

SOUTHPORT & DISTRICT TENNIS LEAGUE RULES 2026

(Changes from 2025 are indicated by red text)

1. NAME

The League shall be called The Southport & District Tennis League

2. OBJECTS

The objects of the League shall be:

- (a) to promote tennis generally in Southport and District.
- (b) to ensure any action to further the interests of the game.
- (c) to ensure that affiliated members shall observe:
 - (i) the laws of tennis
 - (ii) the regulations of the LTA
 - (iii) the regulations of the Lancashire County LTA.

3. CONSTITUTION

- (a) The League shall be affiliated to the Lancashire County LTA.
- (b) Members, eligible for affiliation to the League at the discretion of the Executive Committee, shall be:
 - (i) clubs that are Lawn Tennis Association registered, of which at least one of the objects is lawn tennis and which have their headquarters and courts in Southport and District. The Executive shall determine the effective district boundary. All new clubs shall have a minimum of 4 courts **marked out clearly for tennis**, suitable for match play and meet the criteria for applications as determined by the EC.
 - (ii) individuals, known as private members who shall:
 - (a) pay an annual subscription.
 - (b) receive copies of all League circulars.
 - (c) be eligible to attend League general meetings and hold office
 - (d) private members shall have no vote.
 - (iii) Honorary Life Members

Individual members of individual clubs are ipso facto indirect members of the League.

- (c) The League year, for which all Officers and committee members whether elected, co-opted, or substituted shall hold office and during which the registration of players shall subsist, shall be from the 1st day of March in one year to the last day of February in the following year.
- (d) All clubs in the Southport & District League must display a full copy of these rules prominently within their clubhouse so that they are available for all members to view.

4. ADMINISTRATION

A. Executive Committee – Structure

- (i) The Management of the League shall be vested in an Executive Committee consisting of:
 - (a) the officers of the League who shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting.
 - (b) nine other members, not more than two from any club to be elected at the Annual General Meeting, three of whom shall retire each year in rotation.
- (ii) The officers of the League shall consist of:

President, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Hon. General Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Match Secretary, Hon. Tournaments and Competitions Secretaries.

- (iii) Six members shall form a quorum at any committee meeting.
- (iv) All retiring members of the Committee shall be eligible for re-election.
- (v) The Chairman shall have a casting vote at all meetings of the Executive.

B. Executive Committee – Terms of Reference

- (i) The Executive Committee shall have power to:
 - (a) transact the general business of the League.
 - (b) co-opt such assistance as the Committee see fit; these members shall not be full members of the Committee.
 - (c) fill any casual vacancy occurring to the Committee, including a vacancy under Clause (iii) of this rule but anyone so appointed shall serve only until such time as the original member would have retired by rotation;
 - (d) elect at any time any number of Vice-Presidents of the League, to hold office for such period as the Executive may determine;
 - (e) take any steps which they consider necessary for the purpose of enforcing payment of any subscription or fines payable or imposed under any rules for the time being of the League;
 - (f) elect Honorary Life Members;
 - (g) appoint and delegate powers to sub-Committees for any purpose considered desirable and such sub-Committees may co-opt members to the sub-Committee from outside the Executive provided that the number of co-opted members is always less than the number of members of the Executive on the sub-Committee.
- (ii) The Executive Committee shall meet not less than three times annually. Meetings shall be called at the discretion of the Chairman or at the request in writing of at least six members of the Executive.
- (iii) If any member of the Executive Committee be absent from three consecutive meetings he may, at the discretion of the Executive Committee, be treated as having thereby tendered his resignation.

5. GENERAL MEETINGS

- (a) The Annual General Meeting of the League shall be held in the month of February or March on a day and at a place and time (which may be online) appointed by the Executive Committee for the adoption of the Executive Committee report and audited accounts, any alterations to rules, the election of officers and the Executive Committee as required under Rule 4, the election of the Hon. Auditor, and such other business as may be transacted in general meeting.
- (b) All items to be placed on the agenda of the Annual General Meeting, including nominations for office and for the Executive Committee, shall be sent in writing to the Hon. Gen. Secretary so as to reach him/her not later than 31st December in the preceding year.
- (c) Not less than 14 days notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given. Written notification to each affiliated club secretary, which shall include the agenda for the meeting and a copy of the audited accounts, shall be deemed to be sufficient notice of the Annual General Meeting.
- (d) An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be convened upon a resolution of the League Executive or at the written request to the Hon. Gen. Secretary of not less than 20 members being representative of at least six member clubs. Such requests shall state the purpose for which the meeting is required and no other business shall be transacted. The meeting shall be held within one month of such requisition being received by the Hon. Gen. Secretary and the notice and agenda shall be circulated to all member club secretaries at least 14 days in advance.
- (e) Accidental omission to give the required notice to any Club Secretary shall not invalidate the proceedings at a general meeting.

