

LEAGUE RULES

1. North East Cheshire Lawn Tennis League.

- 1.1 The League shall be called "The Slazenger North East Cheshire Lawn Tennis League" for the period of the sponsorship.

2. Annual General Meeting

- 2.1 The Annual General Meetings shall be held on the last Wednesday of November in each year.
- 2.2 The Annual General Meeting shall elect the President and the Executive Committee.
- 2.3 The League Secretary shall give 14 days notice to all Clubs.
- 2.4 Each Club shall send at least one authorised representative.
- 2.5 Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only.
- 2.6
- 2.6.1 Any Club which is not represented at the Annual General Meeting will be fined £20
- 2.6.2 Any fine is to be paid before the following Annual Fixture Meeting.

3. Extraordinary General Meeting

- 3.1 The League Secretary shall summon an Extraordinary General Meeting upon the written request of seven or more Clubs.

4. Management of League

- 4.1 The League shall be managed by an Executive Committee.
- 4.2 The Executive Committee shall consist of:
 - 4.2.1 Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Mens Match Secretary, Honorary Ladies Match Secretary, and Honorary Tournament Secretary as ex-officio members.
 - 4.2.2 Seven other members.
- 4.3 All officials shall be elected at each Annual General Meeting.
- 4.4 All officers and committee shall retire at each Annual General Meeting, but shall be eligible for re-election.
- 4.5 The quorum for an Executive Committee meeting shall be six.
- 4.6 Any member of the Executive failing to attend three consecutive meetings shall be considered to have vacated their seat and the Executive Committee shall be empowered to fill any such vacancy.
- 4.7 The Treasurer shall submit to the Annual General Meeting the accounts for approval of the League, duly audited by a person who is not a member of the committee.
- 4.8
- 4.8.1 Any Notice of Meeting will be sent to the Club Secretary or Match Secretary as appropriate, unless the Club have notified the League Secretary in writing of the name and address of another person who is authorised to receive notices on behalf of the Club.
- 4.8.2 A notice will be held to have been duly sent on the next working day after it is posted if sent by prepaid post.
- 4.8.3 Clubs must immediately advise the League Honorary Secretary in writing if the name and/or address of their Club Secretary or nominated person changes.

5. Powers of Executive Committee

- 5.1 The Executive Committee shall have the power to:
 - 5.1.1 Conduct the business of the League.
 - 5.1.2 Deal with offending Clubs or players.
 - 5.1.3 Determine the constitution of the Divisions.

- 5.1.4 Make decisions with regard to all abandoned matches.
- 5.1.5 Appoint a sub-committee from the members of the Executive Committee to review all disputes.
- 5.1.6 Give a ruling on all disputes or appeals on any matter connected with the League.
- 5.1.7 Use the League funds as they think advisable.
- 5.1.8 Deal with any matter not covered by these Rules.
- 5.1.9 Co-opt not more than 2 persons at any time.
- 5.2 The Chairman of the Executive Committee may exercise a casting vote at any meeting where there is equality of voting.

6. League Rules

- 6.1 No alteration or addition shall be made to these Rules except at the Annual General Meeting.
- 6.2 Notice of any proposed change to the rules shall be sent in writing to the League secretary on or before the 15 October, details of which shall be forwarded to all Clubs at least seven days before the date of the Annual General Meeting.
- 6.3 Any change to the rules shall not be made unless supported by a two thirds majority of the Clubs present and voting at the Annual General Meeting.

7. Disputes

- 7.1 All disputes shall be discussed by the Disputes sub-committee, and if necessary shall then be presented to the Executive Committee.
- 7.2 If a member of either Committee is connected with a Club involved in a dispute then that member shall not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter.

8. Payment of Subscriptions/Fines

- 8.1 Any subscription or fine must be paid by the stated date.
- 8.2 If any subscription or fine remains unpaid the Club will be disqualified from the League and not allowed to re-enter until all outstanding amounts have been paid.
- 8.3 If disqualification of a Club occurs in a current season, the Executive Committee will decide whether the Club's results for that season shall stand or not.

