

# SAN FRANCISCO PENINSULA TENNIS LEAGUE (SFPTL) RULES AND REGULATIONS 2025-2026

## I. SFPTL ORGANIZATION

### A. THE GOVERNING BOARD

- Shall consist of the LEAGUE MANAGER, LEAGUE CO-MANAGER, SECRETARY, TREASURER, A DIVISION REPRESENTATIVE FOR EACH DIVISION, and SCHEDULING DIRECTOR.
- Each member of the GOVERNING BOARD shall have one [1] vote.
- The BOARD may settle disputes, apply team penalty points, and expel any team, club or person not abiding by the rules and regulations, or code of ethics.
- The SFPTL and its GOVERNING BOARD are NOT responsible for any injuries occurring to any one individual or individuals playing tennis at either public or private tennis courts during League season play.
- The Board does not send out mid-season results. Any captain interested in Team Standings can call the Division Representative or refer to the ***sfptl.com*** website.
- The Rules and Regulations may be amended by a majority vote of the BOARD.
- The ***sfptl.com*** website provides general information about SFPTL. Team captains and players can access/download Team Registration Forms, Rules and Regulations, Code of Ethics, Schedules, Score Sheets, team match results and the Waiver of Liability form.

## **B. TEAM COMPOSITION**

- Each team shall consist of a captain and co-captain.
- Each Regular Ladies team shall consist of a total of no fewer than eighteen [18] members. There is no cap on the number of members on a Regular Ladies team.
- Each Senior Division Team shall consist of a total of no fewer than eighteen [18] members. There is no cap on the number of members on a Senior Division team.
- Seniors must be fifty [50] years of age or older to qualify in the Senior Tier. The player must be 50 years or turn 50 years of age by December 1<sup>st</sup> to play in the first half of the season. If joining a team on January 1<sup>st</sup>, the player must turn 50 during that calendar year.

## **C. TIERS AND DIVISIONS**

- The SFPTL shall have two tiers of DOUBLES tennis. These tiers will be the Regular Ladies and the Senior Ladies.
- The Regular Ladies Tier will have three (3) divisions:  
U.S. OPEN, MASTERS, and WIMBLEDON.
- The Senior Tier has two divisions: MADRID and MONTE CARLO. All the rules of the SFPTL shall apply to the Senior Ladies tier.
- The League will attempt to keep the number of teams within the Regular Ladies and Senior tiers to no fewer than 5 teams per division.

## **D. DIVISION WINNERS**

- Divisions will be balanced and re-aligned at the discretion of the Board.

- Any winning team moving up to the next higher division must consist of a minimum of 75% of their players. ***The team must take all of their top players.***

## II. ELIGIBILITY: TEAMS /PLAYER MEMBERS

### A. REGISTRATION

- ***Each team wishing to enter or rejoin the League must submit a registration form and entrance fee in June, Date to be determined. They must be submitted to the Co-Manager.***
- ***A new team joining the League must submit a completed registration form, a preliminary team roster and entrance fee to the Co-Manager in June, Date to be determined. Upon review by the Board, a new team will be assigned to an appropriate division.***

### B. TEAM ROSTER

- A copy of the FINAL team roster must be submitted by September 1<sup>st</sup> to the Division Representative AND to the League Manager.
- Members may play for only one team within each tier. This means a player can play in the Senior tier and in the Regular Ladies tier.
- Consequences of violating the above rule will make the player ineligible to play in SFPTL for the entire upcoming playing season.
- Team lists are confidential and are the property of the SFPTL. No request for their return or copies will be honored. *Information may not be shared or distributed for personal or commercial promotion in the form of advertisement or invitation of board members, captains, or players.*

## C. WAIVER OF LIABILITY RELEASE FORM

- The Waiver Release form must be received by the Division Representative by September 1<sup>st</sup>. ***Captains will keep the original signed waiver form and send a copy to their Division Rep.***
- ***A player must sign the Waiver BEFORE being allowed to play in a match.***
- ***If a player has not signed the Waiver and plays in a match, the team will forfeit three [3] points and in addition will forfeit any points won by said player.***