- (f) When meetings are at a physical location, clubs shall have one vote per team entered into the Summer League at the time of the meeting providing the number of representatives is equal to the number of teams. When meetings are online, clubs shall have one representative each who will be able to cast one vote for each team which that club has entered into the Summer League at the time of the meeting.
- (g) In physical meetings voting shall be by show of hands unless any 6 persons present, and entitled to vote, demand a secret ballot. For online meetings the chairman of the meeting will determine the mechanism for voting.
- (h) No member may vote by proxy.
- (i) No individual may have more than one vote, except in online meetings as defined in rule 5 (f) and the Chairman of the meeting, who shall have a casting vote.
- (j) At all general meetings, if half the clubs in the League are represented, that shall form a quorum.
- (k) If there is no quorum for:
 - (i) an Extraordinary General meeting, the motions(s) on the agenda shall be deemed to have been defeated and the meeting concluded.
 - (ii) an Annual General Meeting, it shall be adjourned and another notification shall be circulated without a time restriction. At the adjourned meeting the members present shall form a quorum.

6. FINANCE

- A The financial year of the League shall end on 31st December.
- B. Annual subscriptions shall be paid by 31st May in each league year.
- C. Any member club affiliated to the League whose subscription remains unpaid after 31st May in each year shall be liable to penalty, suspension or forfeiture of membership at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- D. All monies due to the league shall be deemed to be owing to the League Hon. Treasurer.
- E. The rate of subscriptions shall be:
 - (i) Team Tournament **£10.00**; Spartans Trophy **£10.00**
 - (ii) Annual subscription per club £30.00
 - (iii) Private members annual subscription £1.00
- F. The rate of registration shall be: Bulk registration per team **£20.00 for the Summer League and £10 for the Autumn League.**

7. MISCELLANEOUS

A. Rules.

Any matter not provided for by these rules shall be dealt with by the Executive Committee, who shall also be the sole authority for the interpretation thereof, provided that any decision given by a General Meeting shall be binding. Any addition to, or interpretation of, these rules made by the Executive Committee shall only be operative until the next Annual General Meeting of the League when they shall be reported to such meeting for confirmation or otherwise. No amendments or alteration to these rules shall be made at a General Meeting.

B. Complaints

If any club wishes to make a complaint against any other club or clubs the complaint shall be made in writing or email to the League Secretary or any of the particular League Secretaries concerned within seven days of the incident. Upon receipt of a complaint to any of the above officials, a copy of the complaint shall be forwarded to the club or clubs who are complained against and a written or emailed reply requested within 14 days. Any complaints or responses sent by email must be in a separate document, not in the body of the email. The complaint and any responses will be referred to the League Match Regulations Sub-Committee (LMRSC) who will decide on the appropriate action.

Any club shall have the right of appeal to the Executive Committee over the decision taken by the LMRSC. In the event of such an appeal, the Executive Committee shall be convened to hear the appeal and all parties to the original complaint shall be invited to attend the meeting. The absence of all or any of the parties to the complaint shall not invalidate any meeting of the Executive Committee hearing the appeal. Any decision taken by the Executive Committee following the appeal shall be final. Such appeals must be sent to the League Hon. Secretary on a separate document, not in the body of an email, no later than 14 days after receiving a LMRSC penalty or decision.

C. Other Appeals.

Any club or player shall have the right to appeal to the Executive Committee on any matter and any such appeal or other application hereunder shall be dealt with in such manner as the Executive Committee may determine and their decision shall be final. Such appeals must be sent to the League Hon. Secretary on a separate document, not in the body of an email.

D. Dissolution.

Any resolution for dissolution shall be presented in accordance with Rule 5 and a general meeting shall be held as soon as convenient. Two thirds of the votes cast, in accordance with Rule 5, must be in favour for any such resolution to be carried. If the resolution be lost, a further resolution cannot be presented for five years. If, upon winding up or dissolution of the League, there remains, after the satisfaction of all the debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, the same shall not be paid to, or distributed among the members of the League, but shall be given or transferred to some other body or bodies, institution or institutions, having objectives similar, wholly or partially, to the objects of the league, such body or bodies, institution or institutions, to be determined by a simple majority of the members of the league at or before the time of dissolution, and insofar as effect cannot be given to the aforesaid provision, then to some charitable object.

THE SUMMER LEAGUE

A. STRUCTURE

The League shall consist of such one or more divisions as the Executive should determine. The EC will form each division prior to the date of the AGM **or as soon as possible afterwards.**

