

Tri-County Women's Tennis League

PART I: LEAGUE STRUCTURE

1. **Name and Objective:** The name of this league shall be the Tri-County Women's Tennis League (TCWTL) and will be comprised of local area tennis clubs organized to:
 - a. Manage and promote amateur, competitive, all-surface, team tennis for women's doubles play.
 - Co-ed play allowed in the 2.5/low 3.0 division – eff 12/2022 & approved by vote 2025
 - b. Promote fair play through the use of a dynamic rating system.
 - 60+ 3.5 is only division currently NOT calculating ratings by majority vote 2023.
 - c. Maintain high standards and good sportsmanship among its players in the areas of St. Lucie and Martin counties with the option to include Indian River County and North Palm Beach County clubs.

2. **Participants:**
 - a. Teams will be from area tennis clubs that submit team commitments to and are accepted by the League Administrator, herein known as the LA, by September 1st annually.
 - Late team requests will be voted on by the existing committed team captains with acceptance by the majority. The LA will recommend acceptance if request will make the division have an even number of teams.
 - b. Fees will be an annual registration amount of \$125.00 per team made payable by October 1st to JABAAR, LLC – unless other prior arrangements have been made.

3. **League Administrator (LA):**
 - a. Administer the league with experience & integrity through the use of the TopDog system
 - Create levels/division
 - Enter teams and maintain rosters
 - Create league schedules
 - Maintain league rules/guidelines
 - Keep open communication with club pros and team captains
 - b. Work closely with each level's/division's Captains known as the Advisory Committee (AC)
 - Meet once prior to season beginning – October
 - Review how to use TopDog
 - Answer questions regarding ratings – benchmarks & dynamics
 - Meet once in February
 - Discuss guidelines that need to be changed/added/deleted
 - Voting will be done via email
 - Dates to be pre-determined with a minimum 2-week notice given
 - Interim meetings may be called by the LA if needed
 - c. Pay fees for use of TopDog, all operational expenses and up to \$500 towards awards

4. **Advisory Committees (AC):**
 - a. One (1) committee per playing level/division per season.
 - b. Playing league team Captains will make up each committee or an appointed designee if the team Captain is a non-playing captain.
 - c. Are the eyes, ears and voice of their team to bring discussion items to the committee and relay information from the committee back to their teams.

- d. Be open-minded and put the needs of the specific level/division of play before their own personal needs/wants when it comes to matters that will be in the league's best interest.
- e. Be able to support decisions made by consensus pertaining to their specific level/division, for which they are an advisor for.
- f. Be able to meet with the LA and other AC members with a two (2) week's prior notice ideally or less if the need arises.
- g. Work together with the LA to resolve any formal complaints for the specific level/division, for which they are an advisor for.
 - The Captains of the team(s) involved with any formal complaint will not be included in the complaint resolution.
- h. Interim meetings may be called by a specific AC if the need arises.

5. League Format:

- a. All court surfaces will be used for league play. Whenever a match is scheduled on hard and soft courts simultaneously, the home team with the varied court surfaces shall offer the visiting team the option to declare which position(s) shall play on the hard court(s).
- b. If "home" match is scheduled on hard courts, opponent may offer to play at their place; however, it should not be expected and is not required of the home team to agree.
- c. There are six (6) levels/divisions of play - 4.0, 3.5, 3.0, 2.5, 60+ 3.5 & 3.0 - each with three (3) court/positions playing.
 - Increase to 4 courts of play for the regular 3.5 division not passed by vote 2025.
- d. A stand-alone 4.5 level/division may begin when enough players are available to sustain league play.
- e. The LA, with consensus of the specific AC, may restructure each division with the best interest of that level/division in mind.

