

# 2019 GWTA League Rules (as Revised November 2018)

## 1. PLAYERS

- 1.1. Each team must submit an online roster of players before April 1 of each calendar year. The information for each player must contain, at a minimum, the player's name and telephone number. Captains should include e-mail addresses for each player if they intend to use the online team management system.
- 1.2. There should be no fewer than 12 and no more than 35 names on each roster.
- 1.3. There is one roster, per team, per calendar year. Players may play for only one GWTA team for the calendar year; and therefore, players may be active on only one GWTA roster in a calendar year.
- 1.4. Captains may add existing players from lower division teams within the same club to their rosters as substitutes. These players do not count in the total player count specified in 1.3—either to meet the minimum of 12 or to exceed the maximum of 35. Substitute players do not need to be added to a roster prior to the start of a match, but a captain should notify the opposing captain that she is using a substitute player, either orally or by designating the player as a substitute on the scorecard that is exchanged. Captains should notify the scorekeeper of substitute players who need to be added to rosters to ensure that the scores for the match can be entered in a timely manner.
- 1.5. Captains may not add existing players from a higher division team or from a team within the same division to their rosters as substitutes, even if they are within the same club.
- 1.6. Additions to a roster may be made after the season begins as long as the team captain sends an email to the scorekeeper **prior to the match start time**. The email must include the captain's name, team name and division, name and phone number of the player, and a statement that the player has not played for another GWTA team **during the calendar year**. The scorekeeper will send the captain a confirmation email when the addition is processed.
- 1.7. **A captain can delete any player from her roster if the player has not played in a match for the team during the calendar year and the captain sends a request to the scorekeeper by email.**
- 1.8. All captains must be players, included on the team roster.
- 1.9. The GWTA Tennis League is an adult (18+) women's league.

## 2. LINE-UPS

- 2.1. All players in a line-up must be on the team's current GWTA roster. Players not on GWTA rosters may not be used.
- 2.2. Line-ups should be exchanged by captains before the matches begin.
- 2.3. Each team's line-up should be consistent with its club members' ladder rankings.

2.4. If no ladder exists, teams should be placed according to the team member's abilities and caliber of play. Teams must be placed in order of strength from strongest in Position 1 to weakest in Position 5.

2.5. There is no limit to the number of substitute players that may be borrowed from below, but an individual player may not sub for the same team more than TWICE in the spring and TWICE in the fall.

2.6. For each of the individual spring and fall GWTA seasons, any player in the line-up at Position 1 including defaults shall not play any other match at Position

5. Likewise for each of the individual spring and fall GWTA seasons, any player in the line-up at Position 5 including defaults shall not play any other match at Position

1. The penalty for any player found in violation of this rule shall be an automatic default at the court in which the player is playing.

### **3. MATCHES**

3.1. All matches must be played on the host club's courts or on courts that the host has permission to use for the scheduled play.

3.2. All clubs in the league must own or have control of at least four courts which are in good condition and in the same location. An exception to Rule 3.2 requiring four courts in one location may be made for a club that has been in good standing with the GWTA league for 15 years and only has three courts available due to permanently losing one court to renovations. The club must provide two additional courts to play on within five miles as an option.

3.3. Starting time for all matches will be 10:00 a.m. unless an earlier or later start is agreed to by the captains.

3.4. Host teams will furnish new, yellow, numbered, USTA-sanctioned tennis balls, water on the courts, and simple refreshments.

3.5. Play will be on all court surfaces. If a host team has more than one type of court surface or location for a match (e.g., inside vs. outside, clay vs. hard, or on-site vs. off-site), the host captain must inform the visiting captain which positions will be playing on which surface or in which location **at least 24 hours prior to the match start time.**

### **4. SCHEDULES**

4.1. Host captains should contact the visiting team captain no later than the day before the match. At that time, the captains shall decide upon a mutually agreeable time to **discuss** match cancellation in the event of inclement weather. **In the case of a team that has fewer than 5 courts available to start at 10 am on the day of the match pursuant to Rules 3.2 and 3.6, the host team captain should contact the visiting team captain at least 3 days prior to the match to inform her of the number of courts starting at 10 am and to discuss the court or courts that will begin late. At the request of either captain, teams may also agree to start one or more lines early. If the host team captain fails to provide timely notice, then the visiting team can decide which line**

will begin play late.