B. COMPETITION

1. **Clubs are responsible** for highlighting any irregularities in relation in the Rules and should notify them to the League Match Secretary as a formal complaint in writing, by letter or by e-mail, within 7 days of the match being played. If email is used then the complaint must be on a **separate attachment and not in the body of the email**. If the complaint is about another club then a copy will be sent to them and they must provide a response within 7 days (later responses will not be considered). The League Match Secretary will forward the complaint and any response to the LMRSC for consideration.
2. Clubs must notify the General Secretary of any changes they would like to make to the number of teams entered into the Summer League by at least 14 days before the date of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for that year. Any new clubs wishing to enter the league must also apply by at least 14 days before the date of the Annual General Meeting for the year in which they wish to enter. If there are too many teams for the number of divisions then the AGM will vote on a proposal of which teams to include/exclude, the exact content of the proposal shall be decided by the Executive Committee.
3. The team scoring the most points in each division shall be the champion team of that division and shall be entitled to the custody of the Championship Trophy of that division from the League Presentation Evening until they are due to be presented at the next year's final. Clubs are responsible for any damage or loss of trophies awarded to them and must return them, **polished**, to the League. Immediately after the final they must be returned to the league for engraving prior to being re-presented at the League Presentation Evening.
4. The two teams at the head of the second and lower divisions shall be promoted to the next highest division. The teams at the foot of each division may be relegated to the next lower division with the two teams at the foot of the bottom division being required to re-apply. This shall always apply except when the divisions are reconstituted by the EC/LMRSC. No more than two teams from any one club can play in Division 1 at any time.
5. Ties for promotion and relegation, if level on points, sets won will decide. If level on sets, games will decide. If teams are level on games, then head to head will decide. If still level, a coin will be tossed. League tables should include sets for and against.
6. All matches shall be played under the laws of Lawn Tennis in the particular week appointed by EC/LMRSC and on the night submitted to the League at the beginning of each season. (This night shall be Monday for 1st and 2nd teams). **Home nights must be on a weekday, alternate nights may be weekdays or weekends.**
7. Each match shall consist of four Mixed doubles, two Ladies doubles and two Gents doubles with a tie-break operative at 6 games all. Therefore, each of the eight **events** shall be worth 2 points and the completed match 16 points. Points awarded should be as follows: 2 points for a win; 1 point for a draw. Clubs must make every effort to field complete teams. However, if this is genuinely not possible then a match may go ahead so long as each team contains a minimum of two men and two ladies and the shortage of players has been notified to the opposing team at least two hours before the match is due to take place. Any gaps in a team must be in the lowest positions in the team and must only be in the club's lowest team.
8. **No player may play for more than one team in the same League round, unless playing as an injury substitute. Any player breaking this rule will be treated as an ineligible player for the lower team.**

9. All players wishing to take part in any League competitions must be registered members of the Lawn Tennis Association, have obtained a World Tennis Number and must have nominated the club for which they wish to play. Clubs may register additional players with the LTA at any time and use them in a team but they must be played in order of strength. Clubs agree that the names of all registered players will be shown on the League results.
10. Each club with more than one team in the League shall nominate **two** men and **two** ladies for each team, excluding the lowest team, who will be known as 'starred players' by no later than the Friday before the **first** week of the season. 'Starred players' may not play for a team which is lower than the one for which they have been 'starred' and must be regular League players in the team for which they are starred. **Starred players must be indicated on score sheets by an asterisk, and the number of the team for which they are starred, being added to the surname of the player.** Lists of starred players will be placed on the league website. Team Captains are responsible for checking their opponent's team against these lists.
11. Clubs may request a change to 'starred' players between the 8th and 9th week of the season. Any change requests must be sent to the League Match Secretary in writing or email to arrive no later than the Friday of the 8th week. Apart from these changes no other changes to 'starrings' may be made except in the case of injury or as directed by the League Match Secretary.
12. Any team that concedes a match will suffer a two-point penalty in addition to the loss of points from the conceded match. This rule will not apply to the lowest team in clubs with more than one team.
13. **Before the start of a match the home team captain must provide a scoresheet showing the names of their team. The away team captain must then add the names of their team to the scoresheet before the match begins.** Names given on paper score sheets must be the same as those registered with the LTA (**plus an indication if a player is starred**) otherwise, if the paper form has to be requested by the League for clarification of a match, they will be treated as Unknown Players. If a player's name cannot be found on the online League Planner system their name **and LTA number** must be sent to the League Match Secretary using the Match Comments form **that can be found** on the league website at:
<https://www.southporttennisleague.org.uk/wp/match-comments/> (or by hovering over the **Contact Us option on the league website**) otherwise they will be treated as an "Ineligible Player". **At the end of the match, the scoresheet must be signed by both team captains and retained by the home team until the start of the following season in case of dispute. The away team captain may take an electronic copy of the scoresheet if they wish.**
14. Pairs **must** be played in order of strength. Players in the 1st Mixed event must play in 1st Ladies or 1st Gents doubles. Players in the 4th Mixed event must play in the 2nd Ladies or 2nd Gents doubles. Teams as well as individual players within a team **must** be played in order of strength. **Breaches of this rule will result in the players concerned being treated as ineligible.**
15. In the event of a player being incapacitated after play in a match that has begun, so that he or she cannot continue playing, the remainder of that event will be forfeit. A captain shall be entitled to include a substitute in any subsequent events in which the incapacitated player should have taken part, provided that the injury or other incapacity was caused after play in the match had begun and was not due solely to tiredness. If the substitute arrives more than 20 minutes after the court and players are ready to commence the subsequent event then they will forfeit the first set and if they still have not arrived after 40 minutes they will forfeit the entire event. The substitute's name must be shown in the match results on League Planner for the events in which they have played and an email sent to the League Match Secretary using the Match Comments form on the league website at:
<https://www.southporttennisleague.org.uk/wp/match-comments/>. If no substitute is found the injured player's name must not be shown on the scoresheet for any sets that they have failed to complete.
16. If a player is injured during a match or has been included on the team sheet but does not arrive in time for the second half of the match and no substitute has been found then for the remainder of the match the gap will be left in the position that the missing player would have occupied.