6. Participating Clubs:

- a. Any club/facility currently within St. Lucie or Martin county is eligible to enter teams. The LA and AC may grant approval to admit clubs from other counties to benefit the league.
- b. A club may field more than one (1) team participating at the same level/division.
- c. A club must have sufficient courts available to start league play between 8:30am & 12:30pm to field its scheduled team positions. Club requests for exception to the above window require pre-season LA and AC approval prior to their club being accepted into the league.
- d. Each club must submit a Team Commitment Form (located on the TCWTL TopDog site in the News Section) by September 1st of the upcoming playing season.
- e. A registration fee per team is required to be paid to the LA by October 1st of the upcoming playing season unless other prior arrangements have been made. The registration fee is non-refundable once the league's division schedules have been published.
 - Checks payable to - JABAAR LLC * PO Box 518 * Palm City, FL 34991

7. Teams:

- a. Any new team considering participating in the league, should contact the LA to discuss.
 - New defined as a team who did not participate the prior season.
- b. Commitments from teams should be sent to the LA prior to September 1st for the upcoming season and will be processed in order of receipt. ALL Team Commitments are due by September 1st (form is available on the site - tcwtl.topdoglive.com – in the News Section)
- c. Agree to submit form(s) and team fee as required.
- d. Agree to uphold and abide by all League Operating Guidelines set forth.

- e. The level/division of play may be restructured based on the number of teams committed to play if it is in that groups best interest.

PART II: LEAGUE OPERATING GUIDELINES

1. Player Requirements:

- a. Women must be at least **21** years of age prior to the first match of the current season.
- 60 years of age by January 1st current season to play in the 60 & over divisions.
- c. This league is an amateur league. Any player who is or has been professionally ranked or has received prize money for playing is not permitted to play in this league. Those who currently receive money for teaching/coaching tennis with USPTA or PTR certification or have done so in the past, require LA and AC approval to participate.

2. Player Ratings:

- a. A Captain may request the addition of a brand-new player to the league with a ratings evaluation from their club pro or team Captain if there is no club pro.
The LA will factor in any USTA play history, the pro's assessment and any other performance data to determine the player's "benchmark" & "starting rating."
Once in the league's ratings system – TopDog -, ongoing computer-generated match result ratings will be known as one's "dynamic rating." For players with said history in the system, this dynamic rating will be continuous and ongoing season to season.
- If there is a break in play for 2 years or more, a player may be re-evaluated and a new "benchmark" assigned. The player's "dynamic rating" may also be adjusted.
 - A dynamic rating does not change if a player's change level request is granted unless there are special underlying circumstances approved by the LA.
- b. Brand-new players to the league may be entered with a "starting rating" on the quarters –
- Examples 2.25, 2.50, 2.75, 3.00, 3.25, 3.50, 3.75, 4.00 and 4.25
 - "Benchmark" ratings are only 2.0, 2.5, 3.0, 3.5, 4.0 and 4.5 which determine the lowest level/division a player can participate in.
 - A player may enter with a 4.5 "benchmark rating" for the 4.0 division/level and will be restricted to playing on position #1 regardless if her rating falls below 4.50.
- c. Disputed ratings will be resolved by the LA and that specific AC for that player if necessary prior to player playing in a league match but no later than February 1st of current season.
- All majority AC decisions are final.
- e. Ratings approved for all or any portion of a playing season will remain in effect for the remainder of the current season; however, a level change based on a rating update/correction can be considered if requested by the player's Captain or club pro.
- f. "Bump Up" - players whose dynamic rating exceeds their current benchmark level will have a restriction imposed.
- For all divisions/levels, only one (1) "bumped up" or restricted player can play per match
 - 2.5, 3.0, 60+ 3.0 and 3.5 division/level
 - will be designated on the team roster with a "1" in the Team Position Column
 - players will be required to play in court/position #1 for remainder of the season
 - only one (1) restricted player permitted to play in a weekly match.
 - at season end, all "bumped up" players will be required to play at the next higher level – voted on & approved 2025.
 - 4.0 division/level – any "benchmark" 4.5 player is restricted to play in court position #1 period.

- she is designated as such with a number “1” on the roster in the Team Position Column. This will print out on the weekly scorecards as (1) behind the player’s rating.
 - any 4.0 “benchmarked” player who achieves a 4.50 dynamic rating or higher is restricted to play in court position #1 ONLY until her dynamic rating falls below 4.50.
 - Only one (1) restricted player is allowed to play in a weekly match.
- If a “bumped up” player participates in league play in a position other than court/position #1, that line will be defaulted and one (1) penalty point will be assessed to that team by the LA.
- g. For the 4.0 division/level, any currently rostered 4.0 benchmarked player reaching the 4.5 “benchmark” level, may continue to play in the division/level restricted to the court/position #1 until her “dynamic rating” reaches 4.75 or a stand-alone 4.5 division is established.

