



FINAL – March 2021

Tri-County Women's Tennis Association

PART I: ORGANIZATION RULES

1. **Name and Objective:** The name of this organization shall be Tri-County Women's Tennis Association (TCWTA), a not-for-profit association of member tennis clubs organized to:
 - a. Manage and promote an amateur, competitive, all-surface women's doubles team tennis league.
 - b. Maintain high standards, fair play and good sportsmanship among its members in the tri-county area of St. Lucie, Martin and Indian River counties, Florida.
2. **Teams, Members and Dues:**
 - a. Teams will be from area tennis clubs that apply to, join and are accepted by the Association.
 - b. Members will consist of any/all rostered team players.
 - c. Dues will be an annual registration/membership fee of \$65.00 per team, made payable to "TCWTA", no later than September 1st as specified by the Board.
3. **Officers:** The officers shall consist of President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, Ratings and Roster Chair and Website Administrator. Each of these officers must be a player member and will serve for a term of two years, unless voted on for a shorter term by the Board.
4. **Executive Committee (EC):** The officers shall form the EC. This Committee shall have all the powers of the Board between meetings of the Board. The actions of the EC shall be presented to the Board. The EC also serves as the Ratings and Grievance Committee.
5. **Board:** The Board shall consist of the EC and one player Representative from each club. The term of office for the Board and the fiscal year shall be May 1 - April 30. The Board shall:
 - a. Meet at least three times a year.
 - b. Approve or disapprove all rule changes.
 - c. Amend rules as necessary.

6. **President's Duties** shall include:
 - a. Call and conduct EC and Board meetings; in her absence another member of the EC will fill in.
 - b. Act as Chair of the Rules Committee.
 - c. Appoint the Nominating Committee at the January meeting.
 - d. Appoint vacated positions on the EC.
 - e. Notify the Captains of both teams when one of those teams is penalized for a match infraction.
 - f. In the event the President is unable to serve or continue her term, a member of the EC will be elected by the Board to fulfill the time of absence for the remainder of her term.
 - g. Perform other duties as prescribed by the Board

7. **Vice President's Duties** shall include:
 - a. Liaison for EOS Event
 - b. Assume duties of other Executive Committee Members as needed.

8. **Secretary's Duties** shall include:
 - a. Compile minutes and reports
 - b. Be responsible for all external correspondence and mailing.
 - c. Be responsible for preparation of Rules changes to be posted on the TCWTA website.
 - d. Maintain a hard copy of the current Rules, recording periodic amendments made by the Board.
 - e. Maintain documents that appear on the TCWTA website.
 - f. Duties of Secretary and Treasurer are now combined.

9. **Treasurer's Duties** shall include:
 - a. Have custody of all monies of the Association
 - b. Keep account records of all income and disbursements and have said information available upon request and provided in each Executive and Board Committee meeting minutes.
 - c. Collect team fees to be determined by the Board.
 - d. Collect payments for the Annual Awards Luncheon and make disbursements.
 - e. Be responsible for securing Board Meeting location once the dates and times are determined.
 - f. Duties of Treasurer and Secretary are now combined

10. **Ratings and Roster Chair's Duties** shall include:
 - a. Keep rosters of each club; ensure that roster does not exceed 20 players.
 - b. Be notified of all roster changes, keep record of same.
 - c. Review USTA profiles of players entering TCWTA and contact Captain or pro should there be a ratings discrepancy.
 - d. Ensure scores are entered.
 - e. Mediate re-matches and ensure re-scheduling of delayed matches.
 - f. Track penalty points and make penalty point adjustments to team totals when necessary