17. Any team playing a player made ineligible under any of these rules shall forfeit all games and points won by that player whilst he or she was ineligible. Ineligible players must play in the lowest position in the team otherwise any pairings playing below the ineligible player will also forfeit all games and points. Breaches of the rules by a higher team will not penalise other teams playing on different nights.
18. The captain of the home team shall have submitted the results of the match, using the on-line system, within 48 hours of the match being completed. Missing this deadline will result in a one match point penalty for the home team unless a problem has been reported to the League Match Secretary before the deadline. However, the match results remain valid and must be entered into the online (League Planner) system. The captain of the away team shall have verified the results within 72 hours of the completion of the match. Missing this deadline will result in the match being confirmed by the League Match Secretary. Any appeals against these actions must be directed to the LMRSC/EC via the League Match Secretary.
19. Either team captain may insist a match is postponed if they consider conditions (for example, heavy rain or extreme heat) are dangerous for their players. Postponements before the designated (or otherwise agreed) start time of the match must be made at least one hour before. If there is a dispute between the team captains as to whether conditions are safe to play, then (unless directed otherwise by the League Match Secretary) both teams must attend the match venue but either captain may then require the match to be postponed. *(Team captains may be viewed on League Planner once you are signed in.)*
20. Either team captain may insist a match is abandoned during play, if they consider conditions (for example, heavy rain, extreme heat or bad light) have become dangerous for their players. If insufficient sets have been completed for the result to stand (see the following rule) then the match must be rearranged.
21. When matches are abandoned, the match shall be deemed to have been completed if eight sets have been completed. All sets not completed or begun shall be deemed void and recorded 'not played' on the system. In the event of eight sets not having been completed, the match shall be treated as a postponed match and replayed as a new match. The scoresheet must show the actual date played.
22. Postponed matches due to adverse weather conditions shall be played on the alternative date and time as shown on the League website (not the League Planner website) wherever possible. Where two or more teams in a club have the same nominated alternative night/day the higher/highest team will take precedence at all times. The home team must reschedule the match in League Planner, by clicking on the cogwheel at the top right of the results entry screen, to show the revised date of the match.
23. In the event of a match not being completed on the first or alternative night a further 14 days are allowed. Failing completion in that time, (unless directed otherwise by the League Match Secretary/EC) the match will be halved. It will be recorded on the League Planner system as a "tie" with no sets or games being awarded to either team. The League Match Secretary/EC may, at their discretion, extend the 14-day window if the outcome will decide whether either of the participating teams, or another team will be promoted or relegated. They may also extend the 14-day window pending the outcome of any formal complaint procedures.
24. All matches should start at 7.00pm apart from the first three and last two which should start at 6.30pm. Courts must be made available for play 15 minutes before the official start time to allow players to "warm up". All players in a team should be available to play at the appointed time. All warm ups must be completed by 10 minutes after the official start time. Any player not ready to play 20 minutes after the appointed starting time shall concede the first set 6-0. Or if 40 minutes after the appointed starting time shall concede the first event 6-0, 6-0, or if after 60 minutes of the appointed starting time shall also concede the second event, 6-0, 6-0. The order of play in all matches shall be MIXED events first.
25. THREE COURT CLUBS: all matches will commence at 6.30pm. The order of play MUST be 1st, 2nd and 3rd MIXED. The 4th mixed pair must arrive by 7.15pm whether a court is available or not. If they arrive after 7.15pm they will forfeit the first set, after 7.35 they will forfeit the second set and after 7.55pm they will forfeit the second event.

26. The home team shall provide three new LTA approved tennis balls for each of the first four events.
27. All league matches have precedence over cup matches except for the team or individual cup finals. If either team playing in a cup final has a league match scheduled for that night, the league match shall be rearranged for the alternative night of the home team.
28. All communication by clubs with the League Match Secretary must be made via CLUB Match Secretaries only.
29. Any problems arising from the on-line system should be notified to the League Match Secretary and/or the League Planner Manager immediately by the Club Match Secretary.
30. Players may only be registered for one Southport & District League club at any one time. They may be transferred between clubs no more than once during the season which must be before week 8 of the league season. Before a player plays a match for their new club they must have added the new club to their LTA registration and the new club must inform the League Match Secretary by email (at lms@southporttennisleague.org.uk) or letter. No player may play for two different clubs in the same week.
31. The League Match Secretary shall report any irregularity in relation to the Rules to the LMRSC. Failure to comply with these Rules shall be subject to an LMRSC enquiry. The LMRSC shall have the power to impose any penalty or fine.

Appendix to Summer League Rules (new structure for bottom division)

The following experimental structure is adopted for the bottom division of the summer league in 2026. If this works well the experimental rules below will be merged into the standard league rules in 2027.

The differences to the standard rules, for the bottom division only are:

1. If there are too many teams for a single division, the bottom division will be split into two or more “groups” which will be at an equal level. The number of teams in each group and the allocation of teams to groups will be determined by the Executive Committee (EC).
2. During the main season, teams will play home and away matches only against the other teams in the same group.
3. At the end of the season there will be a “play-off” between the winners, and possibly runners up, of each group to determine which teams are promoted to the higher division. The EC will have discretion to decide on which teams take part in the play-offs, based on their results.
4. All teams in the bottom division will consist of two men and two ladies but if clubs have sufficient players, they may enter two 4-player teams that would become an A and a B team and will be put into different groups if possible.
5. A and B teams must have the same home night.
6. Clubs may enter more than two 4-player teams in the bottom division, for example Hightown might enter Hightown 2A, Hightown 2B and Hightown 3A.
7. Teams with the same number (e.g. Hightown 2A and 2B) will be treated as a single combined team in the rest of the summer league rules. For example, starred players will still be required for the combined Hightown 2A and 2B teams.
8. If a club has an A and a B team with the same number, players who are eligible may play for either, but only for one in any given week.
9. In the end of season play-offs, all teams must have four men and four ladies. If a club has an A and a B team they will be combined into a single 8-player team for the play-offs.
10. In a play-off match the winner will be determined by the number of sets won and, if that results in a draw, then by the number of games won. If that still results in a draw, each team will select one man and one lady to play a deciding mixed doubles tie-break (first to 7 points with a 2-point advantage).
11. A and B teams will be treated as a single combined team for the purpose of league subscriptions.