9. League Membership

- 9.1 9.1 Any lawn tennis club is eligible for membership of the League and may be elected to the League by the majority vote of the Executive Committee.
- 9.2 9.2 Applications for membership of the League or for additional teams must be made in writing to the League Secretary no later than the date of the Annual General Meeting.
- 9.3 -
- 9.3.1 Notice of withdrawal of any Club or team from the League must be notified in writing to the League Secretary on or before the Annual General Meeting.
- 9.3.2 Any Club failing to give such notice shall be fined £20, payable by 1st May.
- 9.4 Any Club guilty of inducing, or attempting to induce, a bona-fide member of another League Club to leave the Club of which they are a member, shall be liable to a fine or expulsion from the League.

10. Composition of League

- 10.1 The League shall be divided into Men's and Ladies Divisions.
- 10.2 The number of teams in a division shall be at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- 10.3 No more than two teams from one Club may play in the same Division, and will be subject to the conditions in Appendix A.
- 10.4 The Executive Committee shall have the power to deal with situations that arise as it considers appropriate (including awarding or deduction of points or sets) in order to ensure fair play.

11. Annual Subscription

- 11.1 The annual subscription for each team shall be fixed at each Annual General Meeting and shall be payable on or before 1st May in each year.
- 11.2 The subscription shall include the supply of a minimum of six League Handbooks for each team.
- 11.3 Clubs whose subscriptions are not paid by 1st May shall be required to pay double fees.

12. Fixture Meeting

- 12.1 A League Fixture Meeting shall take place on the last Monday in January unless varied by the Executive Committee.
- 12.2 Each Club shall send its Match Secretary or other authorised representative(s) to arrange the fixtures for the following season.
- 12.3 -
- 12.3.1 Any Club which is not represented at the League Fixture Meeting will be fined a sum equal to the subscription payable by that Club for the forthcoming season.
- 12.3.2 Any fine is to be paid by the following 30 April of that year.

13. Fixture Dates

- 13.1 Fixture dates will be arranged at the Fixture Meeting.
- 13.2 Fixtures must be arranged for completion by 31 July of that year.
- 13.3 Re-arranged matches shall be played as soon as possible and no later than 14 August.
- 13.4 Weekday matches shall start at 6.30pm. There will be no knock-up later than 15 minutes after the start time of the match and the break to be no longer than 5 minutes between matches once players become available from the completion of the previous round.
- 13.5 Weekend matches shall start at the time agreed at the Fixture Meeting.
- 13.6 No team shall be obliged to play matches on a Saturday or a Sunday.
- 13.7 If teams are not able to agree on a date, the home team must offer a total of three alternatives which must not be in the same seven day period, and one of which must be accepted by the away team.

14. Match Card

- 14.1 A Match Result Card, fully and correctly completed in all respects and signed by both captains, shall be posted by the captain of the home team to the relevant League Match Secretary to be received within seven days of completion of the match.
- 14.2 Late and illegible cards may incur a fine.
- 14.3 Any fine is to be paid prior to the Annual General Meeting.

15. Promotion/Relegation

- 15.1
 - 15.1.1 Two points shall be given for each match won, and one point for a draw.
 - 15.1.2 The match result will be decided on the number of sets completed.
- 15.2 If two or more Clubs finish the season with equal points, then their position shall be decided by dividing the number of sets won by the number of sets lost. Should these prove equal, then the decision shall be on games on a similar basis.
- 15.3
 - 15.3.1 Normally the top two Clubs in each division will be promoted in the second and subsequent Divisions except in the highest paired divisions where one team from each arm will gain promotion. The two team runner-ups in the uppermost paired level to take part in a play-off to decide the third promotion place, on the second Saturday of September. The play-off teams must only contain players that can be shown to have consistently played for the teams throughout the season. The venue to be decided by the Executive Committee at the beginning of the season by the toss of a coin.

- 15.3.2 In the case of the unpaired bottom division, four teams will be promoted, two into each Division of the lowest paired level.
- 15.3.3 The bottom two teams in each division will be relegated to the next division except in the lowest unpaired divisions where 3 teams will be relegated (for this purpose the lowest unpaired divisions will not include those below the paired divisions.).
- 15.4 The Champions of each Division shall be awarded a plaque which shall become the property of the Club concerned and a trophy which shall remain the property of the League.

16. Courts

- 16.1 All matches shall be played on hard/all weather courts.
- 16.2 Matches may be played on grass or indoors if both captains agree.