- g. Notify captains and players when upgrades or downgrades are made to a player's benchmark rating.
 - h. Maintain email database for the EC.
 - i. Maintain a strong working relationship with all Club Pros.
 - j. Prepare schedules for all divisions; enter schedules, teams, Captains, rosters, players, and other information necessary to conduct the league's play.
11. **Website Administrator's Duties** shall include:
- a. Maintain the Tri-County website.
 - b. Assist the Ratings/Roster Chair as needed.
12. **Player Club Representative's Duties** shall include:
- a. Be a player member.
 - b. Be the official TCWTA representative from her club and attend all Board meetings or provide an alternate from her club to attend.
 - c. Be responsible for relating all business of the Board to her club's TCWTA membership.
 - d. Vote the will of her club's TCWTA members on Board issues.
 - e. Be responsible for submitting all team information as requested by the EC.
13. **Nominating Committee's Duties** shall include:
- a. Consist of a member of the EC and two Board Members
 - b. No two members may be from the same club.
 - c. Prepare a slate of new officers to be presented to the Board; if possible, no more than one nomination per club.
 - d. Accept and place on the ballot all names of qualified individuals for nomination from the general membership prior to March 1st.
 - e. Distribute complete ballot to all Club Representatives at least two weeks prior to elections at the March meeting. Before the election, additional candidates can be added to the ballot.
14. **Rules Committee's Duties** shall include:
- a. Be composed of the EC.
 - b. Receive suggested rules changes from Club Representatives at any time.
 - c. Present suggested rules changes to the Board at the January meeting for discussion and vote at the March meeting.
 - d. Call a special Board meeting at which to consider proposed changes deemed to be urgent consequence, providing a two-week prior notice of the meeting that shall include the specific proposal.
15. **Voting Procedure:**
- a. Each club shall have one vote in general matters. If an issue pertains to only one Division, then each club within that Division will have one vote.
 - b. In case of a tie, the EC shall have the tie-breaking vote.
 - c. Rule(s) changes adhering to the regular January - March due process require a simple majority of all clubs voting, either present or by proxy, to approve and

become effective the following season.

- d. Issues of urgent consequence prompting the calling of a special Board meeting shall be so stipulated and will require a 2/3 majority of all clubs voting, either present or by proxy, to approve and will become effective immediately unless otherwise specified.

16. TCWTA Website: TCWTA maintains a website, www.tcwta.net to manage the league and its functions. The website shall:

- a. Be accessible to all league players.
- b. Provide online match scheduling, scorekeeping, team standings, and other records and reports.
- c. Provide a dynamic computer rating system that adjusts player ratings automatically each time they play.

17. League Format:

- a. All court surfaces will be used for league play. Whenever a match is scheduled on hard and soft courts simultaneously, the home team with the varied court surfaces shall offer the visiting team to declare which line(s) shall play on the hard court(s)
- b. There shall be five basic Divisions, 4.5, 4.0, 3.5, 3.0 and 2.5, each with three to five court positions.
- c. The EC with approval of the Board of Directors may restructure each Division.

18. Participating Clubs:

- a. Any club within St. Lucie, Martin or Indian River counties is eligible to enter teams. The Board may grant specific approval to admit applicant clubs from outside the three counties.
- b. A club may field more than one (1) team and may have more than (1) team participating at each different level.
- c. A club must have sufficient courts available at 8:30 up to 10:30 AM to field its scheduled team positions, club requests for exception require pre-season EC approval.
- d. Each club must notify the President of its team commitment by September 1st.
- e. A registration fee of \$65 per team is required to be paid to the Treasurer by September 1st or as specified by the Board and is non-refundable after one week prior to the first scheduled match. A team may be fined \$5.00 per day for each day it is in default of the payment due date.

19. New Teams:

- a. At the very earliest a team considers joining TCWTA, it should contact the President and refer to TCWTA *Rules* posted on the TCWTA website.
- b. Inquiries for new teams should be sent to the President by September 1st and will be processed in order of receipt: (a) application should state the desired Division and number of available home courts, and (b) applicants must agree to submit rosters and team fees as required and to otherwise observe TCWTA *Rules*.
- c. If there is no vacancy in the appropriate Division, it may be restructured (see League Format), or new applications may be rejected until such time as restructuring is feasible.

PART II: LEAGUE OPERATING RULES

20. Scheduling:

- a. The playing season shall be normally, but not restricted to, mid-October to mid-April.
- b. A full season shall consist of each team playing every other team in its Division/District at least once. Due to the number of teams and time constraints, the Executive Committee may make exceptions.
- c. Play schedules for all levels of play will be posted on the TCWTA website.

