

MassSquash League Rules - September 2009

I. Section 1 : Club Teams

A. A Club may enter one or more teams in each of the Open 5.5, 4.5, 4.0, 3.5, 2.5, Women's 4.5, 3.5, 2.5, 2.0, Open Handicapped 50+ and Open Handicapped Summer squash leagues (see <http://www.us-squash.org/squash/RBL.html> for information on rating levels). Also, a team may be formed of individuals with no club affiliation in which case the team will be considered an "away" team for league scheduling purposes.

B. Clubs must be willing to provide two acceptable courts for two playing periods starting between 6pm and 7pm on the designated night(s) for play unless their teams are designated as "away" only. See rule 3.B for the definition of acceptable courts for league play.

C. There is a \$100 entry fee per team for MSRA league play.

D. Any team located more than 40 miles outside of Boston, or any team belonging to a Club that possesses only one court may be required to play away matches only.

E. If a Club has entered two or more teams in any one of the Leagues, it shall, prior to the date of the first league match, divide its players among the teams and such division of players shall be final for the remainder of the league season.

F. Each team shall designate one player to be Team Captain and advise the League Chairperson of the Captain's name, address, email address, and telephone numbers prior to the commencement of league play. An assistant captain may also be designated.

II. Section 2 : Eligibility for Team Play

A. Each team shall consist of a minimum of four (4) players. Teams should sign up with at least 1-2 extra players in order to be sure there will be enough players available to play on league night.

B. Each team member must be a member of the Massachusetts Squash Racquets Association (MSRA) and United States Squash Racquets Association (USSRA) at the time a match is played.

C. No player shall play in Open or Women's league competition at a lower level than the team of which (s)he is a member, or at a level below which (s)he qualified to play in prior years without the prior approval of the League Chairperson and League Coordinator, which shall be granted only in exceptional circumstances.

D. A player must have reached his/her 50th birthday prior to playing any 50+ League match.

E. A player may play up a league on no more than five (5) occasions each season without being advanced to the higher league. Exceptions to this rule can be made by appealing to the League Coordinator.

F. Matches played by ineligible members will be forfeited and scored as a default in calculating league standings. If both players are ineligible then the match will be considered a default by both teams and not included in the league standings (see rule 3.D).

G. A player may not play for more than one team in the same league during a season without the prior approval of the League Chairperson and League Coordinator of the league or leagues involved.

III. Section 3 : Matches

A. League matches and matches in MSRA sanctioned singles tournaments shall be played according to the World Squash Singles Rules 2009 (eff. April 1, 2009) (the "Rules"). For leagues, the scoring to be used depends on the league as follows:

1. Open and Women's league matches shall utilize standard, PAR-11 scoring as defined in Section 2 of the Rules, provided that in any individual league match the two players may by mutual agreement choose instead to play either of the alternative scoring systems specified in Appendix 7 of the Rules, being (i) "Server Only Scores - the previous standard scoring system" (HiHo 9), or (ii) "Point-a-Rally (PAR) to 15".

2. Handicapped 50+ and Summer league matches shall utilize point a rally scoring to 15, specified in Appendix 7 as "Point-a-Rally (PAR) to 15", modified:

- (i) to account for handicaps as defined in Section 4 of these rules, and
- (ii) to provide that the player who scores 15 points first wins the game, regardless of any tie at 14-all.

B. Regular season matches shall be played on international, 21 foot wide courts where available, but may be played on 20 foot wide courts otherwise meeting international court specifications (typically, converted racquetball courts). Playoff matches shall be played on 21 foot international courts only, even if the consequence is that a higher-seeded team will not have the home court.

C. Each member of the team shall play his/her opponent in a match of the best of three out of five games. One point shall be awarded to the winning member at each position and one bonus point to the winning team. In case of a tie, the winning team will be that team which has more games won and if the same, that team with more game points won. In the event that each team has the same number of matches, games and game points, ½ point shall be awarded to each team.

D. A defaulted match shall count as a 3-0 win with each game score 11-0 (or 15-0 in the handicapped leagues). If both teams default a given position then neither team shall be awarded the point for the match and the match shall not be included in the determination of the bonus point. In this case, the total available points for each team shall include defaulted matches for the purposes of calculating league position (see rule 6.A).

E. If a player withdraws due to injury or other reasons, then his opponent wins the match. However, games and points won by said player before withdrawing are included in the determination of the bonus point. The winning player is given 11-0 (or 9-0 or 15-0, as applicable) games scores for any games not started at the time the player withdraws.

F. The Dunlop XX Yellow Dot is the official ball to be used in league play.

G. Each team shall maintain an up-to-date challenge ladder which shall be made available to the opposing team Captain and/or League Chairperson upon request.