## D. PLAYER EXCLUSION

- Division I and collegiate players, ranked and listed players, Open players, and all other players deemed inappropriate by the Board for league level play shall be excluded.
- For the US OPEN division: The Board with the US Open Division Rep will determine when 5.0 ranked players can be included on a team match lineup.
  - 5.0 players may only play in the OPEN division, and in the #1 position
  - If a 5.0 player is scheduled to play, the opposing team must be notified ahead of the match
- **A 4.5 player may only play in the U.S. OPEN DIVISION AND THE SENIOR MADRID DIVISION.**

**OPEN DIVISION: Unlimited Play**

**SENIOR MADRID DIVISION: 4.5 RESTRICTED PLAY**

**4.5 players must be highlighted on the roster.**

4.5 players should play against 4.5 players. Captains with 4.5 players need to contact the opposing team captain prior to the match to discuss and agree to not play 4.5 players unless the opposing team captain and her players agree to play against the 4.5 players

If playing 5 spots, 4.5 players can play in the 1 & 2 spots

**An infraction of this rule will result in a penalty to be determined by the SFPTL board.**

- **If a 4.0 player becomes a 4.5 player at any time, she is automatically ineligible for the Masters Division. She can be placed on a U.S. Open Division team immediately.**
- It is always the SFPTL Board's discretion to determine eligibility and players for the League's level play.

## **E. ADDING NEW PLAYERS**

- ***A player may join a team by September 1<sup>st</sup> or be added to the roster before the first match of the second half of the season. Each Team Captain should check her team schedule as this may be in December or January depending on her Division. Only players listed on the team roster may play in a match. “Substitutes” are not allowed.***
- The new player's name must be submitted to the League Manager AND the Division Representative before the new player plays her first match.
- The Waiver Release form must be received by the Division Representative before the new player's first match. An infraction of this rule will result in a penalty.
- ***A player may not move from one team roster to another team roster within the playing season.***

### **III. CAPTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **A. REQUIRED FORMS AND CAPTAINS MEETING**

Each team captain or designated representative is to complete and turn in the following forms by the due date:

- **Due in June, Date to be determined:** Team Registration form and SFPTL fee to the Co-Manager only. Check to be made out to our Treasurer Terry Lewandowski
- **Due September 1st:** Final Team Roster to division Rep AND League Manager ONLY
- **Due September 1st:** Waiver Release forms to Division Representative ONLY (Please do not send these forms to the Manager/Co-Manager)
- The Captain (or designated representative) **MUST** attend the annual Captains Meeting held in August.
- Each team captain must have a current copy of the SFPTL Rules & Regulations present at every match; the file is available on the SFPTL Website.

#### **B. NUMBER OF POSITIONS PER MATCH AND ROUNDS OF START TIMES**

- To be consistent throughout the League, play will be limited to 5 positions for all teams.
- At the annual August Captains Meeting, Regular Ladies Team Captains will vote on the start times for their home matches.

#### **C. CONFIRMATION OF MATCH DATES**

- The hostess (home) captain will contact the guest captain ten [10] days, with the minimum of a seven [7] day notice, **BEFORE** the

match to confirm the start times, courts location, availability of restroom facilities, and other necessary details, such as possible inclement weather contingencies. Any unexpected changes must be mutually agreed upon BEFORE the match date.

- After the annual Captains Meeting, SFPTL Master Match Schedules can be viewed on ***sfptl.com*** and can be downloaded by Captains and any SFPTL member.

#### **D. NOTIFICATION OF DEFAULTS**

- Team captains are obligated to contact each other about DEFAULTED MATCHES as soon as they are aware of the situation. Note: Such as the night before or by 7a.m. on the day of the match.
- Notification of a default between the two captains is FINAL. It should be noted that notification should be by phone, then followed by email and text, if need be. It should also be confirmed that once the notification is transmitted, the default is FINAL.

