

East Bay Women's Tennis League Rules
Amended 08/12/23

The East Bay Women's Tennis League (EBWT) is operated by a Board of Directors consisting of 3 to 5 volunteers. The board is supported by a volunteer Advisory Committee who serve as Division Representatives and other roles essential to managing the league. The Division Representatives' work entails assisting teams, answering questions, and acting as liaisons between the captains and the Board. The EBWT Board may settle disputes and/or expel or penalize any player or team that does not abide by the rules set forth here.

During the registration process, the Board reserves the right to move teams up or down to different levels to balance the number of teams in each division. The League offers 4 divisions with varied levels of play.

- * 18+ Doubles Division: Levels A1 through C
- * 50+ Division: Levels A1 through B3
- * 65+ Division: One Level, 3.0 - 4.5 players
- * Singles Division: One Level, 2.5 - 4.5 players

For Divisions with one Level, teams play their strongest players in top lines. (Please note we have renamed the Divisions to more clearly reflect player eligibility)

The primary objective of the Leagues' rules is to ensure that good sportsmanship should prevail above all else. EBWT rules, which may be amended by a majority Board vote, take precedence over any other tennis rules. USTA local league area rules apply in situations not covered by EBWT rules.

1. Team Eligibility and Responsibilities:

- a) The Board shall determine the eligibility of each team entering the League. New teams may be added at the discretion of the Board.
- b) Teams must register and pay online by the specified deadline. Fees are **NON-REFUNDABLE** once submitted.
- c) Each team must consist of at least **15 players**.
- d) **50+ and Singles Division matches will be scheduled on Mondays. Every effort should be made to schedule make-up matches on Mondays as well, but it is not required.**
- e) **Court requirements:** Each team must have at least 2 courts in one location. The courts must be in good, playable condition. Courts **MUST** be available until the completion of the match, otherwise the host team must enter a default.
- f) **Team name:** The team's name must reflect the team's home club.
- g) **4.0 players and above:** 4.0 and above players may only play on **A Level teams**.
- h) **Change of captain:** If there is a change of captain, the Division Rep and all the team captains **in that Level** must be notified immediately.
- i) **Defaults:** No team may have more than two defaults per match. We strongly urge ALL captains to be flexible and creative and do their utmost to avoid defaults. They must take the following steps:
 1. Try to reschedule the match
 2. Consider alternative locations
 3. Stagger the days of the match
 4. Contact the Division Rep for help

Failing to do ***all the above*** and having three defaults in a single match will result in the entire team being dropped immediately from the schedule. All points won and lost will be voided and the team ***and*** all its players will not be allowed to participate in EBWT the

following year. If the defaulting captain does all four steps listed above to try to avoid defaulting, the EBWT Board may elect not to penalize the defaulting team.

2. Player's Eligibility and Responsibilities

a) Age requirements:

1. **Players must be 18 years or older to play on a 18+ or singles team.**
2. Players must be 50 years or older to play on a 50+ team.
3. Players must be 65 years or older to play on a 65+ team.

Eligibility to play starts on January 1st of the calendar year of the player's birthday.

b) **Player registration: Players must register themselves on TopDog. A player MUST accept the liability waiver to play in the EBWT League. Captains and club managers/tennis directors may not register players.**

c) **Club rules:** Players MUST abide by all the host club's rules.

d) **Ratings:** A singles player must be assigned a rating, preferably a USTA rating. For all other divisions, EBWT does not update player ratings. Level of play is based on the honor system.

e) **Transferring to another team:** If a player signs up for a team, they may transfer to another team any time during the season as long as they have **NOT** played a match for the original team.

3. Captain's Responsibilities

a) **Contact the visiting captain:** The hosting captain must contact the visiting captain five days prior to the match to confirm times, location, dress code requirements, etc. The host should also provide complete directions to the match location.

b) **Captains must read and understand EBWT league rules.** Captains are encouraged to carry a copy of the league rules in their tennis bag. Captains should TRY to refrain from engaging tennis pros and tennis staff in league matters. Captains should do their utmost to resolve disputes between themselves. If that is not possible, please contact your division representative.

c) **Team communications:** The captain must communicate to all team members the importance of providing correct and updated personal information in TopDog. Players must understand and agree that email is the PRIMARY means of communication for EBWT. Text capabilities are not reliable.

d) **Provide balls:** The hosting team shall provide new, unopened cans of regulation tennis balls.

e) **Water:** The host team must provide drinking water.

f) **Refreshments:** Refreshments are optional and at the discretion of the host team.

g) **Defaults:** If a default is to be given, the other captain must be notified as soon as possible. If the playing schedule conflicts with an existing match, school holiday, or if one of the teams is unable to field 3 lines, the captains may elect to reschedule the EBWT match.

h) **Scoring:** The host captain must enter the players' scores and the match results from a completed and signed score sheet into the league website within 24 hours of the match. The visiting captain must confirm the entered scores and results within 48 hours.

