

Middlesex Tennis Summer League Rules 2025

1. Competition

This competition, which is open only to LTA registered clubs/venues within Middlesex **who have also “opted in” to Middlesex Tennis membership**, will be called the “The Middlesex Tennis Summer League”. It will be played between mid-April and August with a “play off” for the winners of the Premier East and West divisions in September. It will be run in accordance with the Rules and Regulations and the Code of Conduct of the LTA.

2. Middlesex Summer League Management

The Management of the Summer League will be vested in a League Management Committee which reports to Middlesex Tennis Board of Trustees and will consist of:

| | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Regional League Secretaries: | East: | Brenda Stewart |
| | North-East: | Ro Foley |
| | West: | Hilary Watts |
| | North-West: | Ian Crew |

Each division shall have a Divisional Secretary who will be appointed by the Regional Secretaries

3. Powers and Duties of League Management

- a) The League Management Committee is empowered to amend the league structure and rules as they deem appropriate and its decision on any matter arising from the competition will be final.
- b) The League Management Committee may refuse an entry without giving a reason.

4. Summer League Structure

- a) There will be Premier and Intermediate Divisions for both Men’s and Ladies’ competitions which will be zoned in two areas (East & West), each consisting of eight teams.
- b) The other divisions in the League will be divided in four areas as follows:
 - West Middlesex Area
 - North-West Middlesex Area
 - North-East Middlesex Area
 - East Middlesex Area
- c) Each Area will have as many Divisions as necessary.
- d) Divisions generally will contain eight teams.
- e) In Divisions containing six or more teams, each team will play one match against each of the other teams in its division.
- f) Where a division contains five or less teams, each team will play twice per season against each of the other teams on a Home and Away basis.

- g) A club will be permitted to have more than one team in the same Division. Where this occurs, the teams must complete their fixture not later than the date set for the completion of round two.

5. Fixture Arrangements

- a) Match secretaries must organise their home match dates for every fixture by 28th February
- b) Matches should be played midweek evenings, (Bank Holidays only by mutual consent) and be within the round dates.
- c) Match secretaries should contact opposing club match secretaries to confirm the dates and start times and then update the website
- d) Each club will then enter a team captain and their contact details on the website by 31st March
- e) All team captains should check the dates on the website for all of their matches.
- f) 5 days prior to a match the home team captain must contact the away team captain to confirm arrangements for the match including refreshments.
- g) The home team must provide refreshments after a match, which should be a minimum of sandwiches or something equivalent and a hot or cold drink. The cost of the food and drinks must be borne by the home team.
- h) Matches must take place on the agreed date subject only to mutual agreement to rearrangement and with the prior consent of the Divisional Secretary
- i. Requests for an alternative match date if made before the start of the season should be given proper consideration by the home team
- i) Matches must be completed within 14 days of the play by date of the final round – for any matches not completed by this date, points will be allocated by the Regional Secretary.

6. Team and Player Regulations.

- a) All players must have an LTA Advantage Tennis Membership number which links to the venue they are representing in this competition.
- b) All players must be a bona fide member of the LTA registered venue they are competing for prior to their first match and commit to representing that venue. A player may only represent one venue in the Middlesex Summer Tennis League irrespective of area in the same season.
- c) Each team should consist of three pairs. In the event of a team not being able to field three pairs for the match they should field two pairs and concede all eight points for the missing pair. The two pairs must play all three of the opposition's pairs. The two pairs must play as pair 1 and pair 2. Any team fielding less than three pairs on more than one occasion during the season will normally have an additional six points deducted on each occasion it occurs after the first occasion, (this includes the concession of a match). These points will be deducted at the end of the season.
- d) Clothing worn for matches must comply with the clothing rules of each individual clubs. Any clubs that insist on predominantly white tennis clothing must ensure that all opposing teams are aware of this restriction prior to the match being played.

7. Nominations and Player Restriction - Clubs with two teams or more

- a) All Clubs with more than one team but up to five teams in the competition must nominate five players for each of their teams except the lowest ranked team. All clubs with more than five teams must nominate five players for each of their first four teams - no nominations need to be made for any fifth or lower ranked teams.
- b) Nominated players are expected to play regularly for the team for which they have been nominated and may not play in any lower team. If a club has two or more teams in the competition a player who plays twice for any higher team or teams, be it in the same or different Division, may not subsequently play for a lower team in that season.
- c) If a club has 2 or more teams in the same division where players have been nominated then six players must be nominated for the highest team.
- d) Nominations must reach the Regional Secretary by the date of the Club's first match (for all required teams) or by 1st May whichever is the earlier. Points will be deducted from any team which has not submitted their nominations by this date and further points will be deducted for every match thereafter when nominations have not been registered.
- e) If for any reason a nominated player is unable to play for the Club during the current season, the Regional Secretary must be informed immediately and a replacement player nominated. Failure to comply could result in points being deducted.