#### **E. MAPS**

Each captain may either mail a map with complete directions to her opponent at the beginning of each new season or hand out same on the day of the Captains meeting before the season begins.

Captains may also check for teams' match courts addresses through the ***sfptl.com*** web site.

#### **F. COPIES OF TEAM MATCH LINE-UPS**

LINE-UPS MUST BE COMPLETED **IN PEN** BEFORE ARRIVING AT THE COURTS. The match shall not start until the entire team line-ups have been exchanged by the captains or co-captains. NO CHANGES shall be made thereafter.

## IV. RULES OF PLAY

### A. HONOR SYSTEM:

- Each captain must keep her players listed on the score sheet by the honor system. A captain's line-up must list her players by strength in sequence from #1 (strongest/top) through #6.
- The Honor System includes appropriate team management, good sportsmanship, common sense, and mutual respect. If this is not done, penalties determined by the Board will be deducted.
- A captain may move her team players no more than two- [2] positions – UP or DOWN. Once the captain has moved a player two- [2] positions - UP or DOWN – the captain has established her team player's position.
- A captain must justify playing a team player out of position. If a captain has a line-up problem, she must call – **PRIOR** to the match - her Division Representative or League Manager to help solve or clarify the situation. [***Refer to Range of Positions for Players on page 10.***]
- Always call the score loud and clear before the first serve.

### ***RANGE OF POSITIONS FOR PLAYERS***

***The first 3 matches determine which bracket a player will fall into:***

- ***If a player starts at #1, she may play no lower than #3.***
- ***If a player starts at #2, she may play as low as #4 as long as she hasn't also played #1.***
- ***If a player starts at #3, she may play as low as #5 as long as she hasn't also played #1 or #2.***

- *If a player starts at #4, she may play as high as #2 as long as she hasn't played any lower than #4.*
- *If a player starts at #5, she may play no higher than #3 as long as she hasn't played #6.*
- *If a player starts at #6, she may play no higher than #4. [See brackets scenario below.]*

*[1 2 3] 4 5 6*

*1 [2 3 4] 5 6*

*1 2 [3 4 5] 6*

*1 2 3 [4 5 6]*

*Keep your player within one of the above brackets. If you have to play a player outside her usual range, inform your Division Rep.*

*Remember, we are all part of the SFPTL: We demonstrate Honor, Ethics and Integrity.*

## **B. GENERAL RULES**

- The League tennis (playing) season shall be from September to December of the same year and will be continued from January through May of the following year.
- All players will wear appropriate tennis attire and BRING their own FILLED water or sport beverage bottles.
- CELL/MOBILE PHONES SHOULD BE ON SILENT MODE. For each incident of A DISTURBANCE OR NOISE BY OR BECAUSE OF A CELL/MOBILE PHONE, there will be a THREE-

[3] point deduction from the total team score at the end of the season.

- The hostess team will furnish yellow heavy-duty WILSON, PENN, or DUNLOP tennis balls. [NOTE: if the match is split a set each, new balls may be requested for the third set.]
- Each individual match shall consist of two [2] winning sets out of three [3] sets. The Doubles seven [7] point Tie Break rule shall apply [reference: IV-G, pg. 12], when a set reaches six [6] games all.
- If all lines/match positions start at the same time, a Third Set Tie Break is optional and must be mutually agreed upon; if not, it will be determined by the home team. [See Section V; A-point 4]
- When a THIRD SET is necessary to determine the winner of a position match, The Doubles TEN- [10] point Tie Break rule should apply [reference: IV-G, pg. 12] in lieu of the third set.
- With all matches with split start times, the THIRD SET shall be played with the Doubles Ten-point Tie Break.
- The health of a player in an SFPTL match is the priority at all times; on-court help is allowed for an incident involving injury to or sickness of a player.

