PICKLEBALL
Tournament Rules

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1. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

The SSC rents all courts from private facilities. As tenants, players must respect the standards and rules of each facility:

- Outside alcohol is strictly forbidden inside facilities or in parking lots.
- Alcohol may only be purchased and consumed within a designated beer garden.
- Caretakers and staff must always be treated with respect.
- **Doors should never be propped open.**
- Players must wear clean, non-marking running shoes. All players must bring an extra set of shoes to change into once they arrive at the facility.
- The SSC will provide Pickleballs to use for the tournament and have some paddles on hand for those who don't own a paddle. Players are encouraged to bring their own paddle.

Facility Complaint Policy: Any player who causes the SSC to receive an official complaint regarding a facility is subject to a $100 fine and possible suspension from the tournament and leagues.

2. SPORTSMANSHIP

The SSC encourages a 'fun-first, winning-second' attitude in all tournaments. All players are expected to abide by the SSC sportsmanship policies, including:

- Controlling emotions and actions at all times.
- Treating the facility, equipment, staff, other players, and coordinators with courtesy and respect.
- Avoiding retaliation under any circumstance.
- Providing feedback in a constructive manner to the SSC staff and being open to feedback from the SSC staff.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

SSC Staff (including Games/Event/Beach Volleyball Coordinators) reserve the right to remove players immediately from a facility and/or league, tournament, or event if they are involved with any of the following acts toward a coordinator, facility staff, player, or spectator:

- Using racial, ethnic, homophobic, fatphobic, gendered, transphobic, sexist, sexual, disability or other slurs.
- Swearing directly at another person.
- Intentionally pushing, shoving, or making physical contact with another person.
- Instigating and/or retaliating in an altercation.
- Displaying disrespectful or threatening behavior.

If a player is ejected due to unsportsmanlike play, they must vacate the facility immediately, inclusive of the parking lot.

In addition to being dismissed from the game, the player(s) or team may be removed from the tournament with no refund and future league suspensions may be issued.

REPORTING SPORTSMANSHIP CONCERNS

- If during the game there is a concern with the other team, the issue should be addressed respectfully with the opposing team captain at the appropriate time (during play on the sidelines or breaks in the game).
- If the issue remains unresolved at the end of the game, captains should further discuss the issue with the SSC Staff and opposing team captain.

3. ROSTERS

Format	Total # of Players Required on the Court	Minimum # of F Players Required on the Court	Maximum # of M/X Players Allowed on the Court
Co-ed Doubles	2	1	1
Open Doubles	2	0	2

The SSC welcomes people of all gender identity or expression. Minimum female player requirements are inclusive of anyone who identifies as a female (i.e. players who identify themselves as M and X will not count towards female player minimums).

- All players on the roster must have accepted their MySSC invite prior to the tournament.
- When competing in semi-finals and finals, all players on the court must have played at least 1 game with the team during the round-robin.
- **Masters** divisions require **all** players to be at least 40 years of age.

DEFAULT MINIMUMS AND SCORES

Format	Minimum Players to Avoid Default	Default Score
Co-ed / Open Doubles	1 (No Gender Requirements)	0 - 11; 0 - 11

4. TOURNAMENT FORMAT AND SCORING

GAME FORMAT

- **Round Robin Matches:** Games 1 and 2 are played to 11 points and teams must win by two, to a maximum of 15 points. There is no Game 3 in round-robin games.
- **Playoff Matches:** Playoffs are single elimination and are a best-of-three-game format with each game played to 11 points and teams must win by two, to a maximum of 15 points.
- Ties are allowed in round-robin matches. If each team wins a game in the match, the match winner is determined by who has the higher total points 'for'. Should the total points 'for' for both teams be the same, the match is considered a tie.

SCORING

- Pickleball scoring is not rally-point; teams can only score points when they have the serve.
- If the Event Staff is required to call 'time' on a game, teams should finish the current point.
    - The score will stand as-is unless the combined score in the current game has not reached a total of 5 points, in which case the game will not count.
- The serving player should announce the score before each serve.
    - Announce the serving team's score first, followed by the opponent's score, and then the server number.
        - *Example: 10-8-2 (indicates that the score is 10-8 for the serving team, and they are on their second serve).*

5. GAME PLAY

SERVING AND RETURNING

SERVICE ROTATION

- Teams can use any suitable means to determine who gets the first serve or chooses a side (e.g. rock, paper, scissors).
    - Service and sides will alternate between teams for Game 2.
    - If a 3rd game is required in playoffs, teams must re-determine who gets serve or side.
    - Teams will switch sides in Game 3 once one team has reached 5 points.
- The team that starts the game with the serve will start on their 2nd serve; they only get one service game to start.
    - After this initial service game is played out, each team will always have both players serve during each remaining service game.
- The serving team always starts the game with the player in the right-hand service court.
    - If a point is scored, the server moves to the left side (odd court) and serves to the diagonally opposite court.
    - The server continues to move from right to left or left to right each time a point is scored.
- For the serving rotations that follow, serves will always start in the right-hand court, but the player serving first will vary.
    - Whoever is on the right side (depending on the score) when the team gets the serve back is the first server for that service turn only.
    - When the first server of that game is on the right side of the court, that team's score should be even.
        - If this is not the case, then either the players are positioned on the wrong side of the court or the called score is inaccurate.
- Players on the serving team alternate between the service-courts after each point.