4. Match Guidelines

a) **Sportsmanship:** East Bay Women's Tennis League is a recreational tennis league created to foster fun, friendly, competitive tennis where good sportsmanship prevails above all

- else. To promote equitable play and in the spirit of good sportsmanship, captains should always play their lines straight up with the strongest players on line 1 and weaker players on line 4. If a captain knows in advance that they cannot play the lines straight up due to scheduling issues, they should notify the opposing captain.
- b) **Lineups and exchange prior to match start:** Each captain must fill out their team's line-up in ink on a score sheet and bring it to the match. Line-ups must be exchanged simultaneously. After the exchange, the line-up generally may not be changed. However, flexibility and good judgement should prevail. If a substitute player is sent of which the captain is unaware, or if an injury occurs during warm-up and replacement can be made within the default time, a roster change is permitted. Team positions may not be changed. Players may only be substituted. The captains should verify all players in the lineup are listed on the bottom of the scorecard. Exceptions should be acknowledged and noted.
 - c) **Match start times:** Four lines starting at the same time is HIGHLY recommended.
 - d) **Four-line match start times:** The hosting team may choose to play all four lines at 9:30 or 10:00 a.m.
 Play **MUST** begin at **9:30 or 10:00. If a team wishes to warm up prior to the match it must be done prior to the match start time. All players must be on the court ready to go at start time.**
 - e) **Split start match times:** Split start matches must start at 9:30 a.m. SHARP for the first lines. If a team wishes to warm up, the team must arrive prior to 9:30.
ALL 9:30 PLAYERS SHOULD BE ON THE COURT AND READY TO GO AT 9:30 SHARP.
 Second round players should arrive by 10:30 a.m. and take the first available court. 3/1 or 1/3 split start times are permitted, but the host captain must inform the guest team on TopDog via email.
 - f) **A full third may be played if all four lines are played simultaneously:** A full third set is encouraged. **HOWEVER**, the host team may decide whether to play a full third set or a ten-point super tiebreaker. This decision must be communicated **BEFORE** the start of play. The ten-point tiebreak results should be recorded as 1-0.
 If the HOME team fails to decide and to communicate their choice of a full third set or a 10-point super tie breaker before the first serve of the match, they forgo the right to select, and all four players must agree to a full third set. If there is one dissent, a ten-point super tiebreaker must be played.
 - g) **Third set if using a split start:** A ten-point super tiebreaker is mandatory for the first shift and optional for the second shift starters. All 4 players in a second start match must agree to a full third set. If there is one dissent, a ten-point super tiebreaker must be played.
 - h) **Late players:** A default may be given if a player(s) are 15 minutes late and a court is available. If a player(s) arrives 15 minutes after the scheduled playing time, the opposing captain may call a default. However, if there are unforeseen problems (such as heavy traffic, freeway accident, etc.) and a player(s) arrives late, the teams should try to play the match regardless of the 15-minute default rule. Allowing a wait-time beyond 15 minutes is at the full discretion of the opposing team or opposing team captain. Protests, if any, may be made to the division representative after the match has concluded.
 - i) **Late player's warm up:** Regardless of the time that the late player(s) arrive, if the match is to be played, late players must be allowed a 5-minute warm-up.
 - j) **Additional changes:** Any other changes in playing schedules must be mutually agreed upon in advance.
 - k) **Scoring:** All matches consist of the best two out of three sets with regular scoring. A 7-

point set tiebreaker must be played at 6 games all. The first team to win seven points by a margin of 2 points wins the tiebreak game. The tiebreak game shall continue until the 2-point margin is achieved.

- l) **Set Scoring:** If three **full** sets are played each set is given the actual set scores. If a third set tie breaker is played in lieu of a full third set, the score is 1-0 for that third set.
- m) **Retired matches:** Enter the actual score when the match ended. Make sure to click "retired" for the status and which team retired. The loss goes to the retired team.
- n) **USTA Rules:** Play is governed by USTA rules. Players are allowed three minutes for an injury time-out. A ten-minute break may be taken between the second and third sets. *Note: USTA day matches do not take precedence over EBWT matches.*
- o) **Coaching:** Coaching of players is not permitted by anyone during the match. Only players are allowed on the courts during the match.
- p) **Children:** Children are NOT allowed on or near the courts during matches. Players must follow the rules of the host club especially concerning unsupervised minor children.
- q) **Disputes:** Fair, cooperative play and good sportsmanship is the goal of all EBWT matches. If needed, a linesperson may be requested. The individual will stand at the net but will not make calls unless asked. When asked, they may overrule a player's call.
- r) **Foot faults:** A warning must be issued, and the offending player must agree to take care to avoid foot faulting before a linesperson is called.
- s) **Order of defaults for lines:** Defaults start from the bottom up (e.g., line four doubles, then line three), except when matches are scheduled early and late on the same day or on different days, in which case no-shows and same-day defaults will affect that time only.
- t) **Team Scoring:** Each line can earn a maximum of three points per match. The total score for a match cannot exceed 12 points. Each line grosses 3 points: 4 lines x 3 points each = 12 points for the total match.
 - i. A team that wins in 2 sets earns 3 points; opposing team earns 0
 - ii. A team that wins in 3 sets earns 2 points; opposing team earns 1 point
 - iii. A match MAY end in a tie.
- u) **Posting match results:** The host captain should post match results on TopDog within 24 hours of the match.