Highlighted sentence above has been amended slightly for clarification but with no change of meaning.

AUTUMN / WINTER LEAGUE

A. STRUCTURE

1. Teams wishing to enter the Autumn League are expected to have taken part in the Summer League in the same year and must notify the Autumn League Match Secretary of their wish to take part by the end of July. The League Match Secretary will have the discretion on whether to allow additional teams if requested and to determine their starting position in the league.
2. The Autumn League shall consist of such one or more divisions as the Executive should determine. The EC will form each division during August with teams allocated to divisions based on their placing in that year's Summer League.

B. COMPETITION

1. **Clubs are responsible** for highlighting any irregularities in relation in the Rules and should notify them to the Autumn League Match Secretary as a formal complaint in writing, by letter or by e-mail, within 7 days of the match being played. If email is used then the complaint must be on a **separate attachment and not in the body of the email**. If the complaint is about another club then a copy will be sent to them and they must provide a response within 7 days (later responses will not be considered). The League Match Secretary will forward the complaint and any response to the LMRSC for consideration.
2. The team scoring the most points in each division shall be the champion team of that division and shall be awarded a prize determined by the EC. The team scoring the second most points in each division will also be awarded a prize determined by the EC.
3. There will be no relegations or promotions and team's results in the Autumn League will have no effect on their placing in the next year's Summer League.
4. Ties for winners and runners up, if level on points, sets won will decide. If level on sets, games will decide. If teams are level on games then head to head will decide. If still level, a coin will be tossed. League table should include sets for an against.
5. All clubs taking part must allocate 2 courts for use in Autumn League matches.
6. All matches shall be played under the laws of Lawn Tennis in the particular week appointed by EC/LMRSC and on the night submitted to the League at the beginning of each season if possible. (This night shall be Monday for 1st and 2nd teams). For the Autumn League, matches may be rearranged (e.g. due to weather, bad light or need for floodlights) if agreed by both teams. Any matches not played within 1 week from the appointed match night will be recorded as a draw, no matter what the reason.
7. Each match shall consist of two Mixed doubles, one Ladies doubles and one Gents doubles with a tie-break operative at 6 games all. Therefore, each of the four **events** shall be worth 2 points and the completed match 8 points. Points awarded should be as follows: 2 points for a win; 1 point for a draw. Clubs must make every effort to field complete teams. Any gaps in a team must be in the lowest positions in the team and must only be in the club's lowest team.
8. **No player may play for more than one team in the same League round, unless playing as an injury substitute. Any player breaking this rule will be treated as an ineligible player for the lower team.**
9. Individual players may be registered for any number of teams but must still be played in order of strength. Clubs agree that the names of all registered players will be shown on the League results.
10. As with the Summer League all players must be LTA registered **and have obtained a World Tennis Number**. Clubs may register additional players with the LTA at any time and use them in a team but they must not be significantly stronger than those used in the same team in the Summer League for the same year. Players who were starred for higher teams in the Summer League must not be used for lower teams in the Autumn League.

11. Before the start of a match, the home team captain must provide a scoresheet showing the names of their team. The away team captain must then add the names of their team to the scoresheet before the match begins. Names given on paper score sheets must be the same as those registered with the LTA (plus an indication if a player was starred for the Summer League) otherwise, if the paper form has to be requested by the League for clarification of a match, they will be treated as Unknown Players. If a player's name cannot be found on the online League Planner system their name **and LTA number** must be sent to the League Match Secretary using the Match Comments form **that can be found** on the league website at: <https://www.southporttennisleague.org.uk/wp/match-comments/> (or by hovering over the Contact Us option on the league website) otherwise they will be treated as an Ineligible Player. At the end of the match, the scoresheet must be signed by both team captains and retained by the home team until the start of the following season in case of dispute. The away team captain may take an electronic copy of the scoresheet if they wish.
12. Pairs must be played in order of strength. Teams as well as individual players within a team must be played in order of strength. Breaches of this rule will result in the players concerned being treated as ineligible.
13. In the event of a player being incapacitated after play in a match that has begun, so that he or she cannot continue playing the remainder of that event will be forfeit. A captain shall be entitled to include a substitute in any subsequent events in which the incapacitated player should have taken part, provided that the injury or other incapacity was caused after play in the match had begun and was not due solely to tiredness. If the substitute arrives more than 20 minutes after the court and players are ready to commence the subsequent event then they will forfeit the first set and if they still have not arrived after 40 minutes they will forfeit the entire event. The substitute's name must be shown in the match results on League Planner for the events in which they have played and an email sent to the League Match Secretary using the Match Comments form on the league website at: <https://www.southporttennisleague.org.uk/wp/match-comments/> explaining the circumstances. If no substitute is found the injured player's name must not be shown on the scoresheet for any sets that they have failed to complete.
14. If a player is injured during a match or has been included on the team sheet but does not arrive in time for the second half of the match and no substitute has been found then for the remainder of the match the gap will be left in the position that the missing player would have occupied.
15. Any team playing a player made ineligible under any of these rules shall forfeit all games and points won by that player whilst he or she was ineligible. Ineligible players must play in the lowest position in the team otherwise any pairings playing below the ineligible player will also forfeit all games and points. Breaches of the rules by a higher team will not penalise other teams playing on different nights.
16. The captain of the home team shall have submitted the results of the match, using the on-line system, within 48 hours of the match being completed. Missing this deadline will result in a one match point penalty for the home team unless a problem has been reported to the League Match Secretary before the deadline. However, the match results remain valid and must be entered into the online (League Planner) system. The captain of the away team shall have verified the results within 72 hours of the completion of the match. Missing this deadline will result in the match being confirmed by the League Match Secretary. Any appeals against these actions must be directed to the LMRSC/EC via the League Match Secretary.
17. When entering match results, clubs may add additional players to any team as long as they are not unreasonably strengthening the team. An email giving the full name of the additional player must be sent to the League Match Secretary using the form on the League website at: <https://www.southporttennisleague.org.uk/wp/match-comments/>