8. Format of Match

- a) A match will consist of nine rubbers as described in rule 8c, 8d, 8e and 8f and no finishing time should be set. Points will be awarded in accordance with rule 11.
- b) Play should be continuous, and commencement of any round should not, when possible, be delayed until all the matches in the previous round are completed. There should be no warm up between rounds.
- c) In rounds one and two each rubber will consist of one tie break set.
- d) In the third round each rubber will consist of two tie break sets.
- e) If the score reaches deuce in any game a deciding point will be played. The receiving pair has choice of side but cannot change positions.
- f) A tie-break will be played if the set score reaches 6-6. The tie break will be the first to seven points or by two clear points if a score of six points each is reached.

9. Matches not played or not completed

- a) In the event of bad weather, matches may only be postponed with the agreement of both Captains.
 - i. If no agreement between Captains is reached or no contact made, then the match is deemed to still be on and players are expected to be ready to play at the agreed start time.
 - ii. **NO MATCH MAY BE POSTPONED BEFORE 4PM ON THE MATCH DAY**
 - iii. Where there is agreement to rearrange the match, the new date must be entered on the website by the home captain

- b) If a match is not started or less than two rounds have been completed the match must be replayed on a mutually agreed date before the completion date of the following round, or on a designated rain date. The home team must offer dates within 48 hours of the postponed match. Unplayed matches in the final round must be played within 14 days of the play by date for the last round
- i. The rain dates will be set by the League Management Committee along with the round dates.
- c) If all three pairs have played at least one set in round three and the match cannot be completed, the standard allocation of points rule 12 shall apply.
- d) If two rounds have been completed but not two rounds and one set by each pair, then either or both teams may concede up to 6 points in round three in order to complete two rounds and three sets and then apply the standard allocation of points (rule 12)
- e) In the event of a team conceding a match, the defaulting team will receive 0 points and, at the discretion of the League Management Committee, may have points deducted. The other club will receive a proportional award of up to 24 points. The award of points takes into account the points gained by the receiving club in their other matches and the points other teams have gained against the defaulting club in their other matches. In any other case other where a match is not played the Regional Secretary has the power to award points as he/she considers appropriate up to a maximum of 24 points
- f) Any club unable to fulfil a fixture must notify the Team Captain of the opposing club and the League Divisional Secretary not less than 72 hours before the date agreed on for playing the match. The matter shall be reported to the Regional Secretary and the League Management Committee shall have the power to take such action as they may deem appropriate including the possible deduction of points.
- g) Any team that fails to fulfil two matches in any season shall be withdrawn for that season and any matches they have played be declared void. Any team withdrawn under rule 9g) may not necessarily be accepted for the following season but if they are accepted may be relegated more than one division at the discretion of the Management Committee.

10. Order of Play

Pairs must play in strict order of merit.
Visitors remain on the same court

| Round 1 | Round 2 | Round 3 |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Home 2 v Away 1 | Home 3 v Away 1 | Home 1 v Away 1 |
| Home 3 v Away 2 | Home 1 v Away 2 | Home 2 v Away 2 |
| Home 1 v Away 3 | Home 2 v Away 3 | Home 3 v Away 3 |

11. Points Scoring System

- a) The total number of points awarded for a match shall be 24. Two points will be awarded for each completed set won.
- b) Each team's league position will be determined by the aggregate of the number of points it has obtained in each match during the season plus any points it has been awarded under rule 9(e)

12. Standard Allocation of Points in Uncompleted Matches

| 2 Rounds & 3 Sets | 2 Rounds & 4 Sets | 2 Rounds & 5 Sets |
|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 18-0 Becomes 24-0 | 20-0 Becomes 24-0 | 22-0 Becomes 24-0 |
| 16-2 Becomes 21-3 | 18-2 Becomes 22-2 | 20-2 Becomes 22-2 |
| 14-4 Becomes 18-6 | 16-4 Becomes 19-5 | 18-4 Becomes 20-4 |
| 12-6 Becomes 16-8 | 14-6 Becomes 17-7 | 16-6 Becomes 17-7 |
| 10-8 Becomes 13-11 | 12-8 Becomes 14-10 | 14-8 Becomes 15-9 |
| | 10-10 Becomes 12-12 | 12-10 Becomes 13-11 |