H. The playing order for a team depends on the league as follows:

1. In the Open and Women's leagues the playing order shall be the ladder order as of the match date.

2. In the handicapped 50+ and Summer leagues, players should play in the order of their assigned handicaps (see Section 4 for details). A player's ladder position may supersede the handicap level if the handicaps are within one point of each other.

I. A team with fewer than the required number of players shall move all its players up so that it defaults at the lowest position (i.e., 4th position for 4 person teams). For example, if the #2 player on Team B is unable to play and the team captain cannot find a substitute, then on league night the following match-ups occur:

Team A	Vs.	Team B
#1		#1
#2		#3
#3		#4
#4		DEFAULT

If a team has commenced a match expecting all of its players to appear and one of the players does not arrive due to unavoidable circumstances, his/her position shall be defaulted. The remainder of this match shall be played as scheduled.

J. All matches must be refereed. Each team should supply referees for two matches. Should one team be unable to referee a match, the other should do so.

K. The MSRA has adopted the USSRA's policy on protective eyewear, details of which can be found at: <http://www.us-squash.org/ussra/protectiveeyewear.html>.

During league matches or MSRA sanctioned tournaments, each player must wear lensed, protective eyewear that meets the current American Society for Testing and Materials standard (ASTM F803). Standard eyeglasses may not be worn in lieu of approved eyewear, even if they have plastic lenses and it is not acceptable to play without protective eyewear under any circumstances including mutual agreement by both players. Players who refuse to wear protective eyewear will be forfeited.

IV. Section 4 : Handicaps

A. Handicap rules apply to the 50+ and summer leagues only.

B. All players on the rosters submitted on the entry forms with a USSRA skill level indicated will be assigned a starting handicap for league play. Starting handicaps will not exceed -5 or +5. Generally, the scale will be as follows:

Skill Level	Handicap
≥5.0	-5
4.5	-3
4.0	-1
3.5	0
3.0	1
2.5	3
≤2.0	5

C. The individual match results will be reviewed by the League Coordinator after each week's play. Adjustments will be made if results indicate a player's performance is significantly different from his/her assigned handicap. Two consecutive wins or losses are also suggestive of a possible change in handicap.

D. Captains are encouraged to send suggestions for handicap changes for their own and their

opponent's handicaps, particularly early in the season where team rating scales may have been different.

E. The starting score for a match shall be derived from both player's handicaps by calculating the difference between the two handicaps and setting the starting scores evenly around zero. If the difference is an odd number, the lesser skilled player will start with the higher score. For example:

1. Player A is rated -5 and Player B is rated 0; the difference is 5 points so Player A will start at -2 and Player B at +3.
2. Player C is a +2 and Player D is a +4; the difference is 2 and the starting score will be Player C at -1 and Player D at +1.

F. Following the completion of each game of the match, the handicaps and the starting scores for the next game will be adjusted as follows:

1. The losing player's handicap is raised one point
2. The winning player's handicap is lowered one point.

Using the first example above, if player A wins game 1, the next game would start at -3 and +4. If Player B won game 1, the starting score for the next game would be -1 and +2.

V. **Section 5 : Scheduling of Matches**

A. Unless the Executive Board decides otherwise, each league will play weekly. League schedules for the upcoming season will be published prior to the start of the season. The weekly playing schedule is as follows:

Monday	Open 2.5, Open 50+
Tuesday	Open 5.5, Women's 2.5, Women's 2.0
Wednesday	Open 4.5, Women's 3.5, Summer League
Thursday	Open 4.0, Open 3.5, Women's 4.5

B. Matches will start between 6:00-7:00 PM. Start times for each club will be indicated on the appropriate league schedule. In the event that 2 teams from the same club are home on the same night, it is the responsibility of such teams to reach an accommodation that will allow both to start as nearly as possible within the prescribed time. Home teams unable to comply with this schedule should discuss their situation with the League Coordinator.

C. The captain, at his/her discretion, may default a player from an opposing team arriving more than 30 minutes past the scheduled match time for that player.

D. Captains should make maximum effort to have all matches played on their scheduled date and to avoid defaulting. If a player is not available for the scheduled day or time, captains shall take the following actions, in order of preference:

1. Substitute, using all possible players from the team ladder;
2. Substitute, using a player from a team ladder in the next lower skill level;
3. Ask the opposing team for an opportunity to reschedule in advance of the scheduled time;
4. Default.

Rescheduling requests should be limited by both teams and individual players and matches may NOT be played after the scheduled time. An opposing captain is not required to accommodate a rescheduling request.

E. In the event of bad weather or other exceptional circumstance forcing the cancellation of a team match, the individual matches should be played before the date of the next team match. Any games not played by this time will be considered double defaults and will not count towards league standings. However, such matches will count towards an individuals requirements for playoff eligibility (see Rule 6.C).

F. The home team captain is responsible for reserving a minimum of two courts for team play at the date and time of the scheduled match. It shall be the visiting team captain's responsibility to contact the home team captain to confirm the playing time of the match, obtain directions to the home club and ensure that the team members arrive promptly for their matches.