### **C. SFPTL SCORE SHEET**

- The score sheet should be legible, completed with match date, week number and team names, and mailed immediately (faxed, if available) to EITHER the respective DIVISION REPRESENTATIVE OR LEAGUE MANAGER within one [1] week of the match; otherwise there will be a one [1] point penalty. (Note instructions at bottom of Score Sheet.)

- Home team's score sheet to respective Division Representative and guest team's score sheet to the League Manager. Each team captain should retain one copy of her team's completed score sheet.
- The SFPTL (Match) Score Sheet may be downloaded from [sfptl.com](http://sfptl.com) under the FORMS button.
- If a doubles team wins the first two [2] sets, it receives three [3] points. If a doubles team wins one [1] set out of three [3], it receives one [1] point and the opponents receive two [2] points.
- A defaulted line in any match will result in three [3] points being awarded to the opposing team.

REGULAR SCORING is the rule.

#### **D. SCORING, LINE CALL(S) OR PLAY DISPUTES BETWEEN PLAYERS**

- With scoring disputes, continue play with the last score on which all four players agree.
- If there is a line call you think was not right, let it go the first time. The second time, be polite in voicing your question. On the third time, let the other players know that you disagree with the call and you would now like to get someone in place to be a line judge.
- If there is a play dispute which cannot be settled mutually by all 4 players to replay the point, call for a line judge and replay the point.
- A line judge can be any person present outside of the match courts – deemed with appropriate tennis knowledge - and does not have to be a member from either team. The line judge should stand at the net.

- The line judge is there to confirm or probate disputed calls only AFTER questioned by the player(s). The line judge does NOT make pro-active calls.

## **E. INCLEMENT WEATHER**

- In case of rain the hostess captain will be responsible for contacting the guest captain NO LATER than 7 A.M.
- On the morning of the match, if rain is not present yet but is predicted or imminently visible, by 7am there needs to be a phone call contact – not email - between captains for a mutual agreement on how to proceed to start the match as scheduled.
- If it rains heavily on the day before a match, and it will be impossible for the courts to be dry by the official starting time [9 A.M.] the next day, the hostess captain should cancel the match the day before and reschedule it as soon as possible.
- Rescheduled matches: Telephone or email contact must be made within 3 days by the captain to determine (re-scheduled) match date. To expedite timely completion of rescheduled matches, offer more than ONE date option.
- If rain begins after play has commenced and it is impossible to continue, the rescheduled game must be played from the point of suspension with the same line-up and under the auspices of the same hosting team. Captains must write down the exact score, the last point, and who was serving.
- If you have a default in one of your positions and it begins to rain BEFORE match play begins, upon rescheduling the match, ALL positions, including the defaulted positions, may play in the rescheduled match.

- Rain make-ups for the first half of the Season should be finished or scheduled by December 15 if at all possible. To expedite timely completion of rescheduled matches, teams need to offer 2 new dates within 3 days of a rained out/cancelled match and the guest team must reply within two days to the offer.

If the home team makes reasonable attempts to reschedule (offering two dates to choose from and then a second attempt with two additional dates) and the guest team declines all four offered dates, the lines that can be played should be played, and the remaining unplayed lines defaulted by the visiting team.

- The home captain is to contact the Division Representative with the new rain make-up date. The original match date should be listed on the scorecard along with the date the actual match was played.
- Make-up matches or portions of matches must be rescheduled and played within 6 weeks of the original match date or May 15<sup>th</sup>, whichever is earlier. Failure to do so will result in both teams being assigned zero points for that match.
- **If a match is not re-scheduled at all, no points will be awarded to either team. Splitting points is not an option.**

## **F. MATCH RESCHEDULING**

All matches should be played according to the Master Schedule. However, if the 2 opposing team captains MUTUALLY AGREE, they may reschedule their match for any legitimate reason, e.g., school holiday, funeral, 3-day holiday weekend, school scheduling conflicts, weather, conflicting match date, or holidays, as early in the playing season as possible. The date should be offered and scheduled with in 2 days of notification of conflict.