13. Time of Play - Late Arrival

- a) Unless mutually agreed otherwise all matches will be played mid-week.
- b) The start time is 6.30pm. However, this may be changed to either 6.45pm or 7pm with the mutual agreement of both teams. Neither team is obliged to change the start time and a start time 6.30pm will remain if mutual agreement cannot be found.
 - i. If both teams agree to a later start time they should both inform either their Regional Secretary or their Divisional Secretary who will change the time on the website. All changes to the start time must be agreed and communicated to the Regional Secretary or Divisional Secretary at least 14 days prior to the match. In the event of a later start time the home team captain should reconfirm the later start time to the away team contact 5- 7 days before the match.
 - ii. In the event of a dispute over the start time, the time shown on the results website will be taken as the agreed start time and in the absence of any time showing on the results website it will be taken as 6.30 p.m.
- c) Any 'knock up' must be completed by the start time resulting from rule 13(b).
- d) If a pair is incomplete 15 minutes after the starting time and the opposing pair in correct order is complete, the incomplete pair will forfeit a love set in the first round.
- e) If the previously incomplete pair is on court ready to play by the completion of the matches in the first round, the second and third rounds are played to the rules.
- f) If a pair is not on court ready to play by the completion of the matches in the first round, the incomplete pair will forfeit a love set in the second round.
- g) If the previously incomplete pair is on court ready to play by the completion of the matches in the second round, the third round is played to the rules.
- h) Substitutes are only permitted for non-appearance and not because of injuries sustained during play.
- i) For a pair to be complete both players must be on court, changed and ready to play.
- j) All sets forfeited above must be indicated on tournament software using the "match abandoned" option and then adding a comment as to why the sets were forfeited.

14. Choice of Court

- a) The home team shall have the choice of courts and must provide three suitable courts. If the surface of the three courts is not the same, then the away team has the choice of court.
- b) Matches must start and finish on the same courts unless agreed by both captains.

15. Balls

A minimum of three new and ITF approved tennis balls per court must be provided by the home team.

16. Results

All results should be entered online by the winning team within 48 hours of the match being played. The losing team should check that they have been entered correctly within 7 days and if not they should contact their Divisional Secretary immediately to make any changes.

Both team captains should complete and sign an official score sheet and should retain this score sheet in case of a subsequent query.

17. Divisional Winners, Promotions and Relegations

- a) The Divisional Champion will be the team with the most points after all matches are complete and checks have been made by Divisional Secretaries for ineligible players.
- b) In each of the East and West Premier Divisions, the lowest two clubs will normally be relegated.
- c) In September there will be a Premier League Play off between the winners of the East Premier league and the West Premier league. The match will take the same form as the league matches. Should the result be 12 points all after 3 rounds a tiebreak shoot out will be played by all 3-pairs against their opposite number to decide the winner. The tiebreak shoot out will be 1 match tiebreak – first to 10 points by 2 clear points.
- d) The venue for the Summer League Playoffs shall alternate each year. The winning Men's team from the East will host the final in odd years (2017, 2019 etc.) and the winning Men's team from the West in even years (2018, 2020 etc.). The winning Ladies team from the East will host the final in even years (2018, 2020 etc.) and the winning Ladies team from the West in odd years (2017, 2019 etc.).
- e) Players representing their club in the Premier League Playoffs must have played a minimum of 1 match that season in the Middlesex Summer League.
- f) The date of the Summer League Playoffs will be announced at the start of the season – the start time should be 2.00pm unless mutually agreed by both captains.
- g) In each Division One, normally only one team will be promoted. All other divisions will normally have two promotions and two relegations per season except in Nine Team Divisions where up to three teams may be relegated.
- h) Teams will not be promoted if they fail to complete all their matches without good reason.
- i) In the event of a tie, the total number of games won will decide the winner. If there is still a tie the result of the match between the tying teams will decide.

18. Injuries

If a player is injured during play, he/she is allowed a five-minute recovery time. If after five minutes the player is unable to continue then he shall concede that match. In case of injury in the first set of the two-set match in round three, both sets shall be conceded irrespective of whether the match is completed. A player injured in an earlier round may return for a later round provided he/she available to play at the start of that round.

19. Safeguarding

Team Captains should satisfy themselves that junior players (16&u) who are playing in their team are emotionally and physically able to compete with adults. Additionally, they should agree with the young player's parent/guardian who within their team will be responsible for the supervision and well-being of the young player before, during and after the match.

20. LTA Transgender Policy

The Middlesex Tennis Summer League is an inter-venue competition and falls into the "Specified Competitions" category with regards to the LTA Transgender Policy. For more information please see [here](#).