18. Either team captain may insist a match is postponed if they consider conditions (**for example**, heavy rain or extreme heat) are dangerous for their players. Postponements before the designated (or otherwise agreed) start time of the match must be made at least one hour before. If there is a dispute between the team captains as to whether conditions are safe to play, then (unless directed otherwise by the League Match Secretary) both teams must attend the match venue but either captain may then require the match to be postponed. (*Team captains may be viewed on League Planner once you are signed in.*)
19. Either team captain may insist a match is abandoned during play, if they consider conditions (**for example**, heavy rain, extreme heat or bad light) have become dangerous for their players. If insufficient sets have been completed for the result to stand (see the following rule) then the match must be rearranged.
20. **When matches are abandoned**, the match shall be deemed to have been completed if four sets have been completed. All sets not completed or begun shall be deemed void and recorded 'not played' on the system. In the event of four sets not having been completed, the match shall be treated as a postponed match and replayed as a new match. The scoresheet must show the actual date played.
21. Postponed matches due to adverse weather conditions shall be played on an alternative night to be agreed by both teams. The alternative night must be within 1 week of the original appointed match night. Any matches not completed within one week of the appointed match night will be assumed drawn. They will be recorded on the League Planner system as a "tie" with no sets or games being awarded to either team. **Where two or more teams in a club have the same nominated alternative night/day, the higher/highest team will always take precedence. The home team must reschedule the match in League Planner, by clicking on the cogwheel at the top right of the results entry screen, to show the revised date of the match.**
22. Clubs may set the time of their home matches to either 6.30pm or 7pm so long as this has been specified to the League at least two weeks before the start of the Autumn/Winter League season. An alternative arrangement may take place for a specific match but only when it has been agreed in advance by both teams. If a start time has not been specified then 6.30pm will be assumed. Courts must be made available for play 15 minutes before the official start time to allow players to "warm up". All players in a team should be available to play at the appointed time. All warm ups must be completed by 10 minutes after the official start time. Any player not ready to play 20 minutes after the appointed starting time shall concede the first set 6-0. Or if 40 minutes after the appointed starting time shall concede the first event 6-0, 6-0, or if after 60 minutes of the appointed starting time shall also concede the second event, 6-0, 6-0. The order of play in all matches shall be MIXED events first.
23. The home team shall provide three new LTA approved tennis balls for each of the first two events.
24. All league matches have precedence over cup matches except for the cup finals. If either team playing in a cup final has a league match scheduled for that night, the league match shall be rearranged for the alternative night of the home team.
25. Clubs are responsible for highlighting any irregularities in relation in the Rules and should notify them to the League Match Secretary in writing by letter or by e-mail within 7 days of the match being played. If email is used then the complaint must be on a **separate attachment and not in the body of the email**. The League Match Secretary will forward them to the LMRSC for consideration.
26. All communication by clubs with the League Match Secretary must be made via CLUB Match Secretaries only.
27. Any problems arising from the on-line system should be notified to the League Match Secretary and/or the League Planner Manager immediately by the Club Match Secretary.
28. The League Match Secretary shall report any irregularity in relation to the Rules to the LMRSC. Failure to comply with these Rules shall be subject to an LMRSC enquiry. The LMRSC shall have the power to impose any penalty or fine.

SOUTHPORT & DISTRICT LEAGUE REGULATIONS – INDIVIDUAL TOURNAMENTS

1. (a) At its first meeting each season, the Executive Committee shall consider organising the following tournaments restricted to Southport and District Tennis League Club members.

Tournament A: Level

Tournament B: restricted to players in the fifth and lower divisions.

Tournament V: Veterans.

Tournament J: Junior

- (b) Each tournament, unless decided otherwise by the Executive Committee / Individual Tournament Secretary, shall consist of:

Men's singles, Ladies' singles, Men's doubles, Ladies' doubles, Mixed doubles.

