

HOT RACKETS INTER CLUB TENNIS LEAGUES

LEAGUE RULES 2025 (Updated 6/5/25)

(All rules are subject to confirmation by League Referee Tony Scott)

www.hotrackets.co.uk

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Any matter arising from the Hot Rackets competition which are not specifically covered by these regulations, or challenging the existing regulations, or unusual circumstances/situations, shall be dealt with by the present competition referee/s/administrator/s officiating the Herts Hot Rackets 2 pair competition, whereby variations could be applied & whose decision shall be final.

1. SEASON START & FINISH DATES – NUMBER OF TEAMS PROMOTED & RELEGATED

All league matches will commence in **APRIL** and will finish in **SEPTEMBER**.

All final fixtures must be completed by the last weekend in September, unless a new date is agreed by Hot Rackets.

At the end of the season the top 2 teams in each division will be promoted to the next higher division. This applies to

all divisions except Division 1A & 1B, only the top team from each division will be promoted to the Premier division.

The bottom 2 teams in all divisions will be relegated to the next lower division.

2. MATCH DATES & TIMES

All original fixtures & start times at the start of the season are arranged by Hot Rackets to create an 'initial/changeable' fixture list, to avoid a fixture meeting. These fixtures & start times are a guide & therefore any match date or start times can be changed by either club if not convenient, and by agreement between both clubs. Therefore, matches can be rearranged to be played on any day/evening or start time, agreed between both clubs. On changing match dates or times, work to Rules 4 to 4.5.(below).

3. MATCH BALLS

The home team must supply 8 new tennis balls per match (4 per team). The new tennis balls must be any listed ITF approved tennis balls as per the latest/up to date ITF approved tennis list.

4. FIXTURES - CANCELLED FIXTURES - REARRANGED FIXTURES - WALKOVERS

The '**FIRST INITIAL/CHANGEABLE**' match fixture dates/times will be arranged and confirmed by the 'Hot Rackets' League. Either captains should contact each other to confirm any fixture date/time, preferably two weeks before the match date

- 4.1 The original '**FIRST**' fixtures/times organised by the Hot Rackets League, can be changed by either club if the match date/time is not convenient. This must be by mutual agreement between both captains/clubs. The team creating ANY match date/time change must give no less than **TWO WEEKS** notice before the original match date, of ANY rearranged match/time to their opponents, anything less could be deemed as a WALKOVER to their opponents. (Subject to Rule 23-Extreme Heat/Temp Match Canc)

The team creating a new match date/time must complete & submit the 'Fixture Change Form' on the home page/web site

- 4.2 **IF A CLUB GIVE NOTIFICATION OF A FIXTURE DATE/TIME CHANGE TO THEIR OPPONENTS, TWO WEEKS OR MORE BEFORE THE MATCH DATE, THE OPPONENTS MUST AGREE TO REARRANGE A NEW FIXTURE/TIME THAT IS AGREEABLE TO BOTH CLUBS.**

- 4.3 If a rearranged **SECOND** or **THIRD** match etc, is not played for any other reason, apart from bad/extreme weather or an agreed new match date with 2 weeks' notice, a WALKOVER could be claimed by the team that was ready to play. (Subject to Rule 4.5)

- 4.4 For any match date/time that is rearranged, it is the responsibility of the team captain effecting the change to contact their opponents within **TWO WEEKS** from the cancelled date and rearrange a convenient match date/time with their opponents to suit both teams. Any time over two weeks could result in a walkover being given to the opponents.

- 4.5 If **ANY** fixture is not played, cancelled or abandoned for any reason, & that match is not rearranged & played by the agreed Hot Rackets final fixtures date, & a match result cannot be agreed/or is disputed by both teams. A decision (subject to the non-played circumstances) regarding the result will be made by the competition referee/s officiating the Hot Rackets League. If a decision cannot be agreed in favour of any of the two clubs involved, the match will be declared a 'Void Match' whereby neither teams will receive any points, rubbers, sets, or games.

TO CLAIM ANY WALKOVER IS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CAPTAIN OF THE TEAM THAT WAS READY TO PLAY, THEREFORE ONLY THE CAPTAIN OF THE TEAM READY TO PLAY CAN MAKE A DECISION TO CLAIM THE WALKOVER OR AGREE TO RE-ARRANGE A 'SECOND**' OR '**THIRD**' MATCH DATE, ETC.**

Walkovers should be a final choice, hopefully matches can be agreed to be played as the idea is for all teams to play tennis.

