

WINTER LEAGUE RULES

1. ENTRIES

- 1.1. All squash players MUST be registered on SportyHQ. This includes regulars as well as reserves. No Club is permitted to use a player who has NOT been registered on SportyHQ. If an unregistered player (ie, not registered on SportyHQ), plays a match, then that player will have deemed to have “defaulted” and the match will be awarded to the opponent and a 2 point penalty will be imposed per unregistered player. If the defaulting player is used at any position other than 4, then all players below the defaulting player in the team will be deemed to be out of order and a 2 point penalty will be imposed on all such players. If the “unregistered” player continues to play, the Club will be required to attend a disciplinary hearing.
- 1.2. Each club shall make written application to the Midlands Squash Union (MSU) before the date stipulated by the MSU each year, for the teams it would like to enter into the league.
- 1.3. When submitting their application, each club shall specify the number of home courts they have available for use for league, together with the club's league representative, other committee member names, and their respective email addresses and contact numbers.
- 1.4. Only fully completed and signed applications, whereby each club agrees to pay the prescribed fee and abide by the MSU league rules and decisions as made by the elected MSU committee at the time, will be considered.
- 1.5. For every two teams entered into league to play on any one night, the club concerned must have at least one court available or have access to alternative courts for use for league.

2. LEAGUE TEAMS

- 2.1. All league teams shall consist of four players per team. All league players must be in good standing and a paid up member of their club, and be registered to play league with the MSU.
- 2.2. League will be limited to a maximum of 10 teams per league.
- 2.3. The number of leagues will depend on the number of entries received each year from each club and will be determined and finalised at the MSU Reps Meeting
- 2.4. Leagues will be filled from 2nd league down as far as possible and any shortages of teams will be distributed amongst the lower leagues.

3. SCORING SYSTEM

- 3.1. One (1) point will be earned for each game won.
- 3.2. The Point a Rally (PAR) scoring system will be used. Combined 1st League will use PAR, playing to 11 points, whilst all other leagues will use PAR, playing to 15 points. In all instances where the scores are level at either 10 or 14 points each, depending on the respective league, then in both instances a player must win by a clear 2 points.
- 3.3. **Scoring (SportyHQ being the current system used)**
 - 3.3.1. The Captain of each team, shall after each fixture, capture/verify the results on SportyHQ within a 7 day period of the fixture
 - 3.3.2. A one (1) point penalty will be imposed for every late SportyHQ entry, subject to a maximum of five (5) points per fixture
 - 3.3.3. All walkovers must be clearly recorded on SportyHQ
 - 3.3.4. Where a team fails to arrive, this should be documented and entered on SportyHQ. In addition the MSU Secretary and League Secretary needs to be advised

4. VENUE

- 4.1. First Round matches- home team mentioned first.
- 4.2. Second Round matches- home team mentioned second

5. TIMES AND DATE

- 5.1. Every fixture shall be played on the date and at the venue as stipulated in the MSU league book, which fixtures will also be available on the MSU website. No match or fixture may be postponed or played on another date or at another venue, except if a player wishes to play in a Squash SA, SA Masters, KZN, MSU or SA Schools sanctioned squash tournament, or the fixture falls within a University or a school holiday or a private school long weekend, or a player is selected to manage a representative Squash provincial team, in which case the following arrangements must be made:
- 5.2. The team concerned must request permission from the MSU, before the scheduled fixture, to play the entire fixture or alternatively just the match concerned within a period of seven (7) days before or after the date on the fixture list, or at a time and date acceptable to both teams, provided it is within a reasonable period and within the start and end dates of league, and the MSU is advised of such date at the time the request is made to change either the fixture or match. If the teams themselves are unable to come to an agreement on a date for the re-scheduling of the fixture or match, then the MSU will stipulate the date, time and venue
- 5.3. All Educational institutions MUST submit their problem dates to MSU at or before the REPS meeting to assist the MSU with the re-scheduling of such league fixtures.
- 5.4. All matches will commence at 17.30 pm, except those matches against teams from Cedara, Protea, Michaelhouse, Mooi River, Eston, Richmond and Howick, which will start at 18.00 pm. Matches against Greytown will start at 18.30 pm.
- 5.5. In the event of a power failure, both teams should wait at the court for one hour during which time they should try to ascertain if there is a spare court available at another venue with electricity on which they could complete their fixture. If after one hour the lights are still off, and there is no other court available, all outstanding matches must then be played within one week of the date on the fixture list. In addition, the MSU Secretary and League Secretary need to be advised.