2. All tournaments shall be run in accordance with the regulations of the LTA.
3. (a) All players registered with the League shall be eligible to enter the level tournament.
(b) Entry shall be on forms obtainable from the individual Tournament Secretary or in the handbook.
(c) Players may be seeded in the A and B Tournaments at the discretion of the Tournament Secretary.
(d) Veteran competitors shall conform to the following criteria:
Gentlemen: 50 years old and over before the closing date.
Ladies: 50 years and over before the closing date.
4. Unless decided otherwise by the Executive Committee / Individual Tournament Secretary:
(a) Matches shall consist of 3 sets, all with tie breaks at 6-6.
(b) The first named player(s) in any draw shall be at home.
(c) The home player(s) shall provide three LTA standard balls acceptable to the opponents.
(d) The visiting player shall be offered within four days of the commencing date of a round, three alternative dates for the Match to be played. At least one of the three dates shall be a week night. If the offer is not made within the four days mentioned and the visiting players cannot accept the dates subsequently offered then the Home Team shall be eliminated. If the offer is made within four days and the visiting team cannot accept any of the three days offered, the visiting players shall be eliminated. The commencing date of a round is the day following the day on which the previous round is due to be finished. In the case of 1st round matches the commencing date is to be 14 days before the round is due to be finished. If authority is given for a match to be played after the closing date for a round, then the new date shall be treated as the date for which the previous round is due to be finished.
5. The Executive Committee / Individual Tournament Secretary:
(a) shall determine the entry fees per player per event;
(b) shall determine the date by which entries, accompanied by entry fees, shall be in the hands of the Tournament Secretary.
(c) shall arrange the seeding and draw;
(d) shall direct when and where matches shall be played and the disposal of the results;
(e) shall determine the prizes to be awarded;
(f) may delegate their authority to such sub-committees as they see fit;
(g) shall have the power to refuse the entry of anyone who, in its opinion, is too good a player for the B Tournament.
(h) shall have the power to cancel any event in the B, V or J tournaments if, in its opinion, the entry is not sufficient to warrant the event. Five events shall be played in the A tournament.
(i) shall deal with any matter not provided for by these regulations and shall be the sole authority for the interpretation thereof.

SOUTHPORT & DISTRICT LEAGUE TEAM KNOCKOUT TROPHY REGULATIONS

1. (a) The Team Trophies shall be called

CHRISTIANA HARTLEY TROPHY

TRINITY SHIELD

JOSEPH LORD CUP

COLLEGE CUP

SPARTANS TROPHY – entries to SPARTANS TROPHY Secretary. Rules for the Spartans Trophy will be available on the website.

- (b) The competitions shall be played annually on a knock-out basis and the League Executive Committee shall be responsible for the organisation.

- (c) An entrance fee decided at an A.G.M. to be paid to the League Treasurer by 31st May.

2. (a) Eligibility (Teams)

CHRISTIANA HARTLEY: 1st and 2nd Div. teams

TRINITY SHIELD: 3rd and 4th Div. teams

JOSEPH LORD: 5th and 6th Div. teams

COLLEGE CUP: 7th and lower Div. teams

SPARTANS TROPHY: All league teams. Rules on the website

The team trophies are intended for play between Club League teams. It is therefore expected that regular players will be used by member clubs. For Round 2 of all four knockout competitions a player who has not played in two league matches, for any team at their club, may not be used unless playing for a club's lowest team and with the permission of the tournament secretary. After Round 2 of all competitions a player who has not played in three league matches, for any team at their club, may not be used unless playing for a club's lowest team and with the permission of the tournament secretary. The count of league matches played is up to and including the date when the cup match is played.

- (b) Eligibility (Players)

All registered players who meet the criteria under Rule 2(a) above and who have played for the team for which they are selected, or lower, in at least 50% of their matches. The League rules regarding playing of teams in order of strength apply to all knockout trophy competitions.

- (c) Players may play in more than one team in the same or different rounds of a competition if they are eligible.

- (d) All games and points won by an ineligible player will be forfeited to the opposition team. Persistent breaches of the rule may result in the team being barred from entering the following season's competition.

- (e) If, as a result of (d) the match is tied then games will be decided. If level on games, then a coin will be tossed.

3. Order of Play, Christiana Hartley, Trinity Shield, Joseph Lord, College Cup.

- (a) Each match shall consist of the events as follows: Men's and Ladies' singles, Men's, Ladies', and Mixed Doubles.

- (b) Events shall be decided over three tie break sets.

- (c) No player shall play in more than one event.

4. (a) The team designated the 'Home Team' shall decide the venue.
 - (b) The visiting team shall be offered within four days of the commencing date of a round, three alternative dates for the match to be played. At least one of the three dates shall be a week night (excluding the away teams' actual league match nights). If the offer is not made within the four days mentioned and the visiting team cannot accept the dates subsequently offered, then the HOME team shall be eliminated. If the offer is made within four days and the visiting team cannot accept any of the three dates offered, the VISITING team shall be eliminated. The commencing date of a round is the day following the day on which the previous round is due to be finished. In the case of 1st round matches, the commencing date is to be fourteen days before the round is due to be finished. If authority is given for a new match to be played after the closing date for a round, then the new date shall be treated as the date for which the previous round is due to be finished. Whilst the responsibility rests with the Home Team to offer the dates for the fixture, the away team should make every effort to obtain dates.
 - (c) Any difficulties in arranging matches must be reported to the Tournament Secretary immediately. Extensions are only permissible in the case of bad weather and for no other reason.
 - (d) Matches shall be played by the stated closing dates for rounds. Failure to do so may result in either or both teams being eliminated.
 - (e) The Home Team will provide all the balls, the Away Team will pay half the cost of the balls and take half the balls home unless otherwise agreed by both team captains.
 - (f) Should a match have to be abandoned due to bad weather before a result is achieved, events sets and games completed shall stand and the match continued from close of play.
5. (a) Team captains shall complete their teams on both copies of the score sheet prior to the start of the match.
 - (b) A completed score sheet signed by both Captains shall be sent to the Tournament Secretary by FIRST CLASS POST immediately following completion of the match. (Note: online submission of results will be accepted instead of post)
6. The League Executive Committee shall:
 - (a) Arrange the venue for each final and provide the balls for the match.
 - (b) Appoint a referee in each final who shall have full charge of the match.
 - (c) Be responsible for the insurance and engraving of the trophies.
 - (d) Deal with any matter not provided for by these regulations.
 - (e) Be the sole authority for the interpretation of these regulations.
 - (f) Arrange the date for each Final which should not coincide with the Wimbledon fortnight.