5. Singles Division

- a) **Line-ups:** Singles players must play at their USTA rating effective from the start of the season or the date they are added to the team roster, whichever is later. If a singles player does not have a current USTA rating, a rating will be assigned.
- b) **Match Protocol:** Singles matches consist of four lines, one at each of the following ability levels:
 - Line 1: Players rated 4.0 to 5.0
 - Line 2: Player rated 3.5 to 4.0
 - Line 3: Players rated 3.0 to 3.5
 - Line 4: Players rated 2.5 to 3.0
- c) **Playing up:** Singles players must play in the bracket of their ratings. They may not play above their respective brackets. Singles captains should bring a roster sheet listing the ratings of their players to each match.

6. Rainouts

- a) **Notification of visiting team:** If the courts are wet prior to 8:00 am on the day of the match and are not expected to be dry by the 9:30 am start time, the home team must

notify the visiting team no later than 8:00 am to cancel the match and discuss rescheduling. (A later notification time is acceptable if both captains agree in advance.) Host Captains are not required to CONFIRM that courts are dry. If a cancellation notification is not issued by 8:00 am, THE MATCH IS ON. The visiting team must assume the match is on unless they receive the cancellation by 8:00 am on the day of the match. If the visiting team arrives and the courts are not playable, the match must be rescheduled, and the visiting team has home court advantage.

- b) **Unplayable courts prior to match start:** If the visiting team arrives and the designated courts are unplayable due to inclement weather before a first point is played, the visiting captain shall have the option of rescheduling the match at their **home courts**. The visiting team shall provide balls and water if they choose this option. The captain must follow the rescheduling rules below. Captains may use different players for any or all the positions. If a captain has called to default positions for a match that is cancelled before play begins, those positions may be filled for the rescheduled match.
- c) **Rescheduling Matches:**
 - i. Within seven days of the original match date, the home team must offer two dates simultaneously to the visiting team (the match itself does not need to be played within 7 days but must be played prior to the end of the season). If the home team does not follow up within the designated time, the visiting team takes home court.
 - ii. Within three days of receiving the two reschedule dates from the home team, the visiting team must choose one date. Home team picks the match date if the away team does not respond within three days.
 - iii. If the visiting team is already scheduled to play in a EBWT match on both the dates offered for the reschedule, the home team must offer two alternate dates.
- d) **Interrupted match play:** If it rains AFTER a “team match” or any individual match has started, the make-up match shall be played at the original location, unless mutually agreed otherwise. If both captains agree, they may also allow their individual players to reschedule their own match at mutually agreed upon dates/times.
 - i. For the individual match or line that has started, the same players must return and complete the match, and start exactly where they left off. **(HINT: Write it down!)**
 - ii. For the match or lines that did not start, the captains may use different players.
 - iii. Once the match has begun and the rain interrupts play, any individual match that would have been defaulted shall stand as a default.

7. Division Winners

- a) A team must complete all its matches by the end of the season, not after the season is over, to qualify to **be a winner of their Division Level**.
- b) If a team does not complete all its matches, there could be a harsh penalty, which may include not being invited back to the EBWT league the following season.
- c) The team winning all its matches during the season will be declared the **Division Level Winner**. A tie is not considered a win. If no team wins all its matches, the team with the highest point total at the completion of all matches will be the winner. The TopDog ranking system will apply to help determine the **winners**. TopDog first ranks teams based on total points, wins, losses, individual match wins, individual set wins, then individual game wins.
- d) Division **Level** Winners will be recognized at the annual luncheon and on the League website.
- e) The final League results will be announced at the annual luncheon event. An invitation

- to the annual luncheon will be sent to the captains during the season and will be posted on the league website.
- f) A team winning its **Division Level** must move up to the next higher **level**, except the winner of the A1 **level**. All team members except substitutes will be considered a part of the winning team and may not be eligible to remain in the lower **level**. (A substitute is a player who has played no more than twice during the season.)

The EBWT Board reserves the right to amend any of the above rules in any season and at any time for special circumstances and to serve the needs of our players and teams.