## **G. DOUBLES SEVEN [7]-POINT TIE BREAK**

- 1) Traditional Classic (Wimbledon): With partners preserving their serving sequence assume A-B versus C-D with A having served the first game of the set. A serves the first point from the deuce side, C serves points 2 and 3 [ad side, then deuce side]; B serves 4 and 5 [ad and deuce]; D serves point 6 [ad] and the teams change ends. D serves point 7 [deuce]; A serves points 8 and 9 [ad and deuce]; C serves points 10 and 11 [ad and deuce]; B serves point 12 [ad]. The teams change ends again and continue play. The first team to win seven [7] points wins the 'GAME' and 'SET', provided there is a TWO-POINT MARGIN over the opposing team. The tie-break GAME continues until this margin is achieved. They change ends for one game to start the next set. Team C-D serves the first game of the new set.
- 2) USTA Coman's: With partners preserving their serving sequence assume A-B Versus C-D with "A" having served the first game of the set. "A" Serves the first point from the deuce side. Ends are changed after the first point. THEN after every four points. i.e., 5th, 9th, 13th, 17th, etc...so that the server will always server from the same end of the court throughout the tie-break. *For example, after switching courts sides, with "C" serving points 2 and 3 (ad side, then deuce side); "B" serves points 4 and 5 (ad and deuce). End change, then "D" serves points 6 and 7 (ad and deuce). The first team to win the seven [7] points wins the "GAME" and "SET", provided there is a TWO-POINT MARGIN over the opposing team. The tie-break GAME continues until margin is achieved.* They Change ends for one game to start the next set. Team C-D serves the first game of the new set.

## **H. DOUBLES TEN [10]-POINT TIE BREAK FOR THE THIRD SET**

Traditional Classic style: Same as above. The first team to win ten [10] points wins the 'SET', provided there is a TWO-POINT MARGIN over the opposing team. The tie break SET continues until this margin is achieved.

USTA Coman's SUPER Tie Break: Same as formerly mentioned above. The first team to win ten [10] points wins the 'SET', provided there is a TWO- POINT MARGIN over the opposing team. The tie break SET continues until this margin is achieved.

## V. OFFICIAL TIMES FOR WARM-UP AND MATCH PLAY

### A. TIMES FOR ROUND OF PLAY:

- Any valid variation from below must be of mutual agreement by the 2 opposing captains PRIOR to the exchange of line-ups and start of match play. All team captains must respect and adhere to rental court restrictions that many clubs are contracted to in order to provide courts for the match date.
- All scheduled team matches must be played at the same location, whether there are ONE [1]- or TWO [2]- round start times.
- ***If a team has five [5] or six [6] courts at one location, the official starting time may be 10:00 A.M. unless the captains agree on an earlier or later start time.***
- If a hosting team has all team positions starting at the same time, the third set, if necessary, may be played out entirely instead of using the tie-break ONLY if mutually agreed upon before each position match.
- Teams with first and second round start times: Teams play configurations can include first round with Teams #1, #2 & #3 and the second round with Teams #4, #5 and/or Teams #1, #2, and #3 should start play at 9:00 AM (no later than 9:30 AM) and teams #4, #5 and/or #6 should start play at 10:30 A.M (or 1-1/2 hours from 1<sup>st</sup> round start time) or as soon as a court becomes available from the first round matches. Default times occur 10-minutes after the official match start times, for example, 9:10 AM or 10:40 AM.

- The teams must play in numerical order as listed on the team match line-up (Score Sheet) for positions 1, 2 and 3. However, for the 2<sup>nd</sup> round start, if a court becomes available earlier than the official start time, then the next available and present team, whether #4 or #5 or #6, may take the court and start play to help expedite timely match finishes and use of rental court times.

Recommended scenario:

*First Round:*

- 8:45 A.M. Players arrive, if courts and time permits, players may begin warm up.
- 9:00 A.M. Official warm-up.
- 9:10 A.M. Play begins. If all players on a court are not present, a default may result.