3. Participating Teams:

- a. A roster is limited to **25** total players.
- b. New players to the league may be added during the season once reviewed/approved by the LA according to the rules set forth under “Rosters.”
- c. The deadline to add any players to all roster is February 1st of current season.
 - Voted & approved 2025

4. Rosters:

- a. Change Level requests are handled between April 15th- September 1st by submitting a “Change Level Request Form” to the LA (form on the site – tcwtl.topdoglive.com). It will be reviewed by the LA and the AC if needed. The player will be notified via email of a final decision.
 - *Reminder that player’s dynamic rating remains the same even if change level is granted UNLESS an “Adjust Dynamic Rating Form” has also been submitted.*
- b. Team rosters are due by October 1st to the LA with a minimum of eight (8) players.
- d. The LA will use judgment as to excessive add/delete/changes to rosters and may deny the changes if, in fact, the add/delete/changes affects the team’s dynamic rating IF the team’s dynamic rating was used for placing that team in a particular group (ex. Group A or Group B if used).
- e. Rostering at a level above one's benchmark rating is permitted. Said player will be denoted as a “sub” unless the specific team she is playing on is the only team she is playing on.
- f. Additional players may be added to a team roster by Captains submitting form(s) prior to player participating in a league match and by receiving emailed approval from the LA (form is on the site – tcwtl.topdoglive.com).
 - “New Player to TCWTL Form” for brand new players to TCWTL or TopDog
 - “Roster Change Form” for adding/deleting existing TCWTL or TopDog players
- g. All players should be rostered on the team before they can play in a match.
 - Captains are responsible for verifying that all players are eligible when lineups are exchanged.
 - If an unrostered player plays **undetected** by the opposing Captain, the match will stand as played in good faith and the player will be added by the LA as quickly as possible upon notification.
 - If an unrostered player is detected when the lineups are exchanged -
 - the offending team may adjust their lineup with another player if one is available on site.
 - another player is not available, the offending team’s lineup is adjusted to indicate a default in the bottom position.
 - The opponent may then also adjust their lineup.

- h. A player may ONLY be a “regular” player at one (1) playing level/division on one (1) team.
- i. Substitutes:
 - 1. Five (5) allowed per team
 - i. EXCEPT for 4.0 division – no limit
 - 2. Are players playing up one level/division from their benchmark level.
 - 3. Are included in the team’s roster limit of 25 players.
 - 4. There is NO limit to the number of times a “sub” can play.
 - 5. Can only be rostered on one (1) team per level/division as a “sub”.
 - 6. May be removed from a roster and added to another roster at another club as long as she has not played in a match for the team she is being removed from.
 - 7. May not sub for a lower benchmark level than her current benchmark.
 - 7. May only sub for the benchmark level one (1) higher than her own.
 - 9. May not be a "regular" rostered player on a team participating in that same playing division.
 - 10. Should remain a substitute for the entire season.
 - 11. May be placed in a team’s weekly lineup in accordance with Guideline Line-Ups 6a
- j. Once the season’s play has begun, any player who has played and subsequently wishes to change teams or clubs during that season, must submit a written request to the LA who will review. Each request handled on a case-by-case basis.
- k. Players who have not played in a match in the current season may change teams at any time during the season by having the new team Captain submit a “Roster Change Form” to the LA and await confirmation (form on site – tcwtl.topdoglive.com).
- l. Player Change Level requests will only be available/accepted at the end of the regulation playing season and prior to the new seasons Team Commitment deadline – roughly April 15th through September 1st – by the actual player or club director/pro. “Change Level Request Form” (form on site – tcwtl.topdoglive.com).

5. Scheduling:

- a. The playing season shall normally be, but not limited to, end of October to mid-April.
- b. The number of teams vs number of eligible weeks to play will determine each level’s/division’s season schedule of play which will be determined by the LA.
- c. Play schedules for all levels/divisions will be published on the TopDog website.

6. Line-ups:

- a. Pairs must be placed by their combined dynamic ratings to play in the appropriate positions from high to low/strength to weakness in the weekly line-up.
- b. Court/position #1 restrictions – see Guideline 2f Player Ratings
- c. For all divisions, no more than one (1) team player who is position/court #1 restricted may play in a team’s weekly match.
- d. At match time, Captains will simultaneously exchange their printed pre-populated match lineup/scorecards with players names, ratings and positions from the TopDog website.
 - Captains are responsible for verifying –
 - listed players in the lineup are eligible rostered players
 - lineup pairings are placed in accordance with Guideline 6a Line-ups
 - Matches played will stand with the results if Captains did not verify the opponent’s placement of pairings or playing eligibility.

