



B.L.T.A. WINTER TENNIS LEAGUE

Rules and Regulations: 2018 -2019

1) TEAM/CLUB ELIGIBILITY

- a. Any Club or a Team able to satisfy the following requirements as to playing facilities may apply to play in the Winter Tennis League (**WTL**). The Club/Team must be able to provide throughout the WTL season playing facilities that, in the opinion of the Winter League Committee (**WLC**), are adequate for Teams to properly and effectively compete in the WTL. Adequacy will be determined by the number, quality, and availability of tennis courts for this purpose.
- b. A request to enter a Team must be made, in writing, to the Bermuda Lawn Tennis Association (**BLTA**) Winter League Committee, P.O. Box 341, Hamilton HM BX, or faxed to the BLTA OFFICE AND INFORMATION CENTRE at 295-3056, or e-mailed to the BLTA at info@blta.bm, by the registration deadlines specified each year.
- c. A request to enter a Team received after the scheduling for a particular season has been done would be deferred until the next WTL season unless the WLC is able, in their discretion, to make the necessary adjustments.
- d. A Team making an application for the first time to join the WTL or a Team applying to rejoin the WTL after an absence, if accepted, will be placed in a Division determined solely by the WLC.
- e. An administration fee, as stipulated each year by the WLC and payable to the BLTA, must accompany a Team entry. The amounts of team fees are noted on the BLTA Winter League registration forms.

2) LEAGUE DIVISIONS/COMPOSITION OF TEAMS

- a. The WTL will be divided into three Divisions: (1) Women's Division and (2) Men's Divisions 'A' & 'B', with Division 'A' being the top division. **Divisions may be combined in the event that few Teams enter any Division.**
- b. At the discretion of the WLC, any single Division may be subdivided into two sections. At the conclusion of the league season, the Teams with the most points from each section of one Division will have a play-off to determine the ultimate winner and runner-up of the Division. The play-off will be played at a neutral venue and a WLC member will be in attendance as a referee.
- c. Each Team will consist of the following: Women's Division will have (2) Doubles Pairs, Men's Division 'B' will have (3) Doubles Pairs and Men's Division 'A' a minimum of 4 players total. Two Singles players and one Doubles Pair.
- d. Clubs may register more than one Team in any Division. These Teams should be ranked by the Club [see 4) d.].

3) PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

The WTL is open to all eligible amateur players. In order to be eligible to play in the WTL, a player must:

- a. Be Bermudian by birth or status or have resided in Bermuda for at least three consecutive months, prior to their first fixture. Whether or not a person complies with this requirement shall be a matter that is at the sole discretion of the WLC and from whom there shall be no right of appeal in this respect.
- b. Be registered as a league player by a Club or a Team.
- c. Be a bona fide member of the BLTA.

4) REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS

- a. Teams must register a minimum of four players in Men's Division 'A' Team. Men's Division 'B' a minimum of six players and Women's Division a minimum of four players.
- b. There is no maximum number of players that may be registered per Team.
- c. Players must be registered with a specific WTL Team prior to the start of their first fixture. New players may be added to a Team during the WTL season provided they are registered as per the instructions on the annual Winter League team registration form.
- d. Clubs must register players according to their ability. They must register any player on any of their Teams according to the ranking system of the BLTA. The WLC reserves the right to overrule a Club on this aspect of the registration of players.

5) TEAM AND PLAYER RESTRICTIONS

- a. (Only eligible players, as defined in 3), may play on a WTL Team.
- b. A player may represent only ONE Club per WTL season.
- c. A player may play in only one doubles or one singles position per fixture.
- d. BLTA rankings will be used as the primary guideline for determining the Division of play for individuals. The highest 25% of ranked players in open singles/doubles categories should be registered to play in Men's Division 'A'. Davis Cup players must be registered to play in Division 'A'. This is based on the current BLTA rankings at the time of player registration. For reference, see rankings at <http://www.blta.bm/>.
- e. If a club has multiple teams in the same division players have to play on the team that they are registered with. Example: If a club has two teams in Division 'B' (Team White and Team Green) a player registered with team White cannot play for team green or vice versa. When a Club has Teams in different Divisions, all players registered with the lower Division Teams may play for Teams in a higher Division, but not vice versa. However a player registered in Division 'B' can move up and play in Division 'A' for a maximum of half of Division 'A's matches. Once that player has surpassed the Division 'A's half way mark of matches then that player has to remain in Division 'A' and cannot return to Division 'B'.
- f. A player, who is a member of a Club with Teams in more than one Division, may play for Teams in different Divisions in any single day of WTL pre-scheduled matches as restricted by 5) e.
- g. All players in the Men's Division 'A' must be ranked on the registration form prior to the commencement of league. The ranking of any player will be in accordance to the BLTA National Rankings. If a player is ranked (according to the ranking system of the BLTA) then they must be at least of equal, relative, ranking for any WLT fixture. For example if a team has four players ranked as follows in the BLTA National Rankings 3rd, 7th, 9th & 20th. Then the club has to seed the highest ranked player as their #1 seeded player. So in this case the player ranked 3rd in the National Rankings will be the #1 seed on the

