

# COUNTIES TENNIS ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

## RULES GOVERNING PLAY IN INTERCLUB COMPETITIONS 2025 – 2026 SEASON

### 1. Definitions

- (a) Competition shall mean the whole Interclub Series in any one grade for the season.
- (b) Match shall mean any individual singles or doubles match.
- (c) Contest shall mean the total matches between one club and another club or between two teams of the same club in any one grade or division of a grade.
- (d) Home team shall mean the team playing on its own courts, or if neither team is playing at home, or if both teams are playing at home, the first named team in the draw.

2. The Association shall conduct competition and grades as decided by the Board of Management (Counties Tennis Association Committee)

### 3. Number of Players per Team

The number of players in each grade shall be decided by the Association each year. For the current season 2025-2026, this shall consist of 4 singles players for Grades 1-7. Teams may contain an extra player and be played in accordance with rule 6 (c).

### 3. Age Restrictions

- (a) Grade 7: Year 6 and below at the start of the season (October)
- (b) Grade 4 – 6: 18 years and under at the start of the season (October). A dispensation can be granted for older players under special circumstances, subject to CTA approval.
- (c) Grade 3 – Grade 1: no age restrictions

### 4. Scoring Formats

(a) **Grade 1:** Matches are played on Friday at 6.30 pm (or another time by mutual agreement). Singles and doubles are played as the best of two 12-point tiebreaker sets. If each player wins one set, a super tiebreaker (18-point) determines the match.

(b) **Grade 2:** Matches are played on Thursday at 6.30 pm (or another time by mutual agreement). Singles and doubles are played as the best of two 12-point tiebreaker sets. If each player wins one set, a super tiebreaker (18-point) determines the match.

(c) **Grade 3:** Matches are played on Saturdays at 1:30 pm (or another time by mutual agreement). Singles and doubles are played as the best of two 12-point tiebreaker sets. If each player wins one set, a super tiebreaker (18-point) determines the match.

(d) **Grade 4:** Matches are played on Saturdays at 10:30 am (or another time by mutual agreement). Singles and doubles are played as the best of two 12-point tiebreaker sets. If each player wins one set, a super tiebreaker (18-point) determines the match.

(e) **Grade 5:** Matches are played on Saturdays at 10:30 am (or another time by mutual agreement). Singles and doubles are played as the best of 17 games, with the first player to reach 9 games winning. If both players reach 8 games, a 12-point tiebreaker is used to decide the match.

(f) **Grade 6:** Matches are played on Saturdays at 8:30 am (or another time by mutual agreement). Singles and doubles are played as the best of 11 games, with the first player to reach 6 games declared the winner.

(g) **Grade 7:** Designed for beginning players in Year 6 and below, matches are held at the Counties Tennis Centre, West Street, Pukekohe, on Friday nights at 4:00 pm. Singles and doubles are played as the best of 11 games (first to 6). Low compression green balls are used. Each team must provide at least two adults to assist with scoring. Serving may begin from between the service line and baseline, with encouragement to progress to full baseline serves as the season advances. Overhead serves are preferred, but underarm serves are permitted from the baseline without bouncing the ball. Sudden Death Deuce is used—no advantage scoring.

\* 12-point tiebreaker = Short Tiebreaker = First to 7 points, won by 2

\*\* 18-point tiebreaker = Long/Super Tiebreaker = First to 10 points, won by 2

**Note:**

**Sportsman rule: If bringing in substitutes to make up team numbers, the manager must ensure their playing ability is suitable to the grade they are filling in for and they meet the age requirements for given grade.**

**5. The following balls will be used in each grade:**

Grade 1 – new WILSON Tour Premier or US Open

Grade 2 – new WILSON Tour Premier or US Open

Grade 3 – new WILSON Tour Premier or US Open

Grade 4 – good used balls, preferably WILSON (label must be visible)

Grade 5 – good used balls, preferably WILSON (label must be visible)

Grade 6 – good used balls, preferably WILSON (label must be visible)

Grade 7 – Green balls (supplied by Counties Tennis Association)

Each team shall supply one ball per singles player.

**6. The matches shall be:**

(a) Each player shall play one game of singles.

(b) Each player shall play one game of doubles (men, ladies, or mixed).

(c) If a team contains an extra player, they may play one game of singles or one game of doubles only. The extra player must be written on the team sheet and be played in the correct graded order using the Configure Rankings.

(d) A team may play a non-affiliated fill-in player of the same ranking band or lower in the correct order by paying a \$10 fee each time they play. However, once they play the 5<sup>th</sup> match, a full affiliation fee must be paid.

(e) In the event of a club having two or more teams in the same interclub grade, players must not play in more than one team unless under exceptional circumstances, and then only the players who are NOT #1 and #2 in their team are allowed to slide across. Notification is to be provided to Counties of this change, prior to the match commencing.