7. Matches:

- a. USTA rules/regulations are followed unless a current existing written TCWTL Guideline is in place stating otherwise.
- b. Once published, a match CAN be played early if agreed by both Captains.

- Example – USTA event happening, Spring Break or a holiday not observed by the league.
- c. Once published, match dates and start times are expected to be played as scheduled under standard playing conditions. Exceptions:
- rain or unplayable courts warrant playing the match on a date and/or time other than the pre-scheduled date/time. The LA is to be advised of such situation.
 - extreme heat/cold warrant a later or earlier start time than the pre-scheduled time on the same date if agreed upon by both captains. The LA is to be advised of such situation.
- ❖ When the temperature is 40° or lower or 95° or higher at the host club including windchill based on information from The Weather Channel - [National and Local Weather Radar, Daily Forecast, Hurricane and information from The Weather Channel and weather.com](#) - at the pre-scheduled match start time, the start time can be changed upon agreement by both captains; however, every effort should be made to play the match on the originally scheduled date. The LA is to be advised of such situation. [Wind Chill Calculator](#)
- If Captain's cannot come to an agreement, a date/time will be set by the LA.
- d. Official start times are between 8:30 and 12:30 PM – voted & approved 2025.
- e. A 10-minute warm-up is allowed after line-ups exchanged/court assignments are announced.
- f. New yellow balls, appropriate for the court surface, will be furnished by the home team and opened in the presence of both teams.
- g. Play will be best 2 out of 3 sets with a 10-point tiebreak in lieu of a full 3rd set if needed.
- h. The [Coman Procedure](#) will be used for all tiebreaks.
- i. A maximum of 15 minutes may be taken for **one** medical time-out for injury.
- Medical time-outs are intended to treat medical conditions including, but not limited to, illness, heat-related conditions, cramping or any other condition that the player believes requires attention/treatment.
 - A player is entitled to only **one** medical time-out per match.
 - When possible, this time-out should be taken during a set break or changeover.
 - Any breaks taken at other times should be limited to true emergencies.
- j. During odd game changeovers, the maximum rest time is 90 seconds.
- The maximum rest time between 1st and 2nd set breaks is 120 seconds.
 - A ten (10) minute break may be taken prior to the 3rd set super tiebreak if desired by either team.
 - ***Coaching is permitted during this break.***

8. Scoring

- a. One (1) point will be given for each court position won.
- b. No additional points will be awarded.
- c. Penalty points will be deducted.

9. Defaults and Retirements:

The majority of scheduled positions must play in order to have a scoreable match.

- 2 out of 3 positions must play if 3 positions are scheduled.
- a. A default is charged against a team for not having an adequate number of required eligible players present fifteen (15) minutes after the pre-scheduled match start time.
 - Offending team will adjust their lineup to have the default appear in the lowest court/position.
 - Opposing team may adjust their lineup as well.
 - b. Pre-determined defaults must occur from the bottom court position and go upwards.
 - c. Once a default is decisively declared by a Captain, the opposing Captain does not have to agree to field said defaulted positions if the captain who declared the default changes her mind.

- d. If weather at match time causes postponement of the entire match to another day, any prior declared default is void and the match will be rescheduled to include all courts/positions.
- e. Matches begin at the scheduled time when all players are present. The line-up is exchanged and there is a ten (10) minute warm-up. If all players are **not** present, the procedures are as follows:
 - Line-ups are **not** exchanged until all players are present within 15 minutes of of the scheduled start time. During the delay, players may continue warm up.
 - If the missing player(s) arrive before 15 minutes have passed, the line-up is called and if time allows, late player(s) may warm up until the 15-minute mark is reached at which time play begins.
 - If the missing player(s) has not arrived at the 15-minute mark, a default occurs in the lowest court/position.
 - Both captains may adjust their line-up and match play should begin immediately.
- f. A retired match is one that has started but is not able to be completed after the first serve has been struck because one or more of the players cannot continue play. This is recorded in TopDog as a “retirement” and the court/position win is awarded to the opposing team with the score as it was at the time play was stopped –
 - Example - Your team lost the 1st set 4-6 and were down in the 2nd set 2-5 when your opponent could not continue. You win and it is recorded as 4-6/2-5 “retired” instead of “completed”.
- g. Teams are expected to play all scheduled matches. **A pattern of a team defaulting** may be considered a flagrant disregard of rules resulting in the team's expulsion from the league.
Any team contemplating an entire team match default is required to contact the LA who will consult with the appropriate AC (minus that team Captain) to find the best possible solution.

