

Rules & Conditions of Play

Tennis Victoria Associations Junior Pennant

2024

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Any sections underlined are new or updated for the 2024 season.

SCHEDULE

1. The 2024 Associations Junior Pennant season will span 10 home and away rounds, as well as a Grand Final for the two highest ranked teams at the end of the home and away season.
 - a. This will differ for all 4 team sections, who will play 9 home and away rounds
 - b. This will differ for all Mixed 10/u sections, who will play 7 home and away rounds.
2. All matches will take place on Sundays, with an 8.30am start time unless indicated otherwise by Tennis Victoria.
3. The season will commence on August 11 (September 1 for Mixed 10/u) and conclude with the Grand Final on November 17.
 - a. November 24 is set out as a reserve day for the Grand Final in the case of a washout, heat out or other exceptional circumstances.
4. No play will take place during school holidays (September 22 & 29 and October 6) or the Melbourne Cup long weekend (November 3).

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

5. All players must have completed their Competitive Player Profile to be eligible to play Associations Junior Pennant.
6. All players must have played at least six team matches for his or her club in their association's junior or senior competition from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 (this excludes Tennis Victoria Pennant matches).
 - a. Regional players are eligible to participate for a metro-based Association on the proviso that they have played at least six team matches in their regional Association from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.
 - b. Associations with players who meet the criteria set out in a) above must disclose this with Tennis Victoria before lodging entries.
 - c. Associations with players who do not meet the criteria will not be eligible to participate as a Base or Reserve player unless exceptional circumstances are approved by Tennis Victoria.

It is the responsibility of all Associations to ensure that eligibility is met by all players prior to team entry, as well as any emergency players that are used throughout the season.

7. Each team must consist of a minimum of four players.
8. In the 10/u sections, teams may consist of any combination of male and female players. In all other sections, teams are gender based only.
9. Each Association can enter up to 2 teams in Mixed 10/u.
10. Each team should be ranked in singles order of merit. The number 1 should be the team's highest-level singles player, number 2 the second highest level etc. There is no order of merit for doubles.
11. It is recommended that singles UTR is used to determine order of merit but is not compulsory. Any substantial differences in UTR that are evident in a team's order of merit may be questioned or changed at the discretion of Tennis Victoria.

12. In the Junior Open 'A' section, this should consist of an associations highest level team. As a guide, boys teams entered in Junior Open A should be a minimum 8 singles UTR, with girls teams to be a minimum 6 singles UTR as of 30 June, 2024. Players 14 years and under who fall under this threshold cannot be named as a base player without prior approval from Tennis Victoria.
13. Players 14 and under that are ineligible for Junior Open A must play in their age group unless approved by Tennis Victoria.
14. Associations must nominate a 'home base' for each team at the commencement of the season, which must be a club within their Association unless extenuating circumstances have been approved by Tennis Victoria. A minimum of 2 courts must be supplied per week.
15. All associations participating in the Associations Junior Pennant competition must be affiliated to Tennis Victoria.
16. Players must be of age as of 24 November 2024.
17. Associations must nominate 1 Team Manager for each team they nominate. Team Managers will have their contact number and/or email address on the Associations Junior Pennant website and will be the first point of contact for any issues prior to match day (i.e. weather, forfeits) as well as ensuring the smooth running of procedures on match day.

ORDER OF MERIT AND EMERGENCIES

18. Players must play in the singles order of merit submitted on the entry form. Emergencies may not strengthen a team, except in A grade divisions, and should be of equivalent or lower standard to the nominated player they are replacing in that match. Emergency players cannot play in a singles position higher than the player they are replacing. Nominated players cannot play below their nominated singles position, but may play up in a higher singles position (as long as the team adheres to correct singles order of merit)
 - a. In A grade Divisions, an emergency players can strengthen a team and can play any position, as long as they play in the appropriate order of merit for their standard.
19. Any team not playing in their correct and approved singles order of merit shall lose any singles rubbers where the player has played out of the nominated singles order of merit.
20. Any singles order of merit changes must be received in writing by no later than 12pm Thursday and approved by Tennis Victoria before it can be used in any match. After Round 5, no singles order of merit changes will be accepted.
21. Any player nominated in a team may not play as an emergency in a lower grade team. No player, having played three times in a team, is eligible to play in an equivalent or lower team.
22. If an association has more than one team in a grade, nominated or emergency players can play with both teams through the home and away season. Once they have played three matches with one team, they are tied to that team. If an emergency player plays three matches, they are eligible to play in finals.
23. No player will be permitted to play out of age (in an older age group) as an emergency on more than two occasions in one season without prior approval from Tennis Victoria, with the exception of an underage player eligible for the Junior Open A division by the proviso of their UTR.