The rescheduled match MUST be played between the same team members, playing in the same order, as those that were due to play in the original fixture. It is incumbent on the respective team captains to manage this rescheduled match and monitor this. (Whether all matches are played on the same night or not is up to the teams to arrange as long as the fixture is completed within the seven (7) day period.)

Only in exceptional circumstances may the team composition be changed, but in such an event this needs to be cleared with the league secretary beforehand. If the request is not approved, the team in question may award a walk over in the affected position and in such instances will not be subjected to any penalty points.

LEAGUE NIGHTS

Tuesday	- 3 rd and 6 th League
Wednesday	- 2 nd and 5 th League
Thursday	- 1 st , 4 th and 7 th league

6. STARTING TIMES OF MATCHES

- 6.1. Irrespective of the number of players on each side, if there is a pairing of opponents present and ready to play within 15 minutes of the fixture starting time as per clause 6.2 below, then the match shall commence with the playing of that pairing.
- 6.2. If the first pair cannot commence within this 15 minute time period, then the first match will be awarded to the first team that has a minimum of three (3) or more players present and ready to play 15 minutes after the fixture starting time or as soon as possible thereafter. Such time as there are three (3) or more players present and ready to play must be recorded accordingly on SportyHQ.
- 6.3. If the 2nd pair cannot commence within 15 minutes after the time period as stipulated in clause 6.2 above (ie: The 2nd tie cannot commence by 6pm or 15 minutes after three (3) or more players are

present and the first tie claimed or 15 minutes after the completion of the 1st tie), owing to the lack of a pairing of opponents, then the second match will be awarded to the first team which has 2 or more players present and ready to play. Such matches claimed must be recorded. In addition the MSU Secretary and League Secretary need to be advised.

- 6.4. A penalty of 2 points will be imposed in respect of each player who arrives too late for a fixture or who fails to arrive at all or who plays out of order or does not play in their club ladder position as given to the MSU at the start of league.
- 6.5. If the 3rd pair cannot commence within 15 minutes after the time period as stipulated in clause 6.3 above (ie: The 3rd tie cannot commence by 6.15pm or 15 minutes after two (2) or more players are present and the second tie claimed or 15 minutes after the completion of the last match played), owing to the lack of a pairing of opponents, then the remaining ties will be awarded to the first team which has 2 or more players present and ready to play.
Such matches claimed must be recorded. In addition, the MSU Secretary and League Secretary need to be advised.

7. DRESS / PROTECTIVE EYEWEAR

- 7.1. Only acceptable squash kit as defined from time to time by the World Squash Federation (WSF) and Squash SA (SSA) shall be worn and must be presentable and clean. A player has the right to refuse to play the match if his opponent is inappropriately dressed
- 7.2. Protective eyewear is compulsory for all under 19 participants in the league. No exceptions will be made, and those wanting to play without protective eyewear, will not be allowed to take to the court and shall forfeit their match and points. Opponents must also refuse to play any match where this is applicable. The above is a World Squash rule and subscribed to by Squash SA.

8. PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

- 8.1. Promotion of the **winning team** and relegation of the bottom team in each league, excepting between the 1st and 2nd leagues, shall be automatic, subject to the remaining provisions in this paragraph:
- 8.2. Subject to desirability of implementing the afore-going whenever possible, if any of the following circumstances should arise, then the MSU shall at their discretion constitute the league as it deems best:
 - 8.2.1. If automatic promotion and relegation was applied, a club would then have more teams playing on any one night than it has courts available to play league.
 - 8.2.2. Where a vacancy occurs in any league due to the withdrawal of a team or teams.
 - 8.2.3. Where a vacancy occurs in any league due to the top team not wishing to accept promotion.
 - 8.2.4. Where the MSU desires to alter the number of sides in any of the leagues.
 - 8.2.5. When the MSU desires to place a team in a higher league than it would normally be entitled to because in the opinion of the MSU that team is strong enough to play in such higher league.

9. FULFILMENT OF FIXTURE

- 9.1. If a team withdraws from any league before completing all their matches, all points awarded from fixtures played by that team shall be cancelled
- 9.2. Any club that withdraws a team from a particular league, whether it is before the league has started but after the MSU Reps meeting or during league, will not be entitled to enter that team in that league for the following year and will be liable for the league entry fee for such team and to a fine not exceeding R500.
- 9.3. Withdrawing a team from the league after the league has commenced: The redistribution of players to other teams may only happen after the halfway break, but these players may still reserve for a higher league
- 9.4. Any team fielding two players or less than the number of players per team as stipulated in clause 2.1, shall forfeit the fixture by default. The opposing team shall be awarded full points, provided it is also not in breach of the rules. Should both teams be in default, then no points will be awarded to either side.

A penalty of 2 points will be imposed in respect of each player who arrives too late for a fixture or who fails to arrive at all or who plays out of order or does not play in their club ladder position as given to the MSU at the start of league.

- 9.5. Any team that fails to fulfil a fixture during the season will be required to submit a written explanation to the MSU within 10 days from the date of the fixture, as to why they failed to fulfil such fixture. The MSU will then decide:
 - 9.5.1. The amount of the fine, not exceeding R500, to be levied on the club, under whose jurisdiction such team is playing for.
 - 9.5.2. Whether this team can continue playing in the league.
 - 9.5.3. The number of penalty points to impose on this team.
- 9.6. Any club requesting a postponement of a fixture by their “lowest league team in the club” because of illness, will be approved as there are no lower leagues to draw reserves from. ie: There are no registered players or reserves available due to illness. Medical certificates **are** required for all registered players (including reserves). If not provided a walkover will automatically be awarded
- 9.7. The rescheduled match is to be played within ten days, but if it cannot be accommodated by the non-offending Club, a walkover to be decided by league secretary. (Note: For rescheduled fixtures only, the availability of 2 players per team constitutes a match.)
- 9.8. IPT singles and doubles week- requests for rescheduling of matches- Player leaving early – not to be granted – A reserve to fill in in such instances.

10. PLAYING STRENGTHS

- 10.1. Prior to the date stipulated by the MSU, each club shall register its players with the MSU for that season. Each club shall provide the MSU in writing with a list of all its players and reserves in order of playing strength, indicating on their ladder which players are reserves only, as well as specifying on the Winter League entry form the names of players in each league team with the names of the reserves for each specific team. If a player wishes to play out of their club ladder position, then in such instance a written motivation must be submitted by the club to the MSU prior to the commencement of league for permission.

Note: A reserve may only be registered as a reserve for the same league he or she would have qualified for as a regular player and may then only reserve for that league or a higher league. A reserve may only reserve 9 times in a season, may not reserve more than once in a week and may not reserve more than 5 times in a league higher than his/her ladder league. Should a reserve want to play more than 9 times in a season then that person will be deemed a regular- and the club ladder needs to be adjusted.