5. CANCELLED/ABANDONED MATCHES DUE TO BAD/EXTREME WEATHER

(PLEASE SEE RULE 23 RELATING TO EXTREME HEAT MATCH CANCELLATIONS)

If a match is cancelled/abandoned due to bad/extreme weather, or cancelled for any other reason, **BOTH CAPTAINS MUST SEND THE NEW AGREED FIXTURE DATE & START TIME IMMEDIATELY BY COMPLETING THE 'FIXTURE CHANGE FORM' ON THE HOME PAGE OF THE WEB SITE & SUBMIT TO TONY SCOTT**

- 5.1 If a new fixture date/start time is not agreed immediately between both captains, **THEN BOTH CAPTAINS MUST EMAIL TONY SCOTT AND CONFIRM THAT A NEW MATCH DATE/TIME IS TO BE RE-ARRANGED**
- 5.2 If while a match is being played it is abandoned due to bad/extreme weather the score will stand as a result **ONLY IF ONE TEAM HAS WON 3 RUBBERS**. This is the only way a team can claim a winning result. Any other score at the time of the match being abandoned will result in the match being replayed on a new agreed date, with all previous scores relating to rubbers, sets & games being eliminated and the new match to start afresh from nil scores.

Matches being played can only be abandoned because of bad/extreme weather using Rule 5.2, and cannot be abandoned for any other reason. If this happens then the team who could complete the match will claim the match as a win.

6. WALKOVERS PROCEDURE & ALLOCATION OF WALKOVER FIGURES

Regarding Walkovers, **THE TEAM CLAIMING THE WALKOVER must enter the Walkover result on the Web Site within 3 days of the fixture date, or Rule 12 could apply & the walkover would not be awarded to the team and the match would be shown as a Void Result.**

Please enter brief details on the notes section of the Electronic Score Sheet, of why the match was claimed as a Walkover. THE TEAM WITH A WALKOVER AGAINST THEM WILL NOT RECEIVE ANY POINTS FOR THAT MATCH. THE TEAM CLAIMING THE WALKOVER WILL RECEIVE – 3 POINTS – 4 RUBBERS – 8 SETS – 48 GAMES.

7. MATCH START TIMES

If a player or players are not on court and ready to play 30 minutes after the agreed start time then the opposing team captain can claim the first set of the affected rubbers. The score being claimed as 6-0. If the player or players are not on court and ready to play 60 minutes after the agreed start time the opposing team captain can claim the first rubber by default. The score being claimed as 6-0. 6-0.

8. WIN-LOSS POINTS – DIVISIONAL POSITIONS

Teams will receive **3 POINTS FOR A WIN** and **1 POINT FOR A LOSS**. Points will determine a team's position within their division. At the end of the season if teams are on equal points, then the final positions will be determined by the team who have accumulated either the highest number of rubbers, or sets, or games, in that order of priority. In the unlikely event that teams are equal in all areas, then the winner/s of the head-to-head matches will determine the final divisional position/s.

9. BASIC MATCH PLAY FORMAT – TWO PAIR TENNIS LEAGUE – NO DRAWN MATCHES

All matches must be played with 8 Players creating four pairs/teams, two per club, playing against each other over 4 rubbers, with a possible 'match winning' 5th Rubber as a single short 'Quick Fire' set, with just one pair from each club playing to decide the match winner. In Hot Rackets there are no drawn matches as all matches will create a winning team. **All 4 or 5 rubbers must be played to complete a match (Subject to Rule 5.2-abandoned due to weather) or (Subject to Rule 21-injured player).** Matches to be best of 3 sets, if needed, sets to be decided by a standard 7-point tie break, shown as 7-6 in games to the winner. If the score is one set all then a standard 'Champions' 10-point tie break is played to decide the winner of the rubber. The 10-point tie break is recorded as 1-0 in games & 1 set & 1 rubber to the winner. If the match is drawn at 2 rubbers each then a 5th Rubber 'Quick Fire Short Set' is played to decide the match winner. As this is just one set this will be recorded as games achieved by both teams (e.g., 6-5) 1 Set & 1 Rubber to the winner. The winner of this short set is the first team to **6 GAMES**, so you do not have to win by 2 clear games, therefore if the score is 5-5 the winner of the next game wins the rubber by 6-5. As short deuces apply in this set, the receivers will choose which player is to receive serve. FULL MATCH PLAY PROCEDURE INFORMATION DETAILS CAN BE FOUND ON THE HOT RACKETS WEB SITE HOME PAGE UNDER 'SCORE SHEET & RULES'.