10. Rainouts/Make Up:

- Should be set only in case of actual rain or unplayable courts. Anticipated rain is not a valid reason to reschedule prior to arriving at the match sight unless both Captains agree. Captains will work together to determine the waiting period or to reschedule.
- a. Home team should give at least three (3) make up dates to the visiting team to get the process started.
 - b. Must be played within **three (3) weeks - voted & approved 2025** (excluding league holiday weeks) of the original date or the match will be canceled; no points awarded either team; notify the LA promptly of the new date. **Do NOT use “new date” in TopDog.**
 - c. If the reschedule is rained out, teams have an extra two (2) weeks to play the match or it will be canceled; no points awarded either team.
 - d. All games and points played before the interruption stand. Play resumes from that point continuing the same line-up for both teams.
 - e. If the first point of the match has not been played, the line-up may be changed for the makeup match for that court position.
 - f. Matches can be played on the same day or separately by positions.
 - g. Makeups should be set by the Captains, with all communications handled by them or their designees.
 - Captains determine when their team members can play
 - date(s) and positions are set without naming players
 - Captains are responsible to field their teams for the agreed dates and positions
 - Notify the LA of agreed upon arrangements
 - h. Once a rainout has been rescheduled, a team must default any position it cannot field, with win point(s) awarded to the opposing team.
 - i. Should both teams agree, matches may be played earlier or later in the day due to

extreme heat or cold, but the match must be played on the agreed scheduled date.

- j. If match play has begun, both teams are locked into playing those exact players in the exact positions. If match play has NOT begun, different players can be used to field the makeup. Teams will use the player's dynamic rating on the day the makeup is being played. If match

~~play has NOT begun, and before the makeup is played another regularly scheduled match is played, teams will still use the players dynamic ratings on the printed lineup/scorecard from the day of the rain out.~~

Important – use players dynamic ratings on the day the match was supposed to be played.

- k. Rain out end of the first ½ of the season if the level/division is splitting for a 2nd half -
- Any matches not played will be removed from the schedule with neither team receiving points
 - If rain occurs on the last scheduled match of the 1st half of play and split standings are affected, match play will occur on a day-to-day pattern until completed or a match winner is determined (2 out of 3 positions won) for team(s) proper placement going into the 2nd half.
 - Current standings points will be used for the split
- l. Rain out for the last regularly scheduled match of the season -
- Standings NOT affected by outcome of the match –
 - Match will be removed from the schedule
 - Standings ARE affected by outcome of the match –
 - Match to be played on a day-to-day pattern until completed or a match winner is determined (2 out of 3 positions won) for team(s) proper finishing place in the division's standings.

11. Complaints:

- a. Complaint(s) will be submitted via [Complaint Form](#) to the LA - by Captains only - the same day as the-completed match where the complaint(s) stems from. The LA will review it with the appropriate AC minus the Captains involved. Decisions are final.
- Complaint is found to have no merit; the LA will email the complainant explaining.
 - Complaint is found to have merit; the LA will email all affected parties outlining the agreed upon action being taken.

12. Penalties:

- a. Flagrant disregard of the guidelines can result in a player or team being removed from the league immediately and/or suspended from future league play if the LA and appropriate AC make that determination.
- b. Unsportsmanlike behavior will NOT be tolerated by a player(s) or spectator(s). If a violation of The Code is demonstrated by either a player or spectator, it is the Captain's responsibility to handle it immediately – (Captains Responsibilities Item 15I page 9).
- A violation by a player may result in the player's suspension or expulsion from the league and a one (1) point penalty assessed to the team.
 - A violation by a spectator may result in that individual(s) being prohibited from attending future matches.
 - If the LA receives a formal complaint pertaining to unsportsmanlike behavior, the appropriate AC will be notified and will render a decision on how to handle the player or spectator. This decision will be final.
- c. Teams not complying with League Guidelines may have penalty points assessed if the LA and appropriate AC see fit including, but not limited to, the following offenses:
- 1) Use of a player not properly rostered or use of a player in a division/level in which she is not properly placed to play in.
 - 2) Providing inaccurate information to the LA which results in mis-rating a new

player to the league. Example – incorrect name or not divulging alias names.