- 10.2. At any time, during the duration of league, clubs shall be entitled to register, in writing, additional players with the MSU, prior to a player participating in a league fixture. In the event of there being insufficient time to notify the MSU in writing, verbal application may be made to the MSU prior to a player participating in a league fixture, provided that in such instance, such player is registered in writing with the MSU prior to updating SportyHQ within the seven (7) day period as stipulated in clause 4.1 above, failing which the penalty stipulated in clause 12.1 below shall apply. Clubs must specify in writing where such player is situated in terms of their order of playing strength
- 10.3. Each club shall play its players in strict order of playing strengths from its first team to its last team, except when there are two or more teams from one club within the same league, where in such instance playing strength may be split within such league and subject to the provisions of rule 11.9 or when a player is not a regular player. Where a club has two or more teams in the same league, and in such instance elects to split team strengths between such teams, then in such instance split strengths MUST be sustained for the full duration of Winter League.
- 10.4. A player can not represent more than one team on the same day
- 10.5. No player shall be entitled to play for more than one team in any league unless they are a reserve or if they have been displaced from a team for a minimum period of 2 weeks or more.

- 10.6. In the event of a regular player being compelled to withdraw from a particular team or game, the player selected to fill such vacancy, whether a regular player from a team below or a reserve, shall play in their club ladder position within the team concerned.
A reserve cannot be used from a higher team or from a reserve listed as a reserve for a higher league. Reserves may not reserve down below their ladder and specified reserve position on the winter league entry form.
- 10.7. A regular player is defined as a player who can play at least half the matches in a season and must then be registered at any time before the commencement of the second round. If a player joins a club during the league at such a stage that he or she is unable to fulfil this requirement from the onset, as the league has already progressed to beyond 50% completion, then in such instance such player will be considered as a reserve only for the remainder of the league
- 10.8. In the event of a club concerned not being able to fill a vacancy, the remaining players shall move up, leaving the vacancy at the lowest position, in other words at position number four (4).
- 10.9. If a player is unable to play for the next 5 matches or more, then the ladder and all the teams below such player must be adjusted immediately to cover such player's absence.
- 10.10. A club may elect to fix its teams for certain periods of time in the interests of team spirit and continuity, provided the MSU is informed in advance of this fact, and subject to rules 11.6 and 11.8 being adhered to.
- 10.11. If a team concedes a walkover at any other position other than at the lowest position (ie: position no.4), or uses a player that has not been registered with the MSU before such fixture, then those players playing below this position will be deemed to have played out of order and the match/ (es) will be awarded to the opposing player(s) and the defaulting team will be penalised as per clause 12.1.
- 10.12. A player may not represent more than one club during a season except with the express consent of the MSU.
If a player wants to represent another club in league, either before league starts or during league, then a letter of clearance must be obtained from his/her current club where he/she is registered, stating such player is in good standing and a paid up member of their club and is granted permission to play for another club and submitted to the MSU before he/she can be registered to play for his/her new club.
- A club has seven (7) days in which to respond to a written request for clearance for a player. Should such clearance letter not be forthcoming within the seven (7) day period, such player may only represent his/her new club once the MSU has been informed and given its approval thereafter.
- 10.13. The cut-off date for player transfers between clubs shall be the 31 January of each year. After this date all requests for player transfers must be motivated in writing, signed by both clubs and submitted to a MSU committee meeting for consideration. Only in exceptional circumstances will permission be granted, and all such late transfers will be subject to a late transfer fee as determined by the MSU, which transfer fee shall not exceed R1000 (to apply from 2017). The late transfer fee shall be the responsibility of the new club to which the player is transferring and must be settled by the new club prior to the player participating in any league matches. Failure to comply with these terms will result in the match being awarded to the opponent and such player being awarded zero (0) points plus a penalty of two (2) points. The same will apply for every player below playing out of position and clause 10.10 and 11.1 shall apply.
- 10.14. A player that has been registered with a club but has not been utilized at all and now wishes to be transferred to another club may do so without penalty, but only after the halfway break, and once clearance has been approved by the club that the player is leaving. Such clearance shall be provided in accordance with the first paragraph of 10.13
- 10.15. A regular player moving up the team playing order, and playing above another regular player or players, must remain at this position for a minimum of three (3) consecutive weeks before being able to play below such regular player or players again.
- 10.16. No player may play twice a week, more than five (5) times during the season
- 10.17. In the event of two or more teams being tied for any position, then in such an event the winner/loser and final log positions will be determined by the team that won the fixture or most fixtures between such teams.