21. Eligibility Requirements:

- a. Players must be least 21 years old prior to the first match of the season.
- b. Our league is an amateur league. Any player who has been ranked, played in college, played open level, or has previously received money or currently receives money for teaching or coaching any level of tennis must be screened for eligibility by the EC.

22. Ratings:

- a. A Captain may request the addition of a new player with a ratings evaluation from her Club Pro and/or team Captain if there is no Club Pro. The Ratings/Roster Chair will factor in any current USTA rating, the Pro's assessment and any other performance data to determine the appropriate division of play. Once in the league's ratings program, ongoing computer-generated match result ratings are known as one's dynamic rating. For players with said history in our system, this dynamic rating will be ongoing season to season with unusual circumstances being reviewed by the Ratings/Roster Chair. Upon her recommendation, the rating may be adjusted if necessary to ensure competitive play, with an "effective date" determined on a case-by-case basis and voted on as usual.
- b. Beginning players (new to tennis and league play) will be permitted to enter the league with a 2.5 rating with the written recommendation of the club pro, or team captain if there is no club Pro.
- c. Disputed ratings will be resolved by the EC.
- d. Ratings approved for all or any portion of a playing season will remain valid for the rest of the full season; however, a level change based on a rating update can be considered if requested by the player's Captain or Club Pro.
- e. For all Divisions, players whose dynamic rating exceeds their Division level one time will be required to play in the next higher District/Division the following season. If a player bumps up at any time during the season, it will be considered a bump up (advancement to the next division level). It will be the responsibility of Team Captains to maintain knowledge of their players' dynamic rating. Each player will also be responsible to maintain knowledge of her dynamic rating. If at any time during the regular season, a player's dynamic rating exceeds their division level, it is necessary that notification be made to the Roster Chair forthwith. Additionally, from that point on, the affected player will be restricted to play the Court 1 position within that division. If notification is not made to the Roster

Chair and that affected player participates in league play in in position other than Court 1, that line played will be defaulted.

- f. For the 4.0 Division, any currently rostered player reaching or exceeding a dynamic rating of 4.5 may continue to play in the 4.0 Division with a court one restriction until her dynamic rating reaches 4.75 or a 4.5 Division is established. A player may enter the league as an established 4.5 player and play court one restriction. No more than one 4.5 player may play per match in the court one restriction.

23. Teams:

- a. A roster is limited to 20 regular players.
- b. In addition, a roster may include a total of three (3) substitute players.
- c. All players must meet the eligibility requirements.
- d. New players to the league may be added at any time during the season once approved by the Ratings/Roster Chair according to the rules set forth under "Rosters."
- e. Each team shall have a Captain who is a player member.
- f. The deadline to add players to a roster is March 1st.

24. Rosters:

- a. Downgrade form due by September 1st to the Ratings/Roster Chair.
- b. Team rosters are due by September 20th to the Ratings/Roster Chair and should have a minimum of 8 regular players. The "three week freeze" will only apply when clubs are divided into flights at the beginning of the season.
- c. Team commitment form is due by September 1 to the Ratings/Roster Chair, team fee due by September 1 to the Treasurer.
- d. Deadline for captains to add players is October 1st. which will be in effect until league play begins. The Ratings/Roster Chair will use judgment as to excessive Add's/Delete's/Changes to Rosters and may deny the changes if, in fact, the Add's/Delete's/Changes affect the Team Dynamic Rating that placed that team in a particular Division.
- e. Rostering at any level above one's benchmark rating is permitted. No player may play at a lower level than her benchmark rating (see Rule 29c-1)
- f. Additional players may be added to a team roster by submitting a "Roster Change Form" or a "New Player to TCWTA Form: no less than five (5) days prior to participating in a league match and by gaining approval by the Ratings/Roster Chair which will be given to the requesting player's team captain. All players must be rostered on the TCWTA website on the day of the match. Those teams/team Captains that fail to follow the aforementioned procedure of add a NEW player to their roster and said new player participates in a league match, the results will be a line default for that match.
- g. A player may be rostered at one (1) playing level on one (1) only; i.e., 2.5, 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5.
- h. Designated Substitutes:
 - 1. Each team may have a total of (3) designated substitutes on their roster in addition to their 20 "regular" rostered players.
 - 2. Each designated substitute is limited to playing (5) times per season.