10. THE 'QUICK FIRE' SHORT SET 5th RUBBER

As there is a total of **FOUR** rubbers being played there is the possibility of a draw i.e. two rubbers each. Therefore, in the event of a 'tied match' (2 rubbers each). **A THIRD ROUND FIFTH RUBBER CONSISTING OF ONE DOUBLES 'QUICK FIRE' SHORT SET IS PLAYED TO DECIDE THE OVERALL CLUB WINNER OF THE MATCH.**

AS THERE ARE NO DRAWN MATCH RESULTS IN HOT RACKETS, THERE MUST BE A WINNING TEAM, THEREFORE THE 'QUICK FIRE' SHORT SET MUST BE PLAYED

The 'Quick Fire' Short Set is just **ONE** final **DOUBLES** rubber with just **ONE** short set, it will involve just two players from each club, therefore both club teams will decide amongst themselves which two players will play together in the 'quick fire' short set. **THE PLAYERS MUST BE CHOSEN AS FOLLOWS:**

ONE FROM THE NUMBER 1 PAIR, AND ONE FROM THE NUMBER 2 PAIR.

So, both teams will have a **combination of players from their Number 1 and Number 2 teams.**

If for any reason one team cannot field a team using this combination then this team will forfeit the match to the other team, who will claim the match as winners, claiming the 5th Set score as follows: 1 Rubber – 1 Set – 6-0 in Games.

Normal tennis scoring and play will apply i.e. spin for serve or end etc, and normal tennis scoring apart from the deuce points. In this set the **'Short Deuce'** point applies. If you reach deuce **then the next point wins the game,** so there is no advantage point. **On the deuce point the receivers will choose which player is to receive serve.**

The **first team to 6 games** is the winner, so you could get a 6-5 result, **you do not need to win by 2 clear games.**

The two main differences in the 'Quick Fire' Short Set is, **THE FIRST TEAM TO 6 GAMES IS THE WINNER, ALL DEUCE POINTS ARE PLAYED AS A SHORT DEUCE, THE NEXT POINT WINS THE GAME.**

11. QUICK FIRE SET MUST BE PLAYED AT 2 RUBBERS EACH - NOT A 10 POINT TIE BREAK

If a match is drawn at 2 rubbers each **you must play a match deciding 5th Rubber (QUICK FIRE SHORT SET)**

If for any reason (apart from bad weather) that both teams do not play a 5th Rubber, and against this rule play a **10-point Champions Tie Break** to decide the winning team, this will be entered by Hot Rackets as a **VOID MATCH** with nil points, nil rubbers, nil sets and nil games against both teams. This also applies if both teams do not play a 5th Rubber (QUICK FIRE SHORT SET) and call the match a draw, again this will be entered by Hot Rackets as a **VOID MATCH** with nil points, nil rubbers, nil sets and nil games against both teams. **This is to confirm that all Hot Rackets matches are played to create a match winning team, by playing a 5th Rubber (QUICK FIRE SET), also that no matches can be completed as a draw.**

12. ENTERING MATCH RESULTS/WALKOVERS ON THE WEB SITE WITHIN 3 DAYS OF FIXTURE

Results/Walkovers must be entered **BY THE WINNING CAPTAIN** on to the Hot Rackets web site on

www.hotrackets.co.uk/admin

The entered Results/Walkover must show on the web site within **72 HOURS (3 DAYS)** of the match date. **IF THE MATCH RESULT DETAILS ARE NOT RECEIVED WITHIN 72 HOURS THIS COULD RESULT IN THE WINNING TEAM HAVING ALL THREE POINTS DEDUCTED, THE MATCH SHOWN AS A LOSS AGAINST THEM. ALSO, A POSSIBLE TOTAL DEDUCTION OF ALL RUBBERS, SETS & GAMES ACHIEVED IN THIS MATCH. THEREFORE, THE WINNING TEAM COULD HAVE A NIL RESULT ENTERED AGAINST THEM FOR THIS SPECIFIC MATCH. THE LOSING TEAM IN THIS MATCH WILL STILL BE AWARDED, ONE POINT AND ALL THE RUBBERS, SETS & GAMES THEY ACHIEVED IN THIS MATCH, AS NORMAL. If a Walkover is not entered on the web site within 3 days this can result in the Walkover not being awarded to the team & the match shown as a void result.**

- 12.1 Both captains should check the completed Electronic Score Sheet regarding their played matches, on the Hot Rackets web site - Administration Panel through www.hotrackets.co.uk/admin. Also check if the match result has been entered by the winning team on the web site. Any actual match score discrepancies/disputes should be sent to Tony Scott, with a copy of the paper score sheet.