If the result is still tied, then the team that accumulated the most points in the fixtures between such teams will determine the winner/loser and final log positions. If the teams are still tied, then in such event the teams will share the trophy for first position in the league. If two or more teams are tied in any position at the bottom of the league, then in such an event the final log positions between such teams and which teams will be relegated, will be determined by either the spin of a coin or by a play off, on a date set by the MSU or as mutually agreed to between such teams, using the regular players that played the majority of the season for such teams.

- 10.18. Any protests regarding alleged abuse of the reserves playing in ladder position rule would be dealt with by a Disciplinary Committee as allowed for in section 12.

11. PENALTIES

- 11.1. A team playing an unregistered player shall forfeit the point(s) gained by the player (if any) plus any point(s) gained (if any) by any players playing out of position or below such unregistered player and shall be penalised a further two points for each infringement. The opposing player/players shall be awarded the match (es).
- 11.2. In the event of a player playing out of ladder and team order, all points gained by those players out of order will be forfeited and a penalty of 2 points will be given to each player who played out of order. The opposing team will be awarded the match/(es).
- 11.3. The MSU shall, at its discretion, decide what penalties to impose on a team in the event of any un-sportsmanship conduct or a deliberate breach or infringement of the intent of the league rules which are not fully provided for in these rules and which will bring the good name of the game of squash or Midlands Squash into disrepute

12. PROTESTS

- 12.1. The MSU shall be entitled, to deal with any apparent breach of these rules by any team and, in addition, each club shall be entitled to protest to the MSU in writing, wherein the grounds of the protest are clearly stated against any alleged breach of these rules by any team, in which event the Union shall be obliged to hear the protest and give its decision therein
- 12.2. Any protest must be lodged in writing by a club with the MSU, within ten (10) days of the date the alleged breach of these rules occurred. Likewise, a club shall have ten (10) days to give a written explanation in response, from the date notice from the MSU is received advising the defaulting club of the alleged breach. Should clubs not comply then the MSU shall have the right to elect not to entertain the protest if its administration of the league would be unduly inconvenienced thereby.
- 12.3. A Disciplinary Committee of Club Representatives will be established each season to assist with interpretation of the rules and to resolve any contentious issues as required by the League Secretary. Rulings of this committee are final if not covered elsewhere,

13. MARKERS AND SQUASH BALLS

- 13.1. For each and every league match, both a marker and referee shall be appointed before the start of the warmup, with one player from each team being appointed as either the marker or the referee. Such appointments shall be mutually agreed to between the captains of both teams, failing which, then the host captain, shall nominate the marker and referee, and such two players shall then both officiate for the duration of the match.
- 13.2. The markers and referees shall follow the rules of squash rackets as set by the World Squash Federation (WSF) and recognised and enforced by Squash SA (SSA) as a member of the WSF.
- 13.3. The squash ball to be used in each match shall be, preferably a new, official black double yellow dot ball, and is to be supplied by the host team.

14. LEAGUE FEES

- 14.1. Clubs must pay their league fees in full before the 30 April of each league year. Any outstanding fees at this date will be subject to a surcharge of 20 per centum (20%).
- 14.2. If these fees and surcharge is still outstanding at the 30 June, the club will be suspended from league until such time as all outstanding fees and surcharges are paid, and all their points won for all their teams shall be cancelled and such teams will be awarded zero points.
- 14.3. League fees will be levied on the number of league teams accepted at the Reps meeting each year. If a club should enter additional teams subsequent to this meeting the club will also be liable for these fees. If a club should withdraw a team(s) subsequent to the Reps meeting they will still be liable for the number of teams accepted at the Reps meeting plus a fine as determined by the Committee as per clause 9.2