17. Tennis Balls

- 17.1 Only first grade Slazenger balls (not pressure-less) must be used in matches and tournaments.
- 17.2 By 31st August clubs must send the League Secretary a copy of the club's invoice for the purchase of Slazenger balls for that year. Clubs failing to do so will be fined £20 (twenty pounds).
- 17.3 Clubs failing to use such a ball will be deducted 2 points and the match awarded to the opposition.

18. Tennis Equipment and General Behaviour

- 18.1
 - 18.1.1 All players must wear recognised tennis clothes and footwear.
 - 18.1.2 Any player infringing the rule shall not take part in the match or tournament.
- 18.2
 - 18.2.1 Any mobile phone taken into the court area should be turned off.
 - 18.2.2 The court area includes the courts and the area around the courts within the fenced area of the courts.
 - 18.2.3 Any player infringing this rule shall turn their phone off, and a refusal or failure to do so shall disqualify that player from taking further part in the match or tournament, any outstanding games or sets shall be awarded to the opposition.

19. Composition of Teams

- 19.1
 - 19.1.1 Each League team shall consist of six players comprising three pairs.
 - 19.1.2 In the event of a team consisting of less than six players, then the match can proceed but the incomplete team may be deducted one point.
- 19.2 All players must be bona fide Club members.
- 19.3 No League team player shall be allowed to play for more than one League Club in a League match in the same season except with the prior permission of the relevant League Match Secretary.
- 19.4 A list of Club team players shall be sent to the League Match Secretary within fourteen days of a request made on the instruction of the Executive Committee.
- 19.5 No player shall play in more than 12 League matches in one season. In the case of a division playing 11 matches in a season then a regular player may play 13 matches in one season.
- 19.6
 - 19.6.1 In the event of a breach of this rule, the Executive Committee shall deduct points or otherwise penalise an offending Club as considered appropriate.

- 19.6.2 If someone plays in a match under an assumed name, then that team will be automatically relegated for the first offence, and any further offences will result in the Club being excluded from the League.

20. Playing Down/Playing Up

- 20.1 Players who are recognised as first team players at the time of a second team match shall not be selected for that second team match. Similarly with second team players and third team matches and third team players and fourth team matches etc.
- 20.2 Players who have played a total of 5 matches for the same or different higher teams in the same season will then be ineligible to play for the lower team.
- 20.3 Any dispensation to "play down" will need the prior authorisation of the relevant League Match Secretary.
- 20.4 In the event of a breach of this rule, the Executive Committee shall deduct points or otherwise penalise an offending Club as considered appropriate.

21. 21 Composition of Matches

- 21.1 21.1 The order of play in all matches shall be:

1st round	Home Pair	1	2	3
v	Away Pair	1	2	3
2nd round	Home Pair	2	3	1
v	Away Pair	1	2	3
3rd round	Home Pair	3	1	2
v	Away Pair	1	2	3

- 21.2 Each away team pair shall play on the same court for all three rounds unless otherwise agreed.
- 21.3 Each rubber shall consist of two sets.
- 21.4
- 21.4.1 If a set reaches 5-5, a tie break game shall decide the set
- 21.4.2 The tie break shall be played in accordance with Appendix B

22. Match Completion Time

- 22.1
- 22.1.1 All weekday matches shall finish at the times stated in Appendix C.
- 22.1.2 If the captains agree, floodlighting may be used, but the match will still be subject to the finishing time in Appendix C.
- 22.2 Matches arranged for a Saturday or Sunday shall have the same duration as in Appendix C – The Time Limit Rule.
- 22.3 Any game(s) in progress at the finish time shall be completed.
- 22.4
- 22.4.1 If at the finishing time less than ten sets have been fully completed the match shall be replayed, but if ten or more sets have been completed the result shall stand.
- 22.4.2 Uncompleted sets shall not be taken into account for deciding the match result.

23. 23 Fulfilling/Re-arranging Matches

- 23.1 Matches shall be played on the pre-arranged date and may be postponed only because of unfit playing conditions due to bad weather.
- 23.2 Inability to raise a fully representative team shall not be accepted as valid reason for the postponement of any fixture.
- 23.3 If the team captain or match secretaries of both Clubs are able to communicate with each other on the day of play and mutually agree that play is impossible, the match may be postponed.