3. Each designated substitute can only be rostered on one (1) team at the same club and "sub" will be by her name on the roster.
 4. A designated substitute may be removed from a roster and added to another roster at any club as long as she has not played in a match as a substitute for the team she is being removed from, or played as a "regular" rostered player at that club.
 5. A designated substitute may NOT sub for a lower benchmark level than her current benchmark.
 6. A designated substitute may only sub for one (1) playing level.
 7. A designated substitute may NOT be a "regular" rostered player on a team participating in that same playing level.
 8. A designated substitute should remain a designated substitute for the entire season and should not be converted to a "regular" rostered player without prior approval of the EC.
- i. Once teams are established and season play has begun, any player who has played or substituted in one or more matches and subsequently wishes to change teams or clubs during their season must submit the request to the EC who will consider each request on a case-by-case basis. Players who have not played in a single match in the current season may change teams at any time during the season.
 - j. Player downgrade requests will only be accepted at the end of the regulation playing season through September 1. (Procedures for downgrade requests can be found on the TCWTA website/Resources for teams tab/Downgrade Request Form).

25.. Line-ups:

- a. Teams must be placed by their combined dynamic ratings, to play the appropriate position from high to low, in the line-up.
- b. For all Divisions, players whose dynamic rating exceeds their Division level during the season may complete the season in that Division but are required to play first position.
- c. For the 2.5, 3.0, 3.5, and 4.0 Divisions, no more than one team player whose dynamic rating has exceeded the current Division's benchmark level may play in a match.
- d. At match time, Captains simultaneously exchange match scorecards already prepared with players names and positions designated. Each Captain shall verify that the players are in the correct court positions based on their combined dynamic ratings from high to low and according to the Penalties Rule (#29,), subsection "Stacking."

26. Matches:

- a. USTA Code is followed, unless an exception is made by the TCWTA Rules Committee.
- b. Once published, match dates and start times are not negotiable under standard playing conditions. Exception: 1) rain or unplayable courts could warrant playing the match on a date and/or time other than the pre-scheduled date/time. 2) extreme heat/cold could warrant a later or earlier start time than the pre-scheduled time on the same date if agreed

upon by both Captains. When the temperature is 40 degrees or lower at the host Club or 95 degrees or above at the host Club at the scheduled start time of the match, the match time can be changed upon agreement by both Captains. Every effort should be made to play on the original date and time. Both Captains must agree to the time and/or date change of the match. 3) If there is a dispute, it will be resolved by the EC

- c. Official start times are between 8:30 and 10:30 AM, unless otherwise approved pre-season by the EC.
- d. A 10-minute warm-up is allowed after court assignment.
- e. New yellow balls appropriate for the court surface will be furnished by the home team and opened in the presence of both teams.
- f. Format will be best 2 out of 3 sets. If the sets are split One (1) all, then the 3rd set shall be played as a Super Tie-Breaker (first to 10 by 2) in lieu of a full 3rd set and shall be played in a continuous play fashion.
- g. A maximum of 15 minutes may be taken for one medical time-out or to assess and treat injury. Medical time-outs are intended to treat medical conditions including, but not limited to, illness, heat-related condition or cramping, or any other condition that the player believes requires assessment or treatment. A player is entitled to only one medical time-out per match. When possible, a medical or injury time-out should be taken during a set break or if not possible, at an odd game changeover. A break taken at other times should be limited to true emergencies.
- h. When changing courts during odd game changeover, the maximum rest time is 90 seconds. The maximum rest time between 1st and 2nd set breaks will be 2 minutes. A ten minute break may be taken between the 2nd and 3rd set breaks if desired by either team and coaching is permissible during the 10 minute break between the 2nd and 3rd set breaks.
- i. Refreshments may be served at the discretion of the home team.