MATCHES

24. Tennis balls which are nationally approved will be adopted by Tennis Victoria for the Associations Junior Pennant competition. At a minimum, eight new balls must be provided by the home team for each match, however twelve new balls can be utilised to ensure each rubber utilises fresh balls. Green modified balls must be used for 10/u matches, which will be provided by Tennis Victoria prior to the commencement of the season.
25. Tennis Australia's Code of Behaviour, National Extreme Weather Policy and Member Protection By-law will apply to all matches.
26. No alterations can be made to the place, date or time of a match, without the approval of Tennis Victoria.
27. All doubles rubbers are to be played first, followed by the singles rubbers. The away team has choice of first singles rubber, the home team has second choice, away third, home team fourth.
 - a. Singles can be played first, but this must be at the agreement of both teams.
28. Matches must be played across a minimum of two courts. Up to four courts may be used for a match, but this requires mutual agreement from both team representatives.
29. Matches cannot change surfaces once commenced unless mutual agreement is reached by both teams. During finals, this decision is at the Referees discretion (if one is present).
30. Each team must record singles players in their singles order of merit and doubles pairings on the score sheet prior to the commencement of play.
31. Each match will consist of two doubles and four singles rubbers. Doubles rubbers are to be an eight game pro-set (at eight games all a seven-point tie-break will be played). Singles rubbers are to be the best of two tie-break sets. At six games all (in any set) a seven-point tie-break will be played. At one set all, a match tie-break (10-point tie-break) will be played.
32. Home and away matches will cease at 1:00 pm with any game in progress to be completed unless both teams agree to continue play.
33. Wash-outs and unfinished matches (without a result) will be a draw in home and away matches.
34. If one team has an unassailable lead in an unfinished match, they will be awarded the full match points. Otherwise, the points will be shared.
35. The winner of each match shall be decided by the number of rubbers won and, if equal, then by the number of sets won and, if equal, then the number of games won. A match tiebreak will not count as a set or a game and will only decide the winner of the specific rubber.
36. Four points shall be awarded to the team that wins the overall match and two points will be awarded to each team when the match is a draw. Each set in singles will be worth one point, with an additional point being awarded for a straight set win (three points total on offer for each singles rubber), and two points will be awarded for each doubles set won. Teams without the full four players will still be eligible to win the match points.
37. Food and drink are to be provided by the home team after the match.
38. Match results must be recorded online at matchcentre.tennis.com.au/dashboard by the home team no later than 9.00am on the Monday following each match. In the event of a draw, wash-out or walkover, the home team must still record the result online.

ATTENDANCE AND NO-SHOW PROVISIONS, AND FORFEITED/RETIRED RUBBERS

39. Matches will commence at 8:30 am, with all players of each team to be in attendance at 8:30 am.
40. For all matches, if at least two members of a team are not present by 9:00am then the match will be forfeited.
41. If there is not four players available by 8.45am for doubles rubbers, then the offending team must forfeit one doubles rubber. If there are two or three players present, the other doubles rubber can still be played.
42. If there are player(s) not available by 8.45am for singles rubbers, any singles rubbers that can be played should do so first. If, at the conclusion of all other singles rubbers, the missing player is still not present, that singles rubber is then forfeited.
43. Where a team elects to play a rubber that may be awarded to them as a default because of an opposing player's late arrival, once the relevant rubber has commenced (1 point played) that team may not subsequently claim that rubber as a default for punctuality reasons.
44. If a team only has three players in attendance, one doubles rubber and one singles rubber should be forfeited (singles rubber forfeit shall be as per order of merit). The team can still compete in the other rubbers and potentially win the overall match points.
45. A rubber forfeited by a team for any reason (i.e. punctuality, injury) without the rubber commencing should be marked as 'Home Team Forfeited' or 'Away Team Forfeited', without any scores being entered for that rubber. The rubber sets and games will be added to the teams tally through Match Centre automatically.
46. A rubber halted due to injury should be entered in Match Centre exactly as it was when the rubber stopped, and marked 'Home Team Retired' or 'Away Team Retired'. The rubber, sets and games will be added to the teams tally through Match Centre automatically.

WET WEATHER PROCEDURE

47. The Wet Weather Procedure is as follows:
 - a. In the event that a match cannot commence or continue by reason of inclement weather, unless the Team Managers of both teams mutually agree to reduce or extend the time, the match shall be abandoned after the expiration of any one continuous period of delay of sixty minutes after 8.30am, or from the time that play was interrupted.
 - b. Teams should make every effort to play a match. Teams found to have displayed less than a best effort to dry courts and play matches may be liable to a match forfeit.
 - c. A rubber halted due to inclement weather should be entered in Match Centre exactly as it was when the rubber stopped and marked 'Washout' or 'Heat out'. Any sets still in progress will have points shared.
48. The Abandoned Washout Procedure is as follows:

- a. In the event of inclement weather the Team Manager of the home team or a nominated Association representative can agree with the visiting Team Manager or nominated Association representative to declare the match a wash out without any member of either team having to turn up to the match site. This agreement can be made at any time within 48 hours of the Commencement time for the match. Teams should always endeavour to play matches wherever possible, and this should only be done in the event of a high volume of rain or extreme heat being forecast for the morning of the match.
 - b. In the event of this type of washout, the visiting Team Manager or nominated Association representative must provide the home Team Manager or nominated Association representatives with the names of his/her nominated team members for the match within 24 hours of the match being called a wash-out. This can be done via telephone, email or SMS text.
 - c. If mutual agreement between the Team Managers or between the nominated Association representatives is not attained prior to 8.30am, the match will proceed as scheduled.
49. For Grand Final matches where a delay occurs because of adverse weather conditions after the commencement of play, the match shall be abandoned by both teams after a continuous period of 90 minutes and the match will be pushed back and played on the Emergency Grand Final weekend.
50. In the case of adverse weather conditions during the Emergency Grand Final, the first-place team will be declared the winner.

PROTESTS

51. Any association shall have the right to protest as a result of any matter or thing arising during or after a match. Where possible “Match Played Under Protest” shall be recorded on the score sheet when the score sheet is signed by both team representatives. All protests must be lodged by the association, in writing, on association letterhead, containing full particulars of such protest to Tennis Victoria by 5pm on the Tuesday after the match to which the protest relates. The Match Day Panel shall consider and determine each protest and Tennis Victoria will notify the association having an interest in such protest of its determination.
52. If an Association wishes to lodge an appeal, the appeal must be lodged to Tennis Victoria, by 5:00pm two days from the day the notification of a determination was given. Appeals shall be heard as soon as practicable by an Appeals Tribunal consisting of three members who shall consider the appeal and notify clubs and players of its determination.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR: COMPETITIVE PLAY

53. All matches shall be played in accordance with the behavioural standards outlined in Part II: Expected Behaviours of the [Tennis Australia Code of Behaviour: Competitive Play](#) (the Code)
54. Any alleged breaches of the Code should be reported by filling out and lodging the [Tennis Victoria Competition Code of Behaviour Report](#) by 5pm Tuesday following the match in which the incident took place.
55. Tennis Victoria management may meet on a weekly basis to consider any alleged breaches of the Code. Tennis Victoria management will consider any reports/complaints, then determine, with regard to all the material provided to it, if a breach of the Code or the Tennis Victoria Associations Junior Pennant Rules has occurred and consider appropriate penalties in accordance with clause 51 of these Rules.
56. Team Managers are responsible for:

- a. Educating all players in their team on their responsibilities under Tennis Australia's National Policies (particularly the Code and Disciplinary Policy) and
- b. Managing all players in their team in relation to match play and sportsmanship.

PENALTIES

57. The Match Day Panel and Tennis Victoria management may impose penalties for any breach(es) of the Tennis Victoria Associations Junior Pennant Competition Rules and/or the Code. The Match Day Panel and Tennis Victoria management may resolve a dispute in any way it sees fit and/or impose a penalty, subject to the principles of natural justice. Penalties that may be imposed by The Match Day Panel – include (but are not limited to) suspension from the Tennis Victoria Associations Junior Pennant Competition of no more than four weeks, the forfeit of matches or sets, and the loss of premiership points, on any club, player or spectator found to have breached these Rules and/or the Code.
58. The Match Day Panel and Tennis Victoria management reserves the right to refer breaches of the code to the Tennis Australia Integrity and Compliance Unit for further investigation and to be resolved in accordance with the Code.

FINALS

59. The total number of points awarded per team determines ladder positions, with the Grand Final being played between the top two teams in each section.
60. In the event that two or more teams are equal on points at the end of the season, the tie will be broken by the number of matches won, and if still equal, percentage of rubbers won, and if still equal, by the percentage of sets won, and if still equal by the percentage of games won.
61. Grand Finals will be played at venues determined by Tennis Victoria. Surface preference will be given to the 1st place team. These venues may or may not be played at a team's 'home base' with the intention to host multiple Grand Finals at one location, to allow for a better atmosphere and for Tennis Victoria staff and referees to be in attendance.
62. No player may play in a Grand Final unless three matches have been played in the competition. This includes matches that the player is listed in that were forfeited or abandoned due to adverse weather. Any other changes need prior permission from Tennis Victoria.
63. Teams for finals matches may consist of a minimum of four and a maximum of six eligible players.
64. Should there be a tie in a Grand Final, after a five minute warm-up, the nominated doubles pairs from each team shall each play a standard seven point tie-break. (pair 1 v pair 1, pair 2 v pair 2). If tied at one tie-break all, a count-back on points shall be used. Should there still be a tie, this process shall be repeated until a result is gained.
65. Finals will be played without a pre-determined finish time.