



2024 TV PENNANT RULE CHANGES

Men's & Women's Pennant

The format for Men's & Women's Pennant (Grades 2 and below) will be slightly tweaked this year, to allow for more doubles and further promote team chemistry and connection. The format will be as per below:

Odd numbered rounds (Rounds 1, 3, 5 etc.):

Two first to 8 doubles (tiebreak at 8-8)

Four best of two tiebreak set singles (match tiebreak at one set all)

Even numbered rounds (Rounds 2, 4, 6 etc.):

Two best of 2 tiebreak set doubles (match tiebreak at one set all)

Four first to 8 singles (tiebreak at 8-8).

State Grade and Grade 1 format will remain as per 2023. Finals will be a best of two format for all rubbers.

Masters Pennant

2024 will see the reintroduction of Women's Masters Pennant, to provide a further playing option for Women over the age of 35. The competition will utilise the same format as Men's Masters, with four best of 2 doubles rubbers to be played over the course of the day.

A Sunday 1.00pm option will also be offered for both Men's and Women's (provided there is sufficient interest).

Club eligibility

Designated emergency players will be able to play for different clubs, until they play four matches for one club. At this point, they will be locked into playing for that club for the rest of the season. Usual rules around strengthening of team and order of merit will still apply, and this rule will be closely monitored by Tennis Victoria staff during the season.

Base players will not be able to play as an emergency for different clubs and are locked into playing for their club only.

Wildcard rule (State Grade only)

State Grade teams will be able to utilise one 'Wildcard' player per week, who can strengthen the team, as long as they play in the correct position based on ability. A Wildcard must not have played for another club during the season, and use of a Wildcard must be approved by Tennis Victoria by 5.00pm Thursday, prior to the match.

Any other emergency players must play in order of merit, and cannot strengthen the team.

Substitute rule

A minor adjustment to this rule (By-law 26) to allow for other rubbers to be played first, before the 30 minute timer starts.

Use of balls

Two new balls must be provided for all rubbers. If agreed upon by both teams, the home team can provide two additional new balls at the start of the second set, or four balls for the entirety of the rubber.



2024 TV PENNANT FAQs

Why is the format for Men's and Women's Pennant changing?

The singles and doubles format introduced in 2021 has been a terrific success, and allowed all players to play both formats of the game each week. However, we do acknowledge that it prioritised singles over doubles, which created potential disengagement for long-time Pennant players.

Our post season survey indicated that most players preferred playing singles and doubles each week, but there was also an appetite for greater emphasis on doubles. Therefore, the 2024 format was adopted to ensure each player can play a similar amount of both singles and doubles, and develop their craft in both formats.

What is the team entry fee for 2024?

The team entry fee will remain unchanged this season - that being \$225 for all teams (and \$550 for State Grade teams).

Will uniforms be made compulsory this season?

After consultation with key Pennant stakeholders, uniforms will be made compulsory at State Grade and Grade 1 levels (Men's and Women's Pennant) this season. They will also be strongly encouraged at other Grades and Masters, but not be made compulsory.

Clubs entering State Grade and Grade 1 teams are encouraged to include all Pennant teams when purchasing and organising uniforms for their club this season.

How does singles order of merit relate to strengthening your team?

Players need to play in the correct order of ability – that is, the player playing #1 must be better than the player playing #2, the player playing #2 must be better than the player playing #3, etc.

If you have a reserve player playing (someone who is not listed as a base player, and thus does not have an order of merit assigned to them), they still need to play in the correct order. They also cannot be better than the player they are replacing. For example, if your #3 player is missing, and you bring in a reserve player, they cannot be better than your #3.

How do we decide upon singles order of merit? Does it need to be based on UTR?

UTR is a great way to rank players and decide upon order of merit, and many teams choose to use this to grade and rank players. However, a club trial day, use of past competition/Pennant results, or a combination are all valid methods to deciding upon order of merit.

Please note that if a player appears to have clearly been entered in a lower position than their playing standard and UTR indicates, this may be queried by Tennis Victoria staff after entries close (i.e. more than a 1 point difference in singles UTR).

All players must also be named as Base players prior to the commencement of the season. There are restrictions as to how Reserve players can be used, so even if you are unsure as to the availability of a player, it is best to name them as a Base player.

We have tried as hard as I can to find a fourth, but my team only has three players available for my Men's or Women's Pennant match. Should we forfeit?

No. Teams can and should play with only three players, and they are still eligible to win the team match. They should contact their opponents to let them know ahead of time they are only bringing three players, however.



Who decides if there is a washout?

No team can solely decide if there is a washout. Washouts are decided if there has been 90 continuous minutes with no play, or 120 minutes in a finals match. On the day of a match where the courts are very wet and rain looks like it will continue for considerable time, the home team can contact the away team to ask if they would agree to a washout. However, the away team is within their rights to refuse and still travel to the courts.

Who enters scores after a match and how long do they have?

It is the home team's responsibility to enter scores by 9am Monday following a weekend match. Away teams have until 5 pm Tuesday to verify or dispute scores.

However, given all players should have access to Match Centre on their mobile devices, we are strongly encouraging all teams to enter their scores online before leaving the facility for the day. This provides all teams with timely match and ladder updates.