27. Defaults, Forfeits and Retirements:

- a. A default is declared against a team for not having an adequate number of required players at match time; each defaulting court forfeits a win to the opponent.
- b. Regardless of the position(s) defaulting, a defaulting team's other positions will each move up in order, filling the defaulted position(s) so that forfeits will occur from the bottom position upward.
- c. If advance notice of a default is given as a courtesy to the opposing team but weather at match time causes postponement of the entire match, any default/forfeit is void and the match will be rescheduled to include all positions
- d. Matches begin at the scheduled time when all players are present. The line-up is called and there is a 10 minute warm-up. If all players are **not** present, the procedure is as follows:
 - 1) Line-ups are not exchanged until all players are present.
 - 2) During the delay, players may continue to warm up any fashion, using new balls if requested.
 - 3) If the missing player(s) arrive before 15 minutes have passed, the line-up is called and if time allows, players may continue to warm up until the 15-minute mark is reached at which time play begins.

- 4) If the missing player(s) has not arrived after 15 minutes, a default occurs in the lowest position and Captains may adjust their line-up.
- e. A retired match is one not completed (e.g., due to injury, illness, or other emergency of a player) after official warm-up has begun. Failure to resume play after a 15-minute medical or injury time-out constitutes a retirement and the court win is awarded the opposing team.
- f. Teams are expected to play all scheduled matches. A pattern of a team defaulting may be considered a flagrant disregard of rules resulting in the club's expulsion from the league. Any team contemplating an entire team match default is asked to contact the Ratings/Roster Chair who will act as mediator encouraging players to play the match even if it has to be rescheduled outside of normal time limits.

28. Scoring

- a. One point will be given for each court won.
- b. No additional points will be awarded.

29. Penalties:

- a. Flagrant disregard of rules can result in a team being dropped from the Association.
- b. Unsportsmanlike behavior on court in violation of The Code may result in player suspension or expulsion by the EC if not handled by the captain.
- c. Teams not complying with TCWTA *Rules* may have penalty points assessed including but limited to the following offenses:
 - 1) Use of a player not properly rostered or use of a player in a Division in which she is not eligible to play.
 - 2) Providing inaccurate information to the Ratings/Roster Chair which results in mis-rating a new player to the league.
 - 3) Stacking: Lineups must be correctly placed using the combined ratings of each doubles team from highest to lowest rating. If a violation is determined by the EC, the entire team may receive a penalty point for each offense during the current season.
 - 4) Illegal Coaching: If the opposing team files a grievance, the EC will evaluate. If validated, the team will receive a warning and then may be assessed a penalty point if there are further infractions during the season.
- d. When a team in violation of Rule 29c wins a court on which an infraction occurs, that court will be rescored as a default, resulting in the loss of that court. Whether the team loses or wins the court on which the infraction occurs, one additional penalty point may be imposed.
- e. Any team not completing a full season will lose its position and must reapply as a new team.
- f. Penalty points will not be reflected in the standings shown on the website, but will be tracked by the Ratings/Roster Chair. A separate section of the website will indicate penalty points assessed.

30. Rematches: Should be set only in case of rain or unplayable courts. Delay for these reasons of more than one hour will allow either team a requested rematch.

- a. Must be played within **two weeks** (excluding TCWTA's holiday weeks) of the

original date or the match will be canceled; no points awarded either team; notify the Ratings/Roster Chair promptly of the new date. The Ratings/Roster Chair may determine a deadline date if necessary.