- 23.4 If there is no agreement, both teams shall present themselves on the ground at which the match should be played.
- 23.5 Unless a postponement has been agreed, if a team fails to be present by 7.30pm, the match shall be awarded to the team present, and the score shall read 18 sets to nil and 108 games to nil.
- 23.6 Players must await the captain's decision with regard to possibility of play before leaving the ground.
- 23.7
- 23.7.1 Within seven days of the postponed match the Home Club must contact the Away Club to re-arrange the match.
- 23.7.2 Within seven days of being contacted by the Home Club, the Away Club must agree a date for the re-arranged match.
- 23.7.3 The relevant parts of Rule 13 shall apply to re-arranged matches.
- 23.8
- 23.8.1 If a match is not played, the offending team shall have two points deducted from its League record. In addition, any team in the first three divisions may also be relegated.
- 23.8.2 In the event of any other breach of this rule, the Executive Committee shall deduct points or otherwise penalise an offending Club as considered appropriate.

24. Late Starting Matches

- 24.1
- 24.1.1 If by 6.45 pm play has commenced in only two rubbers due to the absence from court of one or more players, then play in the late starting rubber shall not continue longer than completion of the game in progress at the time when the first two rubbers are completed.
- 24.1.2 If by 6.45 pm only one rubber has commenced, then play in the other two late starting rubbers shall not continue longer than completion of the games in progress at the time when the first rubber is completed.
- 24.1.3 All uncompleted sets shall either be forfeited to the non-offending couple(s) or shall be ignored altogether if both opposing couples had players absent from the court at 6.45pm.
- 24.2 If by 6.45 pm no rubbers have commenced, then provided a team has a couple or couples present on court and ready to play, the first set shall be awarded 6-0 to the couple(s) present.
- 24.3 If by 7.00 pm no rubbers have commenced, then provided a team has a couple or couples on court and ready to play, the first rubbers shall be awarded 6-0, 6-0 to the couple(s) present.
- 24.4 If the non-offending team wish to claim sets they must clearly inform the late team of their intention to do so before the start of the delayed sets or match.
- 24.5 For weekend matches, for the purpose of assessing late starting 6.45 pm and 7.00 pm shall be equivalent to 15 minutes and 30 minutes after the stated start time.

25. Missing/Injured Players

- 25.1 If a team has at least four but fewer than six players present for a match then not less than eight sets shall be played for the result to count.
- 25.2 Upon the completion of the four sets played in the first round the unplayed rubber shall be awarded 6-0, 6-0 to the full team.
- 25.3 If the offending team still has fewer than six players, then upon the completion of the four sets played in the second and third round respectively the unplayed sets in each round shall be awarded 6-0, 6-0 to the full team.
- 25.4
- 25.4.1 In the event of a player having to withdraw from further play for any reason the opponents shall immediately be awarded the necessary number of games to complete the set.
- 25.4.2 Any sets already completed shall stand and further sets equal to the maximum number of sets completed by any other pair shall be awarded to their opponents.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - Clubs with two teams in the same division.

1. The match between the two teams shall be arranged to be played by 24 May.
2. Before the start of the season the Club shall give the relevant League Match Secretary a list of four players who will play at least five matches for the higher of the two teams in that Division and those four players shall not play for the lower team in that season.
3. No player who has played five matches for the higher of the two teams shall subsequently play for the lower team.

APPENDIX B - THE TIE-BREAK RULE

The pair reaching seven points with a minimum two points lead wins the game and the set six games to five.

Serving Order in this example A C v B & D. Normal serving order continued and Player 'A' serves for 1st point only from right court.

Player 'B' serves for 2nd and 3rd points - left court then right court.

Player 'C' serves 4th and 5th points left court then right court.

Player 'D' serves for 6th point from left court.

Change Ends

Player 'D' serves for 7th point from right court.

Player 'A' serves 8th and 9th points left court then right court.

Player 'B' serves for 10th and 11th points left court then right court.

Player 'C' serves for 12th point from left court.

If No Result Change Ends

Player 'C' serves 13th point from right court.

Player 'D' serves 14th and 15th points and so on until one pair has two points lead.

Changed Ends at conclusion of game

The pair who serves first in the tie-break shall receive in the first game of the following set.