RECEIVING THE SERVE

- To start the game, the receiving team must decide which court / side each of them will receive serve in.
- After the initial service game, players receive serve from the court / side they last served from.
- The receiving team does not alternate positions when a point is scored by the serving team.

SERVICE

- Both players on the serving team must be behind the baseline at the time of the serve.
- All serves must be underhand and contacted below the waist.
- The server has the option of dropping the ball and hitting it off of the bounce, performing what is called a Drop Serve.
    - Drop Serves: The server should simply release the ball and let gravity run its course. Players **may not** force the ball down to create a higher bounce, spin or any other type of manipulation.
- The ball must land in the diagonal court, between the non-volley zone and the boundary lines.
    - On a serve, the ball must clear the kitchen (if it lands on the non-volley zone line, it is considered out) however, if the ball hits the center or outer boundary lines, it is considered in.
- If the served ball touches the net, and lands in the correct service-court area it is considered fair.
    - *Please note this used to be considered a 'let,' however it no longer aligns with Pickleball Canada rules.*
- The receiving team makes the line calls. If there is a dispute, re-serve with no point awarded.

RETURNING THE BALL

- **Double Bounce Rule:** Each team must play their first shot off of the bounce, or as a ground-stroke.
    - This means that the receiving team must let the serve bounce, and that the serving team must let the return bounce before playing it.
    - Once these two bounces have occurred, the ball can either be volleyed or played off a single bounce.
- **Non-Volley Zone:** Also known as the "kitchen," extends out approximately 7 feet from each side of the net.
    - A player cannot step on the non-volley zone line or into the zone itself when making a volley (hitting the ball in the air).
    - A player cannot enter the non-volley zone due to forward momentum after hitting a volley shot, even if contact with the ball was made outside of the zone.
    - Players can enter the non-volley zone any other time, as long as they do not make contact with a ball in the air.
    - Players can enter the non-volley zone to make a ground-stroke, or play a ball that bounces in the zone.

VIOLATIONS AND FAULTS

Players are expected to know the Pickleball rules and call their own faults. If an obvious fault is missed, a player on the opposing team may politely point this out, assuming their opponent either does not know the rule or missed their own fault. Generally, teams should NOT call faults against their opponents.

SERVICE FAULTS

- The server foot faults; touching the back line or court during the serve
- The server misses the ball when trying to hit it
- The ball touches a permanent fixture or post before hitting the ground
- The ball does not land in the diagonal service-court area
- The ball lands on the non-volley zone line
- The ball touches the net and lands in the non-volley zone

GAMEPLAY FAULTS

- Ball lands outside the boundaries of the court
- Ball fails to pass over the net
- Ball touches the side walls
- Ball touches a player or their clothing
- Ball is caught and held on the paddle and then slung during the execution of a stroke
- Ball is hit more than once by the same team (double hit)

PLAYER FAULTS

- **Double bounce rule** violation
- **Non-volley zone violation** "Stay out of the kitchen!"
- Failure to return the ball before it bounces twice on their side of the court
- Touching the net or its supports with a body part, paddle or clothing
- Crossing the plane of the net with their body, paddle or clothing
  - *Exception:* Players can cross the plane (without touching the net) if they have contacted the ball on their side of the net first

Note: *Hard smashing is discouraged in SSC Pickleball Tournaments, please respect the level of your opponents.*

6. REPORTING AND STANDINGS

After each game/match, both captains must ensure that the scores are written on the appropriate standings print-outs provided by the SSC. Teams that do not report scores will receive a zero for that game/match.

HOW TEAMS ARE RANKED

At the end of the round-robin, teams will be ranked based on the criteria below:

1. Total Match Points. Teams Earn:
   a. Win both games: 3 pts
   b. Split games and win on point differential: 2 pts
   c. Split games and lose on point differential or tie: 1 pt
   d. Lose both games: 0 pts
2. Number of games won.
3. Point differential (total points for minus total points against).
4. Results in the match versus the team you are tied with (if applicable).
5. The Event Coordinator will flip a coin to determine who places higher.

7. WEATHER

INDOOR TOURNAMENT

The SSC does not cancel any indoor games due to inclement weather. The only time that games would be cancelled is if the facility is closed. Teams would be contacted in that scenario.

OUTDOOR TOURNAMENT

This tournament is an all-weather event and will take place, rain or shine. Players are expected to come prepared to play through some not-so-great weather. Unplayable conditions include: very heavy rain, snow, hail or thunder and lightning.

Although some weather conditions are not ideal to play through, we must ensure that we utilize the playing time we have. If you are not sure whether to continue playing or not, please wait for an update from an SSC representative.