13. MATCH RESULTS/WALKOVERS/NON-PLAYED MATCHES - NOT ENTERED ON THE WEB SITE AFTER THE END OF SEASON

If a match result is still not entered by the winning team on the Hot Rackets web site **3 days** after the agreed end of season date, this could result in the winning team being deducted their 3 points, all the rubbers, all the sets, & games applicable to this match. This will not apply to the losing team who will still be awarded their 1 point, rubbers & all the sets & games they achieved in the applicable match. Also, if a walkover result is not entered on the Hot Rackets web site **3 days** after the agreed end of season date the applicable match will be shown as a Void match, therefore the team claiming the walkover (Rule 16), who should enter the walkover result on the Hot Rackets web site, will lose the points, rubbers, sets, games that are normally awarded in a walkover. Any fixture that has not been played after the end of season date (subject to reason/circumstances) will be shown as a Void match.

14. SAME CLUB TEAMS IN THE SAME DIVISION

If two teams from the same club end up in the same division, the fixture between both teams must be played before any other fixtures are played; therefore, this match must be played as the **FIRST MATCH OF THE SEASON**. Neither team from that club can play any other teams in their division until their first match is completed. If the match is not played first before any other fixtures, the fixture could be recorded as a Void match, with neither team not receiving any points, rubbers, sets or games. Only **TWO TEAMS** from the same club can play in One Division. Therefore, if a third team from the same club gain promotion to the same division, that team could not be promoted to the higher division if this creates three 'same club teams' in that division.

15. PRINTING HOT RACKETS MATCH DAY SCORE SHEETS -MATCH SCORE QUERIES

ONLY USE HOT RACKETS SCORE SHEETS FOR HOT RACKETS MATCHES. Both captains must print off a blank paper hard copy of the Score & Result Sheet and complete their own copies during the match. Both captains must sign both score sheets on the completion of the match. Please make sure both score sheets details are Identical. **ALL PAPER SCORE SHEETS SHOULD BE KEPT BY THE CAPTAINS FOR AT LEAST ONE MONTH AFTER THE LAST MATCHES AT THE END OF THE SEASON, IN CASE THERE ARE ANY MATCH SCORE DISCREPANCIES AGAINST THE FINAL RESULTS. WE CANNOT FINALISE ANY QUERY WITHOUT SIGHT OF THE SIGNED HOT RACKETS PAPER SCORE SHEETS.**

16. CLUB PLAYERS APPEARANCES-CLUB MEMBERS

There is a maximum of eight appearances for any player within one club during one season. Players must be a member of the club or tennis facility they are playing for & can only play for one club in the 'Hot Rackets' league during one season.

17. AFTER MATCH REFRESHMENTS

In all matches the home team will provide after match drink and food refreshments. The content is up to the home team but as a minimum should include tea, coffee, cold drinks, snacks and/or sandwiches, biscuits, cakes, etc. If there are any changes to this requirement by the home or away team, the applicable captain must contact their opponents of any change before the match date.

18. JUNIOR PLAYERS

Junior players can play for their club in Hot Rackets League matches. **The minimum age of a junior player is 14 years of age the maximum age is 16.** (From 17 years of age they would be classed as an adult)

There is a maximum of two junior players per club team, per match. Therefore, within the team's two pairs, two juniors can play but they must play with an adult player (17 years of age and over).

Which would be as follows: **TEAM 1-ONE ADULT & ONE JUNIOR, TEAM 2-ONE ADULT & ONE JUNIOR.**

Exceptions could be agreed as to playing a junior below minimum age, and a team wishing to put two juniors together. **THIS MUST BE AGREED WITH THE OPPONENTS CAPTAIN, PRIOR TO THE MATCH DATE & NOT ON THE MATCH DAY. It is only the opposing captain or league referee who can decide to accept & agree an exceptional situation, if this is not agreed, then the normal rules will apply. Clubs not reporting/complying with this rule could result in the applicable match/es, with a loss of a match win, points, rubbers, sets, games.**

19. TEAMS JOINING-REJOINING HOT RACKETS

Teams not entered in the competition in the previous year shall be placed in either sub division of the lowest group, except where the competition referee/s administrator/s consider that the standard of play of any such team warrants its placing in any vacancy/position in any higher division.

20. AWAY TEAMS COURTS MOVEMENT

In all Hot Rackets matches it is the AWAY TEAM that changes courts after the first round, rubbers 1 & 2, therefore the HOME TEAM will stay on the same courts for the first & second rounds & all rubbers.