- b. If the rematch is rained out, teams have an extra 2 weeks to play the match or it will be canceled; no points awarded either team.
- c. All games and points played before the interruption stand. Rematch resumes from that point, continuing the same line-up for both teams.
- d. If the first point of the match has not been played, the line-up may be changed for the rematch.
- e. Matches can be played on the same day or separately by positions. If the teams cannot agree to a rematch date(s), they each submit two dates. Using a coin toss, the loser chooses one of the winner's dates.
- f. Rescheduling should be set by the Captains, with all communications handled by them or their designates: (a) Captains determine when their team members can play; (b) Date(s) and positions are set without naming players; (c) Captains are responsible to field their teams for the agreed dates and positions; (d) Notify Ratings/Roster Chair of agreed upon arrangements.
- g. Once a rematch has been scheduled, a team must default any position it cannot then field, with win point(s) awarded to the opposing team. No further dates may be set except for cancellation due to rain or court conditions and as subject to items 30a and 30b above.
- h. Should both teams agree, matches may be played earlier or later in the day due to extreme heat or cold, but the match must be played on the scheduled date.
- i. Scorecards should be printed (blank or filled in) on the day of the originally scheduled match even if the match is determined to be unplayable in advance; the dynamic ratings listed on the bottom of the score cards must be used when rescheduling the match. All matches must use the ratings of all rostered players as of the date of the originally scheduled match; i.e., if the match is rescheduled for two (2) weeks later and additionally regularly scheduled play has been accomplished, ratings of players may have changed. Therefore, all teams will use the players and ratings that are reflected on the scorecard that was printed out for the originally scheduled match. If all three (3) courts are played on the same day, change the date on the scorecard from the original date to the actual date of completion. If the rematch does not have all three (3) courts playing on the same day, the date reflected on the scorecard for the entry of the match will be the date of the last court played, regardless of order the courts were played.
- j. In the event of any matches being rematched, all rematches must be made up BEFORE the regularly scheduled last match of the season. In the event of a rematch on the last regularly scheduled match of the season, this rematch must be made up WITHIN 5 DAYS.

31. Grievance Procedures:

- a. Any player's complaint may be issued in writing to any officer of the EC, who will then be responsible to relay it to a relevant officer, the President and/or full Committee.
- b. A player may relay her complaint through her Club Rep who will keep her identity anonymous if she requests.
- c. If the complaint is judged not to have merit, only the complainant or her

Club Rep will be advised. If the complaint is upheld, all affected parties will be advised and appropriate remedy or penalty imposed.

- d. Any player who wishes to appeal a complaint decision is to contact the President, or will ask for all pertinent information and present the arguments to the EC at it's next meeting.
- e. The EC sits as the final Grievance Committee and its decision is final.

32. Coaching

- a. Coaches, Club Pros, players and spectators may not coach during a match except during a rain delay or during a team's break between the 2nd and 3rd sets.

33. Captain's Responsibilities shall include:

- a. Provide complete and accurate information to the league on all of her players; i.e., correct spelling of first and last name(s), email address(es), telephone number(s) and notify the Ratings/Roster Chair of any changes to the information.
- b. Be the spokesperson for her team.
- c. Attend all Board meetings or send a designated representative.
- d. Read and review TCWTA *Rules*, the USTA Code and Friend of Court with her team prior to the start of season play.
- e. As home Captain, contact visiting Captain 2 days prior to the match.
- f. For each match, determine team positions and prepare the scorecard for exchange with the opposing Captain. Each Captain shall verify that the players are in the correct court positions, based on the dynamic ratings and according to the Penalties Rule 29c. subsection "Stacking."
- g. Enter results on the website for all home matches no later than 5:00 PM on the date of play.
- h. Instruct team members that in case of a rain (or other) interruption, they should: (a) make note of the server and the order of all servers, (b) note all games and point scores, (c) note the sides and ends of court of each player (d) have the opposing team Captain initial a written recording of the notes, (e) resume play in a rematch as notes indicate.
- i. Arrange date/time of rematch and promptly notify the Ratings/Roster Chair.
- j. If a protest is to be filed over any incident on court, mark "Protest" on the scorecard and then refer to the Grievance Procedures (section 31) for follow up.
- k. Give her team roster to the Ratings/Roster Chair. Registration fee and team fee awards luncheon reservation and payments are sent to the Treasurer.
- l. Ensure that all players conduct themselves on court in accordance with The *Code*. It is expected that the captain will reprimand, suspend or expel any player found to be in flagrant violation of The *Code*.

34. Annual Awards: At the end of each season, awards for the winning and second place teams in each Division will be presented at an Annual Awards Function.

- a. If a Division has been divided into two sections, each section will win awards.
- b. In case of a tie for any award in any Division or section, the first and second place will be determined by the statistics provided by the Top Dog website.