team. In the Men's 'A' Division in singles a higher seeded player cannot play below a lower seeded player. For example: if the #1 seeded player does not play at # 1 position in that fixture he cannot play singles on that day. He can however play doubles. Another example: If the #3 seeded player plays singles at the #1 position the #4 seeded player has to play at the #2 position. This then leaves the #1 & #2 seeds to play doubles.

- h. In the Women's Division all players will seed themselves on their team sheet in accordance with their National Ranking.
- i. Failure to comply with rules (a) to (i) above will result in the forfeiture by the Team at fault of all matches in which an infraction occurred. The opposing team will be awarded points for the forfeited matches as if they had been defaulted.

6) TEAM CAPTAINS

- a. Each Team will appoint a Captain and indicate his/her identity to the WLC prior to the commencement of the WTL season. An e-mail address should be provided through which the Captain can be contacted and to which League materials can be transmitted.
- b. The Captain will be responsible for the running and conduct of his/her Team, for reporting the results of fixtures to the WLC, for player registrations, and for liaising with the WLC about Team matters. The Captain may delegate an appointee to assume their responsibilities at any given fixture.
- c. The home Team Captain is the official fixture referee except for individual matches in which they play, when they shall appoint an alternate referee for those matches. This alternate should be appointed PRIOR to the commencement of a fixture and shall be made known to the opposing Team Captain.
- d. Prior to the commencement of a fixture the Team Captains shall present their respective results sheets containing the pairings of their respective Teams, and noting the names of substitutes [see 7). f. & i.]. Once the sheets are exchanged there shall be no alteration, whatever, of the Teams so notified.
- e. Team Captains of both Teams shall be available at the site of the fixture at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled starting time of the matches, in order that they may have time to implement the above rules.
- f. Home Team Captains shall provide cans of new, yellow, pressurized tennis balls, one can for each home pair (i.e., no practice balls) plus one can to be used to replace lost balls, at the commencement of the fixture; three cans for Men's Division 'A', three cans for Men's Division 'B' and two cans for the Women's Division.

7) FIXTURE MATCHES

- a. Only four players can play in any one Men's Division 'A' fixture at one time, (two singles players and one doubles pair). Only 6 players (3 Doubles Pairs) can play in one Men's Division 'B' fixture at one time. Only 4 players (2 Doubles Pairs) can play in one Women's Division fixture at one time.
- b. For fixtures in Men's Division 'A', each player will play against the numerically equivalent player on the opposing Team; that is Player 1 vs. Player 1, Player 2 vs. Player 2 and doubles vs. doubles. All matches to be played at the same time. Each match will be played as the best two out of three regular tie-break sets.
- c. For fixtures in Men's Division 'B', each doubles pair of one Team will play each doubles pair on the opposing Team one regular tie-break set. Therefore, a fixture will consist of nine sets.
- d. For fixtures in Women's Division each player will play against the numerically equivalent player on the opposing Team; that is Team 1 vs. Team 1, Team 2 vs. Team 2. All matches to be played at the same time. Each match will be played as the best two out of three regular tie-break sets.