APPENDIX C - THE TIME-LIMIT RULE

The late finishing times are:

Weeks commencing Monday:

19th April	8.50 p.m.	(2hrs. 20m.)
26th April	9.00 p.m.	(2hrs. 30m.)
3rd May	9.10 p.m.	(2hrs. 40m.)
10th May	9.20 p.m.	(2hrs. 50m.)
17th May	9.30 p.m.	(3hrs. 00m.)
24th May	9.40 p.m.	(3hrs. 10m.)
31st May	9.50 p.m.	(3hrs. 20m.)
7th June	9.55 p.m.	(3hrs. 25m.)
14th June	10.00 p.m.	(3hrs. 30m.)
21st June	10.00 p.m.	(3hrs. 30m.)
28th June	9.55 p.m.	(3hrs. 25m.)
5th July	9.50 p.m.	(3hrs. 20m.)
12th July	9.40 p.m.	(3hrs. 10m.)
19th July	9.30 p.m.	(3hrs. 00m.)
26th July	9.20 p.m.	(2hrs. 50m.)
2nd August	9.10 p.m.	(2hrs. 40m.)
9th August	9.00 p.m.	(2hrs. 30m.)

The times in brackets indicate the length of playing time of the match including matches at weekend.

APPENDIX D - PREMIER LEAGUE RULES

Generally the Rules of the League apply; however, the following special rules will operate in the Men's Premier Division only:

1. The Premier Division comprises six teams.
2. Teams play home & away.
3. Relegation/Promotion:
 - a. 1 team down from the Premier Division & 1 team up from Division 1 provided that not more than two teams from the same club in each Division.
 - b. In addition, there will be a play-off between the 'second from bottom' team of the Premier Division with the second top team of the first division unless the 'Two-Team Clubs' rule applies, in which case the nearest appropriate teams will contest the play-off (see 4 below).
 - c. The play-off to be played in September consisting of players who played regularly for those teams earlier in the season.
4. Not more than 2 teams from the same club can be in the Premier Division and they must play their matches against their own teams by the end of May. See also **Appendix A** with regard to players list for two-team clubs.
5. Trophy: A special Premier Division Trophy will be awarded to the winner of the Division.

APPENDIX E – GUIDANCE NOTES

For Match Secretaries and all Team Captains

RULE 20 – Playing Up / Playing Down

1. Please familiarise yourself with Rule 20.1 and Rule 20.2 (Page 10 of the Handbook)
2. The following points may be helpful when selecting teams:
 - (a) A player may still be regarded as a recognised member of a team even though he/she may not have played 5 matches, as the previous season's appearances will be taken into account.
The ability of a player will not be taken into account when applying the rule.
 - (b) "Returning from injury" will not be accepted as a valid reason to play down.
3. If in doubt, please contact:
Bob Peel, Chairman, Tel: 0161 445 0465
John Houlker, Men's Match Secretary, Tel: 01625 260 759
Val Bowen, Ladies' Match Secretary, Tel: 0161 439 7888

RULE 14 – MATCH CARD

1. Please familiarise yourself with Rule 14 (Page 9 of the Handbook).
2. Your Club will be liable for a fine if the Match Card is not completed correctly.
e.g. Players' full names in block capitals.
3. You must use the correct Match Card (Men's to John Houlker, Ladies' to Val Bowen).

LOSS OF POINTS

Teams will/may be deducted points for the following infringements:

1. Late sending in of match cards (Rule 14)
2. Failure to use 1st Grade Slazenger balls (Rule 17)
3. Short Team (Rule 19)
4. A player playing more than the allowed number of matches (Rule 19).
5. Playing down (Rule 20)
6. Not playing a match (Rule 23)

THE SLAZENGER TENNIS BALL DISCOUNT SCHEME

Free tennis balls will be supplied on the following basis. Receipts for purchase of Slazenger 1st grade Wimbledon tennis balls from the local retailer will qualify for the following quantities:

16 dozen or over purchased . 1 dozen free of charge

32 dozen or over purchased . 3 dozen free of charge

64 dozen or over purchased . 8 dozen free of charge

The receipts must be submitted to Mr. Bob Peel, 21 Farlands Drive, East Didsbury, Manchester M20 5QL by 31st August on the forms provided by the League. The free tennis balls will be distributed directly by the League on a date to be arranged.