4.2. A-1 and C-2 Team matches will be played on Monday mornings.

4.3. A-2, B-1 and B-2 Team matches will be played on Wednesday mornings.

4.4. B-3, B-4 and C-1 Team matches will be played on Tuesday mornings.

4.5. No match shall be postponed unless the courts at the host club are unplayable due to inclement weather conditions which would prevent play. **In the case of an outdoor match, if a Code Red day is in effect for the match day or the temperature at match start time is forecast to be below 40 degrees F., either captain can elect to treat the courts as unplayable and postpone the match pursuant to Rule 4.7.**

4.6. It shall be the duty of the host captain to advise the visiting team captain at the earliest possible time concerning unplayable courts.

4.7. Rain dates will be moved to the end of the season and played on your designated play day unless another date can be mutually agreed upon by the two captains.

4.7.1 All matches played in the spring have to be completed by June 30th of that year.

4.8. If a religious or Federal holiday falls on a weekday on which any GWTA division has regularly scheduled play, and if any team captain in that division feels that she is unable to field a competitive team due to the holiday, the captain of the opposing team must agree to reschedule the match at a mutually agreed upon date (either on some other day or days before the season ends or as a make-up on the division's usual play day at the end of the regular season). If both team captains agree that they can field teams on the religious or Federal holiday, matches will be played as scheduled.

4.9. The GWTA Spring season should start mid-April at the GWTA Board's discretion, however, the fall season should always begin the Tuesday after Labor Day.

## **5. PLAY**

5.1. Each team match will consist of five doubles teams, lines 1-5, each playing the best 2 out of 3 sets. In the event of a Code Red day, an impending rainstorm, or if any line agrees, a 10-point Coman match tiebreak (first to 10 leading by 2) may be used in lieu of the third set. This must be agreed to by all four players on the court and the ruling would not apply to any other court. The decision to play a 10-point tiebreaker to decide the match may be made at any time before the start of the third set.

5.2. Any player or substitute player who is more than one half hour late shall default her match to her scheduled opponent unless there are extraordinary, documented circumstances, such as unusual traffic problems, and every effort has been made by the captain or her representative to contact the host club to inform them of the situation. In such case, a good faith effort should be made to start the affected court(s) later or reschedule those concerned.

5.3. If another team member (whose name appears on the roster) is available before 10:30 a.m., her name may be substituted on the scorecard, but the entire line-up may

not be changed. Only the late individual's name may be changed.

5.4. No match may be postponed because of a shortage of players for a full team.

5.5. Captains must notify the opposing captain by phone of known defaults no later than two hours before the match is scheduled to start. Exceptions may be made for good faith last minute emergencies.

5.5.1 Courts defaulted pursuant to Rule 5.5 shall start with Position 5, then Position 4 and on up depending upon the number of courts to be defaulted.

5.6. Once the line-ups have been exchanged, if a good faith last minute emergency prevents a player or players from playing, a substitute player or players may sub in on the missing pair's court if they are available before the time deadline specified in Rule 5.7.

5.7. The warm-up period will be 10 minutes. All players are entitled to a 10-minute warm-up. Even if a player is late, the full 10-minute warm-up period shall be granted.

5.8. No player may leave the courts during play except in an emergency.

5.9. A 10-minute rest period between the second and third sets is authorized in accordance with USTA rules.

5.10. Should any set score reach 6-all in games, then the Coman 7-point tie breaker (first to 7 points, win by 2) shall be played to determine the winner of the set.

5.11. If a match in progress is halted by rain, it should be resumed at the point where play stopped by the same four players returning on the rain date (a mutually agreed upon date, or at the end of the season on their regular day of play). Both captains should record the exact score at the time of the rain-out and the serving order of both teams. After the make-up date, time and place have been determined by each court, the schedule is given to each captain. Once a rained out match has been rescheduled to a mutually agreed upon date, the team that then has to cancel for any reason should forfeit the match.

5.12. Coaching is prohibited during the course of GWTA matches.

5.13. Play will be in accordance with GWTA Rules, USTA rules and the USTA Code of Ethics. In case of a conflict, GWTA rules will take precedence.

5.14. If a serious violation of the GWTA Rules, USTA Rules or the USTA Code of Ethics occurs, a letter of protest should be sent to the GWTA president.

5.15. The GWTA president will relay the letter to the GWTA Board and to the captain of the other team. The other team will have a period of 7 days in which to respond to the letter of protest. The Board will talk to the captains involved and consider all correspondence relating to the rule violation and protest letter.