- e. A Team not fielding the requisite number of doubles pairs for a given fixture loses, by default, the individual matches for each doubles pair that it is deficient, in that fixture. In the case of the late arrival of a player in Men's Division 'B' [see 7) h.], that player (or a late arriving substitute) loses by default the first set, but can play in the fixture as long as there is no delay in play of subsequent matches.
- f. All Teams must adhere to the schedule of the league. In the event a Team is unable to field a full roster of players for a scheduled WTL match that team will forfeit the points.
- g. If a team defaults an entire fixture, they will be contacted by the Winter League Committee, after two defaulted matches, they will be removed from the WL schedule and the results of any matches in which they participated stricken from the Winter League results.
- h. For Men's 'B' Division; Players from either team must be ready to play at the scheduled start time. If a player has failed to arrive by the scheduled start time this will result in the loss of a set for that particular match. If a player arrives 16 minutes past the start time that player is defaulted and all matches on that day pertaining to that particular player shall be recorded as 6-0 sets. It is recommended that all players arrive 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
- i. For Women's Division; Players from either team must be ready to play at the scheduled start time. If a player has failed to arrive by the scheduled start time this will result in the loss of a set for that particular match. If a player arrives 16 minutes past the start time that player is defaulted and the match on that day pertaining to that particular player shall be recorded as 6-0,6-0. It is recommended that all players arrive 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
- j. In the event of an injury, the injured player is entitled to up to 10 minutes of injury time commencing when the time out is called. If play does not resume within 10 minutes, the match is defaulted and points for all un-played games are awarded to the Team without the injured player. If play resumes, the score continues from the last completed point played. No substitutes are permitted in the case of an injured player unless it occurs during the initial warm-up period and the Team seeking the replacement provides a substitute immediately. A Team cannot use more than two injury time-outs in any one scheduled fixture.

8) SCORING

- a. For Men's Division 'A', Scoring is as follows: The winner of a fixture will be awarded three points total. If teams draw a fixture each team will be awarded one point each. Please note: Doubles is worth twice as much as singles. For example: A team may win both singles and lose doubles, which will result in a draw. A team will win the fixture by winning either all matches or by winning one singles and one doubles. If at the end of the season Clubs are tied on points head to head comes first then sets won, games won. [See 13]
- b. For Men's Division 'B', a team receives one point for each SET won. The total number of games won should also be recorded.
- c. For Women's Division Scoring is as follows: The winner of a fixture will be awarded three points total. (Fixture comprising of two matches) If teams draw a fixture each team will be awarded one point each. If at the end of the season Clubs are tied on points head to head comes first then sets won, games won. [See 13]
- d. Any match or set that must be defaulted for non-appearance of the scheduled opposing Team, will result in the total maximum number of points for a match or set being awarded to the Team arriving as scheduled.
- e. The position of each Team in the WTL for the Division or Subdivision in which it plays shall be determined from the cumulative total of points won during the season. The Team with the highest number of points for an entire Division, or the Team winning a playoff among Subdivision winners [see 2) a.], is the first place Team of a Division.

9) FIXTURE RESULTS

- a. All Fixture Results Sheets must be completed in ink, legible, signed by captains (or their designates) of both teams, and retained by Team Captains. These results must be reported as noted on the Result Sheet, as facsimiles, by e-mail, or as a hard copy, no later than 11:00 a.m. Tuesday following the day when the fixture was played or was due to be played. It is the primary responsibility of the winning Team Captain or home team captain, in the case of a delayed match, to submit the results sheet for a given fixture. Failure to submit the Fixture Result Sheet may lead to the winning Team forfeiting the points earned in that fixture.
- b. Fixture Results Sheets must be submitted, as above, whether or not the fixture was completed. In the case of non-completion, the reason for non-completion should be stated on the Fixture Results Sheet. A proposed rescheduled date for the Fixture, within one month of the originally scheduled date, should be noted on the Results Sheets.
- c. In the event the fixture did not take place at all (i.e., was rained out) the Teams are to play their fixture on or before the next free day for both teams, (BYE or RAIN DAY) in the WTL schedule. Fixture Results Sheets should be submitted for the originally scheduled date, advising the reason the fixture did not take place and advising a proposed rescheduled date.

10) SCHEDULING

- a. Each Team, in each Division, shall during the WTL season play every other Team in that Division at least once, and as otherwise scheduled by the WLC.
- b. League play will initially be scheduled for Saturdays, or as otherwise advised and agreed with individual Teams. In the event that Team members are not able to play on Saturday for religious reasons, the WLC will make every attempt to work with the Team captains to schedule those fixtures on Sunday afternoon or on a weeknight.
- c. Likewise, makeup, playoff, promotion, and relegation matches will be scheduled for Saturday, whenever possible; however, the WLC reserves the right to schedule matches on Sundays or weeknights as necessary.
- d. Where the home Team has less than three available courts, the home and the away Team captains shall be at liberty to agree to stagger starting times for the matches in a fixture.

