarded to either team.

b. All games and points played before the postponement will stand. No player substitutions will be allowed for a game that has started, even if the game is rescheduled for a different day. The match is considered officially started when rosters are exchanged.

c. If one or more of the players of a Line are unable to continue play on a rescheduled time and date, it will be considered a default of that position (not a forfeit), and the winning team will receive all the Standing Points from that Line.

d. If conditions are unacceptable on all the above rain dates and times, that match will be entered as 0-0. If any Lines have been finished those scores shall be entered, and all unfinished Lines be 0-0.

9. Forfeits

a. A line shall be considered a forfeit if two players from a team are not available to play within 15 minutes of the starting time. Players from lower lines must be moved up to fill vacant spots, and all forfeits will be taken on the lowest lines.

b. If a player cannot finish a started game for any reason, that game will be considered a forfeit.

c. A team that forfeits more than three times during the season may be dropped from the League.

10. Divisions

a. Every effort shall be made to place teams in a Division commensurate with their skills.

b. Each Division shall have a minimum of 6 teams.

c. In each new season, teams will be upgraded or downgraded in accordance with their performance within their division in the prior season.

d. Generally, the first one or two teams will be moved up to the next higher division, and the one or two lowest teams will be moved down to the next lower division.

e. These moves will be reviewed by the Board and may be subject to overrule if warranted. (Illnesses, injuries, vacancies).

f. All new teams may be added to the lowest division at the discretion of the Coordinator, after discussion with the teams' Pros.

11. Fees

a. There shall be no player fees to join this league except a nominal entrance donation per team to cover the cost of trophies to be awarded at the end of each season.

b. This shall be reviewed on an annual basis.

12. USAPA Regulations

a. All players in the Palm Beach County Pickleball League will abide by the USAPA Rules. These rules shall apply unless the League Rules are contrary and then the League Rules shall supersede.

13. Balls

a. Appropriate balls approved by the USAPA will be provided by the home team for all games played. For the Fall 2021 and the Spring 2022 the approved ball will be the Onix Fuse Yellow ball. All balls shall be new unused balls.

14. Paddles

a. Paddles must conform to USAPA specifications.

15. Players Rights and Responsibilities

a. Players must remember that they represent their club and their behavior reflects on their fellow team members. When playing at home, make the visiting team feel welcome. When playing away, remember you are a guest at your opponent's club.

b. Players must adhere to the dress code and footwear requirements of the home club.

c. A player may request an umpire if he feels it is needed, and only under extreme circumstances. The umpire will have authority to overrule calls if requested.

d. A player may request to have a spectator removed if the spectator is causing a disturbance or conduct violation. At such time the spectator may be warned or removed at the discretion of the person in charge.

e. A player may request a rule interpretation from either team captain.

f. A player may NOT ask those watching (including the person in charge) whether a ball is in or out, or what the score is.

g. A player must show good sportsmanlike conduct during all League matches.

h. Any team violating these rules or the Code of Conduct may be suspended for the balance of the season and/or not invited back for the following season at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

i. Captains and players should familiarize themselves with these rules prior to the start of the season. Captains cannot agree to any situation which violates these rules.

16. Spectators

a. Spectators or coaches are welcome to watch and enjoy the matches. Their role, however, is restricted to passive observers with no involvement of any kind during the match.

b. Cell phones and beepers must be turned off on and near the courts where matches are being played.

17. Disputes

a. The captains shall try to resolve all disputes "on the spot". When there is a complaint about a member's misbehavior or a dispute that cannot be settled by the captains, each team shall submit a written account of the incident to the League for resolution.

18. Board of Directors

a. The Board shall be made up of the Coordinator and a representative from different participating teams.

b. They shall resolve any unsettled team disputes

c. They shall establish dates, times and locations of all matches.

d. They shall provide weekly reports of team standings to all captains.

e. They shall adjudicate suspensions for violations of rules.

f. The Board members shall serve for a term of one year.

g. The present Board of Directors is made up of:

Walter Gassner – Coordinator

Howard Shames – Coral Lakes

Howie Rowling – Four Seasons

Frank Rosenblum – Valencia Bay

Murray Gendzel – Valencia Reserve

Tony Guerriero – Venetian Isles

David Finkelstein - Woodfield CC

Sid Tweady – Wycliffe CC

Revised 1/5/2022