5.16. The Board has authority to uphold all rules and set reasonable penalties for violations of the rules. The Board's decision will be final and cannot be challenged at a later date.

5.17. If three letters of protest are received concerning the same player, that player will be suspended for the rest of the year.

5.18. Defaulting a whole team (all five positions at one match) will mean immediate dismissal from the league for one calendar year. If the default occurs in the spring, already played matches with that team will be defaulted throughout the league, and

the team will be removed from the division standings. If the default occurs in the fall, spring matches will stand, and the team will remain in the division standings.

Reinstatement after one year will follow the procedures outlined in Rule 6.3.

5.19. Any team that has a total of six or more defaults at the end of the spring and fall seasons combined may be subject to dismissal from the league at the discretion of the GWTA Board.

5.20. In case of an emergency situation affecting all teams in a match from one or both clubs, the captains may decide to stop play to allow players to return home. In this case, the teams should follow the rain delay procedure in Rule 5-11 for completing the matches.

5.21. Unless otherwise agreed upon by the players, cell phones must be turned off during a match. If a cell phone rings during play, the opposing team on that court automatically wins the point in progress.

5.22 A reasonable amount of respectful cheering is allowed for team matches. Cheering shall only contain encouragement and acknowledgement of good play (for both teams) and shall never contain a strategic component. If any player in a match being cheered requests for the cheering to cease, spectators must comply immediately.

## **6. DIVISIONS**

6.1. Each division will have a maximum of eight teams.

6.2. Teams will be divided into new divisions after the number of eight is passed.

6.3. New teams may petition the Board for placement in the league. The Board will use its best efforts to place new teams at the appropriate level.

6.4. Scores shall be kept by totaling the number of individual matches won and NOT by the number of team matches won.

6.5. Each home team captain must enter the completed scorecard online within 24 hours after the match is finished. In the event of a rainout, the home team captain must notify the scorekeeper within 24 hours. A make-up date for rained out matches must be agreed to within seven days of a canceled match in accordance with Rules 4.7. and 4.7.1. The scorekeeper must be notified by the home team captain as soon as a make-up date is decided.

6.6. At the end of each year the highest scoring team in each division must move up to the next higher division (**other than the highest division**) and lowest scoring team in each division must move down to the next lower division (**other than the lowest division**) – i.e., movement upward and downward is mandatory. This mandatory movement must remain consistent even when a governing board needs to realign divisions due to vacancies. For the first vacancy occurring within a division, an existing team which finished at the top of their division will be moved into the vacancy in the division above before the board can consider a team on the waiting list petitioning to come into the league. If there is more than one vacancy in a division at the beginning of a year and there are no teams in the division immediately below the division that

are willing to move up to the extra vacancy, then the lowest scoring team that is designated to move down to the lower division may elect to stay in the division.

6.7. In case of a tie between teams, the tie will be broken in the following manner: the first tie breaker is to be a head-to-head record, the second tie breaker is to count sets against each other, and finally, the third tie breaker is to count sets within the division. This is subject to the discretion of the GWTA board.

## **7. CHAIRMANSHIP**

7.1. Chairmanship of the league will be taken over each year in the order established in 1980. New teams/clubs will be placed at the bottom of the list in the year they enter the league.

7.2. If a team refuses to take over this responsibility, then it is automatically out of the league.

7.3. A team may trade with another team for a period of one season only, once this order has been established.

7.4. The GWTA Board will maintain a website for posting match schedules and results.

7.5. The GWTA Board's term is based on a calendar year, January 1 - December 31.

## **8. ELIGIBILITY**

8.1. For a team to remain eligible to play, a team representative must attend the annual Fall Meeting.

8.2. If unable to attend the Fall Meeting, a team may designate, by proxy, the name of an individual and team designated to vote in its place.

8.3. Failure to attend, either in person or by proxy, may result in dismissal from the league. This is subject to the discretion of the GWTA board.

8.4. Annual dues for each team in GWTA is at the discretion of the board, must be voted on by the team captains and approved by a majority of the voters at the annual luncheon.

8.5. A primary means of communication for the GWTA Board will be email. Every team captain must provide an email address (her own or another team member's address) and be responsible for all information from the GWTA Board conveyed by email. Captains are also responsible for obtaining any match schedules that are posted on a website by the GWTA Board.