SOUTHPORT & DISTRICT LEAGUE REGULATIONS

SPARTANS KNOCKOUT TROPHY REGULATIONS

1. (a) The competition shall be called the SPARTANS TROPHY and played annually on a knock-out basis, starting after completion of the league season. The League Executive Committee shall be responsible for the organisation.

(b) An entrance fee decided at the A.G.M. to be paid to the League Treasurer by 31st May.

2. (a) The SPARTANS TROPHY is a handicapped competition. The handicap will be based on the team's league position after the end of the Summer League season with teams that are relegated or promoted handicapped according to the division in which they will start the next year's Summer League.

(b) The handicaps will be as follows unless the Tournament Secretary deems that a team is clearly playing well above or below its league status at week 12, the handicap will then be adjusted accordingly.

Division 1 -40

Division 2 -30

Division 3 -30, -15

Division 4 -15

Division 5 -15, scr

Division 6 scr

Division 7 scr, +15

Division 8 +15

Where two handicaps are given above, the first handicap will be used for odd numbered games within each set and the second for even numbered games.

These handicaps must be cancelled down:

-40 vs -40, -30 vs -30, -15 vs -15, scr vs scr and +15 vs +15 are cancelled down to love all.

-40 vs -30 and -30 vs -15 are cancelled down to -15 vs love

-40 vs -15 is cancelled down to -30 vs love.

Handicaps that include both minus and plus (e.g. -30 vs +15) cannot be cancelled down and must be played as published.

(c) Eligibility (Players)

To be eligible to play for a team in the Spartans Trophy a player must be a Registered Player for their club. They must have played at least 3 league matches during the entire summer league season for their club and must have played at least 50% of their league matches for that team or a lower team.

(d) Players may play for more than one team in the same or different rounds of the competition providing they meet the eligibility criteria.

(e) Players who have played fewer than three league matches may only play by permission of the Tournament Secretary.

(f) If a team chooses to play an ineligible player whether known or unknown prior to the match then all games and points won by an ineligible player will be forfeited to the opposition team. If both teams choose to play ineligible players and it is known before the match then, if feasible, they must be put down to play each other therefore creating a dead event (0-0, 0-0). Persistent playing of undeclared ineligible players may result in the team being barred from entering the following season's competition

3 Order of play SPARTANS TROPHY

(a) Each match shall consist of four events as follows: 1 Mens Doubles, 1 Ladies Doubles, 2 Mixed Doubles.

(b) Events shall be decided over 2 sets – if the score reaches 6-6 the set will finish.

(c) The winner will be the team winning the most events. Should the match end at 4-4 the team winning the most sets will prevail. Should the number of sets be equal the team winning the most games will prevail. Should the number of games be equal the result shall be decided by 1 Gent from Gents Doubles and 1 Lady from Ladies Doubles playing best of 11 games against a similar par from the other team.

(d) No player may play in more than one event except as in rule (c) above.

4 (a) The team designated the "Home Team" shall decide the venue. (The "Home Team" is the first named team in the draw.)

(b) Each round will take place over a designated one or two week period. Matches (or replays) will be played on the normal league match night (or replay night) for the home team in the first week of the period unless both teams mutually agree a different date within the designated period. If a date cannot be mutually agreed then the match must revert to the original normal league match night. Where a club enters two teams with the same home night and both are drawn at home then the lower team will play their match in the second week of the designated period.

(c) If a match cannot be played on the designated or mutually agreed night or replay night due to bad weather it must be re-arranged to take place within the designated period unless agreement to an extension is received from the Tournament Secretary. Failure to play within the designated period may result in either or both teams being eliminated.

(d) The Home Team will provide all the tennis balls, the Away Team will pay half the cost of the balls and take half the balls home unless otherwise agreed by both team captains.

(e) Should a match have to be abandoned due to bad weather before a result is achieved, events, sets and games completed shall stand and the match continued from the close of play.

5 (a) Team captains must complete their teams on both copies of the score sheet prior to start of match.

(b) A completed score sheet signed by both captains must be sent to the Tournament Secretary immediately following completion of the match.

6 The League Executive Committee shall:

(a) Arrange the date and venue for the final and provide the tennis balls for the match.

(b) Appoint a referee in each final who shall have full charge of the match.

(c) Be responsible for the insurance and engraving of the trophy.

(d) Deal with any matter not provided for by these regulations.

(e) Be the sole authority for the interpretation of these regulations.