11) POSTPONEMENTS DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

- a. Fixtures may be postponed due to inclement weather if, in the opinion of the home Team Captain, the courts are unplayable. The decision of the home Team Captain as fixture referee shall be final and binding.
- b. No fixture or match may be postponed due to inclement weather until a physical inspection of the courts by the home Team Captain, or their appointee, has taken place. For hard courts, such inspection must take place within the 45 minutes immediately preceding the scheduled starting time of the fixture or match.
- c. In the event of a fixture or match being postponed, all completed matches shall count and the score of all incomplete matches shall stand. The match will be continued from the score at the time of the postponement. Final results of matches rescheduled due to inclement weather must be submitted to the BLTA office within 48 hours of the rescheduled date.
- d. There shall be no postponement of matches for any reason other than inclement weather. Failure to adhere to this rule may result in forfeiture of the fixture by both Teams.

12) RESCHEDULING

- a. All incomplete or un-played matches shall be completed or played at the earliest possible date by arrangement between the captains concerned. If there is undue delay in the rescheduling, the WLC will reschedule the match.
- b. All incomplete or un-played matches shall be completed or played by the players originally indicated, and as indicated, on the captains' score sheets. If a player is unavailable at the resumption of a match for good cause (e.g., illness or business commitments), a replacement may take his/her place subject to the approval of the Team captains involved. In the event of a dispute, the WLC will make the final decision regarding the substitution.
- c. All league fixtures must be completed by the season end date, decided by the WLC, and which is specified on the WTL season schedule.

13) END OF SEASON TIES

- a. In the event of a tie for first place in any Division, the match scores during head-to-head competition between the Teams involved in the tie will be used to determine the winner.
- b. In the unlikely event that criterion 13) a. fails to determine the winner, sets won/lost will be counted, then games won/lost.

14) PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

- a. At the start of each season, each Team will identify the Division in which they would like to participate (Division 'A' or 'B'). The WLC will confirm the Division to which a Team is assigned, based on the overall level of the players and on the Team's performance in the preceding season.

15) GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

- a. Any Team Captain (the submitter) may file an official grievance with the WLC in the event that his/her Team has a grievance related to WTL competition. The Captain is responsible for notifying all their Team players of the details of the grievance. This grievance must be in writing and must be physically received by the WLC within seven working days of the event giving rise to the grievance.
- b. Upon receiving such a grievance, the WLC Chairperson(s) will form a grievance subcommittee for this particular grievance consisting of the Chairperson and four members of either the WLC or the BLTA executive, not involved in the dispute. This subcommittee will adjudicate expeditiously upon the grievance, and the Chairperson will communicate the decision in writing to the Team Captain or Captains concerned.
- c. Enquiries about procedures and rules will be considered by the WLC as needed. This may lead to the submission of a grievance, but these enquiries will not be considered to be grievances, unless specifically requested or identified by the submitter as a "Grievance to the WLC".
- d. Decisions made by a WLC grievance subcommittee can be appealed to the BLTA executive.

16) LEAGUE DUES

An entry fees determined by the BLTA must be paid prior to the commencement of the WTL season. The WLC reserves the right to:

- a. Deduct all points earned by the offending Team each time they participate in a fixture until the entry fee is paid in full.
- b. Remove any Team from the WTL or refuse admittance to the WTL for non-payment of this entry fee.

- c. Once paid, WLT dues are not refundable.

17) OBSERVING THE RULES OF THE HOME CLUB/TEAM

- a. All WTL Teams and players are expected to abide by any and all regulations established by the home Teams or Clubs. Regulations include, but are not limited to, the wearing of proper tennis attire, the wearing of tennis shoes appropriate to the surface, and the wearing of tennis whites (e.g., at Coral Beach Club).
- b. All WTL Teams and players are expected to abide by any and all regulations established by the BLTA.

18) EFFECT OF RULES

- a. All Teams and players participating in the WTL do so upon the express conditions that they are subject to and will abide by these rules. The captain of each Team will be asked to certify that they have read and understood these rules. It is the responsibility of the Team Captain to convey this information to the members of their Team.
- b. In the case of uncertainty or misunderstanding of any of these rules and regulations, or in any other instance whereby a circumstance or incident is not covered by the rules, the WLC will make any necessary decisions and as needed.