If a match deciding 5th Rubber (QUICK FIRE SHORT SET) is played this will be played on any court agreed between both teams

21. INJURED PLAYER/S DURING MATCH PLAY

If a Game/Set/Rubber is affected due to a player/s being injured and having to retire & take no further part in the Set/Rubber or Match. If the Set being played when the player/s was injured is not completed, whatever the score was at the time of the injury in the incomplete set, the whole set will be awarded to the team that could complete the set.

The score will be recorded as 6 or 7 games (if by 2 clear games as normal) to the team that could complete the set, & record whatever games had been won by the team with the injured player/s.

Record as 7-6 or 6-7, if at the time of injury, a Tie Break was being played.

Record as 1-0 or 0-1, if at the time of injury, a Champions Tie Break was being played.

EXAMPLES OF SCORES AT TIME OF INJURY DURING THE FIRST 4 RUBBERS

TEAM A (INJURED TEAM PLAYER/S) TEAM B (TEAM THAT COULD COMPLETE THE SET)

TEAM A – winning 4-3 games at time of injury – Recorded score: **TEAM B** wins/records Set score as 4-6 games

TEAM A – score 5-5 games at time of injury – Recorded score: **TEAM B** wins/records Set score as 5-7 games

TEAM A – winning Tie Break 5-2 in points at time of injury – Recorded score: **TEAM B** wins/records Tie Break score as 6-7

TEAM A – winning Champions 10 Point Tie Break 9-5 in points at time of injury – Recorded score: **TEAM B** wins/records Champions Tie Break score as 0-1

Any un-played Sets/Rubbers that the injured player/s could not take part in would be recorded as 6-0 to the team that could play the sets & rubbers

Any Set/s/Rubbers that were completed prior to the player/s Injury would be entered as normal, as to the completed score of that/those Set/s/Rubbers, and count towards the match result.

If when the injury occurs and the rubber is tied at one set each, the team that could complete the rubber will claim the rubber by recording a Champions 10 Point Tie Break win of 1-0 or 0-1.

If the injury occurs either when the match is tied at 2 rubbers each see below 21.1 or if during a Quick-Fire Set see below 21.2.

21.1 If when the injury occurs and the match is tied at 2 rubbers each, the team that could carry on will claim the match by recording a Quick-Fire Set/5th Rubber win of: Games 6-0 or 0-6 – Set Won 1-0 or 0-1 – Rubber 1-0 or 0-1 and therefore claim the match result Rubbers as 3-2 or 2-3.

21.2 If the injury occurred during a Quick-Fire Set/5th Rubber the team that could carry on will claim the Quick-Fire Set/5th Rubber by 6 games & whatever games the injured player/s team had achieved at the time of the injury - Set Won 1-0 or 0-1 – Rubber 1-0 or 0-1 and therefore claim the match result Rubbers as 3-2 or 2-3.

PLEASE RECORD IN THE NOTES OF THE ELECTRONIC SCORE SHEET AT WHAT STAGE OF THE MATCH THE PLAYER WAS INJURED.

22. LADY & MEN PLAYERS

Lady players cannot play in a Men's team, also men players can't play in a Ladies team. The Hot Rackets League is set up as separate Ladies & Mens doubles divisions/teams. If this rule is not applied, the team that allows a lady to play in the men's team and/or a man in a Ladies team, that team will lose the match and a walkover will be given to their opponents.

23. EXTREME HEAT/TEMPERATURES-MATCH CANCELLATION-NEW START TIMES

If extreme Heat/Hot Weather Temperatures forecasts have been confirmed much closer to a match date, a team, because of the extreme Hot Temperatures, can contact their opposition and request to cancel a match **within the 2 weeks cancellation rule**, thereby giving shorter notice to cancel the match, or request to change the start time to a cooler part of the day. In this 'Extreme Heat/Temperature' request the other team cannot claim a walkover, and should work to agree to play the match, either agreeing a new match start time on the original match date, or a new match date, as suits both teams.

This extreme heat/temperature request should apply if weather forecasts are predicted for temperatures of 30 degrees & above.

In trying to rearrange an Extreme Heat/Temperature Cancelled Match, and especially if higher temperatures are forecast, both captains should work together, for all the players health & safety, and try to play matches in the cooler part of the day, either mornings or early evening, and also consider evening mid-week matches, especially if lower/safer temperatures are forecast.

WHEN A NEW MATCH DATE IS AGREED BOTH CAPTAINS MUST COMPLETE 'THE FIXTURE CHANGE FORM' ON THE HOME PAGE OF THE WEB SITE & SUBMIT TO TONY SCOTT