G. It is the responsibility of both team captains to submit the match scores to the League Chairperson by phone or e-mail by 5:00 PM the day following the scheduled match. Players' first and last names and game scores must be included. Captains are encouraged to include a match report with the scores which will be posted with the scores to the MSRA web site.

H. Any disputes or complaints relating to league matches or players shall be referred to the League Chairperson. The League Chairperson will consult with the League Coordinator if necessary. Any dispute that cannot be resolved at this level shall be referred to the Executive Board.

VI. Section 6 : League Standings

A. League standings shall be determined on a percentage basis by dividing the number of match points each team has won by the total number of match points available to said team. In the event of a tie for any position, the standings will be determined by the head-to-head competition results between the tied teams. If the head-to-head results are also a tie, then the two teams shall have equal standing in the league.

B. At the end of the regular season, playoffs will be held except in the Summer League. For Leagues with 4 to 15 teams, the top four teams move on to the playoffs. For Leagues with 16 or more teams, the top eight teams move on to the playoffs. Seedings for the playoffs will be based on the final league standings. In the event of a tie in the standings, the appropriate League Chairperson shall decide the playoff seedings for the tied teams.

C. Players must have played in at least thirty percent (30%) of their team's league matches to play in the playoffs at the end of the season, except with prior approval of the League Chairperson and League Coordinator, which shall be granted only in unusual cases. Matches won by default or cancelled due to weather or other exceptional circumstances shall count towards playoff eligibility.

D. If any team during the season shall have (a) defaulted 2 complete team matches; or (b) defaulted more than twenty percent (20%) of its individual matches, said team may be removed from all further league competition for the entire season. The League Chairperson may exercise his/her discretion in invoking this rule in the event of exceptional circumstances.

VII. Section 7 : Rankings

A. At the end of the season, a maximum of fifteen players will be ranked in each division. Players are eligible for ranking if they played:

1. At least 75% of their teams League matches or
2. 50% of League matches plus two sanctioned tournaments or the state singles championships.

B. Matches won by default are not included in a player's ranking but do count towards eligibility for ranking.

C. The rankings are completed by the League Chairperson for each level of play and are based on league and tournament performance. For tie-breaking purposes, a tournament win will count more than a league win against a common opponent.

D. Each year certain top ranked players may be designated to move up a level. The number of players promoted will be left to the discretion of the League Chairperson.

VIII. Section 8 : Court Etiquette

A. Players should follow court etiquette rules at all times as defined in the World Squash Singles Rules 2009 (see section 3). Serious breaches of same by a player (or players) should be reported in writing to the Executive Board through the appropriate League Coordinator. The President of the MSRA will appoint a subcommittee of three persons, including the League Chairperson, to gather evidence and conduct a full hearing of all those involved in the complaint(s). The hearing shall be held as soon as possible following the complaint and the subcommittee will report its findings to the President and the Executive Board immediately following the hearing. The President and/or the Executive Board will then inform the reported player of its findings and any penalty imposed in writing.

B. Breaches of Court Etiquette include:

1. Deliberately injuring an opponent;
2. Threatening bodily harm to an opponent, or others;
3. Intimidation of an opponent by actual physical contact during play or threat of same and/or verbal abuse;
4. Conduct (such as deliberately throwing a racquet against the wall, deliberately hitting a ball out of court, etc.) unbecoming to the game of squash racquets; or
5. Language (vilifying, obscene, etc. to opponent, self, gallery or officials) unbecoming to the game of squash racquets.

C. Penalties imposed by the Executive Board, may be:

1. No action
2. Warning
3. Probation (for a specified period)
4. Suspension from MSRA play (for a specified period) or
5. Suspension and a request that the player not be certified to play in USSRA sanctioned tournaments until further notice from the MSRA Executive Board.

D. **Probation** means any further violation of the MSRA court etiquette rules could result in suspension from all MSRA sponsored activities for a stipulated period. Probation and suspension may be reported in the MSRA Newsletter and to the USSRA and/or WISPA or PSA. Relief from penalty will be at the discretion of the MSRA Executive Board.

E. **An appeal by a player may be made within one week of a penalty notification** by a player enduring either penalty Number 4 or 5, or Number 3 if the probation period imposed is more than one year. Such an appeal will be heard before the Executive Board of the MSRA including the subcommittee that had been appointed to review the complaint and other interested persons. The

decision of the Executive Board following that hearing will be made within ten days of the hearing and will be final.

F. Lesser breaches of the accepted rules of the game of squash racquets viz: not clearing properly, refusal to accept let calls of an opponent in an un-refereed match, talking during play of a point, double-bounce hits called up for continued play, etc., are not a basis for complaints to the Executive Board. Such unsportsmanlike conduct should be resolved by the referee (see rule 3.J) if occurring in League matches.