*Second Round:*

- All players must be present by 10:30 A.M., even though the courts may not be available.
  - 10:30 A.M. Players arrive, ready to play.
  - 10:30 A.M. Warm-up for 10 minutes.
  - 10:40 A.M. Play begins or default rule applies.
- If players arrive onto the match courts just at the 10-minute warm-up/default time, there will be no additional 10-minute warm-up or delay in the start of the match. Match play must commence as scheduled, otherwise default rule applies.

- If courts are available before 10:30 A.M., both captains may agree to an earlier start time for the second round players as mentioned above [Letter A, point #6.]

## **B. The 10-MINUTE WARM UP/DEFAULT**

The 10-Minute warm-up/default from the time agreed upon by the two captains still applies. For example, if time agreed upon is 10:15 A.M., then warm-up is 10:15-10:25 A.M. If players are missing at 10:25 A.M., a default is assessed as described above. These clarifications are necessary for clubs who have time restrictions on court rentals.

## **C. MISSING PLAYER/PLAYERS**

- If a player from one team is not present and two players from the opposing team are present, then three [3] points will be awarded to the properly represented team. If a player from each team is missing, then a DOUBLE DEFAULT will occur and no points will be awarded.
- On the day of the match, if a team defaults one [1] position, the default is taken by the position that cannot play. The remaining positions are played as originally scheduled.

## **D. MINIMUM NUMBER OF PLAYERS AT ANY GIVEN MATCH**

- Regular Ladies Tier: Each team must have a minimum of six players at any given match. This rule applies to all divisions in the Regular Ladies Tier whether or not there are 5 or 6 positions.
- Senior Ladies Tier: Each team will be allowed two defaults per match. A Senior team MUST always have at least 3 teams for each match.

**\*\* If only 4 players are available on morning of match (2 lines) - match will still proceed. The line ups will be exchanged. Line 3**

can be played within 3 days of the match. Lines 4 & 5 will default.\*\*

## **E. COACHING AND PENALTIES FOR INFRACTIONS**

Coaching is not permitted anywhere or anytime or by anyone including teammates during the match play. It is both teams' responsibility to control the spectator's conduct during match play. Penalties for infractions of this rule are as follow:

- **First infraction of this rule:**
  - 6 POINTS for Senior Ladies Tier to be deducted from total team score at end of the season.
  - 9 POINTS for Regular Ladies Tier to be deducted from total team score at end of the season.
- **Second infraction of this rule:**
  - 12 POINTS for Senior Ladies Tier to be deducted from total team score at the end of the season.
  - 18 POINTS for Regular Ladies Tier to be deducted from total team score at the end of the season.
- **Third infraction will result in a suspension from the League.**

## **VI. PROCEDURE FOR LODGING A COACHING COMPLAINT AND SETTLING GRIEVANCES**

### **Coaching Complaint**

A letter of protest regarding the match must be submitted to the ***Division Rep*** within four [4] days of the match with a copy to the opposing team captain.

The opposing team captain must respond in writing to the ***Division Rep*** within four [4] days upon receipt of the letter of protest with a copy to the other team captain.

The ***Division Rep and League Manager*** will appoint three [3] board members to a special committee which will determine whether an infraction has occurred.

### **Settling Grievances**

If an issue cannot be resolved between two captains or by the rules, then the following procedure will be implemented:

- A phone call must be made to the ***Division Rep*** immediately following the incident stating that a problem exists.
- If the issue or grievance cannot be settled, the League Manager with the appropriate Division Representative will then meet with same captains to hear and settle or dismiss the dispute or grievance.
- All decisions made by and agreed upon by the Division Captains must meet within the approval of the Board under the rules and regulations of the SFPTL.
- The conclusion of the grievance will be documented by the League Manager ***and Division Rep. It will be presented to the Board and included in the minutes.***

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