3) Stacking: Lineups must be correctly placed using the combined ratings of each doubles pair from highest combination to lowest combination (Line-Ups Item 6a)

- 4) Illegal Coaching: If the opposing team files a formal complaint, the LA and the appropriate AC will review it. If validated, the team will be assessed a penalty point.
- d. When a team in violation of Guideline 12c above wins a court on which an infraction occurs, that court will be rescored as a default, resulting in the loss of that court for that team and one (1) additional penalty point will be assessed by the LA.
- e. Any team not completing a full season will have to gain permission from the LA and the appropriate AC to enter a team the following season. Decision is final.
- f. Penalty points are reflected in the standings shown on TopDog and tracked by the LA.

13. Coaching

Coaches, club pros, spectators and other players not playing in the match may not coach during the match EXCEPT during a rain delay or a team's break prior to the 3rd set super tiebreak.

14. Annual Awards & Event:

At the end of each season, awards for the winning and second place teams in each division - unless the division/level has less than four (4) teams - will be presented at an annual awards function.

- If a division/level has been divided into two (2) groups from the season's start, each group will receive awards.
 - In case of a tie for any award, the 1st & 2nd place teams will be determined by the statistics provided on the TopDog website.
- a. A separate group/committee of interested players will handle the end-of-season event.

CAPTAINS RESPONSIBILITIES ON THE NEXT PAGE

15. **Captain's Responsibilities shall include** (but are not limited to):
- a. Provide complete and accurate information to the league on all NEW players
 - b. Provide a team commitment to the LA by the September 1st deadline
 - b. Provide the team roster and registration fee to the LA by the October 1st deadline
 - JABAAR, LLC * PO Box 518 * Palm City, FL 34991
 - c. Be the spokesperson for the team
 - d. Attend all AC meetings for the division or send a designee
 - e. Read, review, uphold and abide by all League Guidelines, the USTA Code and Friend at Court.
 - Review the forementioned with all the team players prior to the start of league play and at any time during the season if need be.
 - Review the forementioned with all spectators prior to the start of any/all home matches
 - f. When scheduled as the home captain, contact visiting captain 2 days prior to the match -
 - Review
 - Directions
 - Warmup court situation
 - Any special club policies – ie dress code
 - Remind to bring printed pre-populated lineup/scorecard to exchange
 - g. For each match -
 - determine pairings and accurate placement of those pairings
 - prepare the printed scorecard for exchange with the opposing captain
 - verify that the player(s) are eligible to play
 - After exchanging printed pre-populated lineup/scorecard -
 - Verify visiting team placement of paired players is done BEFORE PLAY BEGINS. Highest combined ratings to lowest. If not verified -
 - Matches played will stand as played
 - h. Enter results in the TopDog system for all home matches no later than **9:00 PM** on the date of play as the system updates nightly to calculate ratings.
 - Confirm the match scores on date of play as the system updates nightly.
 - i. Instruct team members that in case of a rain (or other) interruption, they should:
 - make note of the server and the order of all servers
 - note set score and game score
 - note the sides and ends of court of each team
 - have the opposing team players initial a written recording of these notes
 - resume play in the makeup as the initialed notes indicate
 - j. Arrange date/time of rematch and promptly notify the LA
 - k. If a complaint is to be filed over any match incident, it must be submitted the same day of completing said match. (Refer to Complaint Procedures Item 11.)
 - l. Ensure that all players/spectators conduct themselves in accordance with The Code.
 - It is expected that the captain will reprimand any player/spectator found to be in flagrant violation of The Code.
 - m. Have spectators removed from the viewing area if they are not conducting themselves according to proper tennis etiquette.
 - If opponent(s) make the request to have spectator(s) removed, it must be obliged immediately.
 - Bad behavior by a spectator(s) can result in their future attendance of league matches being prohibited.