(f) Any prior player approvals made from CTA will be communicated to the playing teams in that respective grade before team play.

(g) The number one ranked singles player must play in the top doubles. The doubles pairing is flexible as long as #1 player plays in the top doubles match. In the event of the #1 ranked player being unavailable to play, then the next highest ranked player (#2) must play in the #1 doubles pairing.

## 7. Score Sheets

Score sheets are no longer required as all match results must now be entered directly into the MatchPoint App.

## 8. Start-times

- All Grades: Please be punctual and ensure you are ready to play at the start time. All players need to report to both teams' Captains within 15 minutes of the start time or risk default. If the player is late more than 15 min, both captains must decide by mutual agreement if the match can be played. If this agreement is not reached, then the match will be defaulted.

- Grade 2 on Thursdays nights: In case of being late more than 15 min for Grade 2 matches played on Thursdays, the captains have an additional option to award the first set to the team that was not late and play the rest of the match. Both captains must choose by mutual agreement one of the following options:

- Play a normal match.
- Default the match.
- Allocate the first set to the team that was on time as 6-0 and play the rest of the match.

Any deferred match or delayed match due to the weather must be played within two weeks of the contest's original date, or if scheduled before the Xmas break, played before the Xmas break.

The Interclub Committee should be contacted immediately if any problems of rescheduling arise. The Counties Tennis Complex is available during the week and on some Sundays for rescheduling of matches or contests.

## 9. Rain Delays

a) Fixtures may only be postponed due to wet or adverse weather by agreement of both team captains.

b) Any Fixtures postponed due to weather in accordance with rule 9 a) must be completed within 2 weeks, unless play-off rounds are required.

- c) If a Fixture is unable to commence play due to wet or adverse weather, a new team list can be used for the re-scheduled Fixture.
- d) Unfinished matches in a Fixture affected by wet or adverse weather shall be continued from the last point score when the match was halted. This applies whether play recommenced on the same day or on another day. Rescheduling of the affected matches is to be agreed between the two team captains. If play has already commenced, the same players already listed must complete that Fixture.
- e) CTA will assist clubs to find courts if requested but the rescheduling of the Fixture is the sole responsibility of the team captains.
- f) No points will be awarded to either team for fixtures not played.

### **10. No contest can be deferred:**

- If you are a player short for a contest, you should default one singles and one doubles match. The default must be the bottom singles and bottom doubles.
- Rescheduling of a match can be done if both team captains are agreeable however the match has to be played within two weeks of the scheduled date.
- Any contest can be played prior to the scheduled dates if both team captains are agreeable.
- No deferred games to be played after the last round of play.
- Any deferral caused by events other than the weather of interclub matches requires the approval of the Interclub Committee. Continued breaches of this rule may result in loss of points at the Interclub Committee's sole discretion.

### **11. Order of Play:**

- Grades 1, 2 – should ensure all allocated courts are used first, then play doubles first unless both team captains agree otherwise,
- Grades 3 – play doubles first unless both team captains agree otherwise.
- Grades 4, 5, 6 & 7 – should ensure all allocated courts are used first. This may involve playing singles or doubles. E.g: when 3 courts are allocated, play 2 singles and 1 doubles match or 3 doubles matches

### **12. During a match:**

No player is entitled to leave the court for a rest, drinks' break, or to receive coaching.

Exceptions to this are:

- A player is permitted to have a toilet break at the changeover of ends (1 per set or 11 games).
- A player can replace their racquet as a result of being broken or breaking a string.
- An injury can be treated provided the player is able to continue to play within 5 minutes.
- A player is allowed 90 seconds between each game for a drink or towel off – not to leave the court.

### **13. Playing Order in Team**

- (a) In Grades 1-3:

In all contests, the players' playing order shall be strictly in order of their **World Tennis Number (WTN)**. This shall apply to singles and doubles, except double pairings may be changed with the proviso that the number one singles player must always play in the top combination. The playing order cannot be changed without firstly notifying Counties of the results of a formal challenge. A formal challenge shall be a contest between the two players, playing a match under the interclub rules for that grade or in a tournament or the Counties grade champs. **World Tennis Numbers (WTN)** are to be referred to at 2 times in the season:

- a) First weekend of interclub for the grade.
- b) First weekend of interclub after Christmas for the grade.

(b) In Grades 4-7:

The WTN will be a good indication, but *after two weeks*, the playing order is to be fixed and cannot be changed without firstly notifying Counties of the results of a formal challenge. A formal challenge shall be a contest between the two players, playing a match under the interclub rules for that grade, or in a tournament, or the Counties grade champs.

#### **14. Match Scores Recording**

- The MatchPoint App must be used to record match scores. The home team is responsible for entering the results, and the opposing team must approve them within the app by Tuesday following the match.
- If a substitute player is used —whether registered in MatchPoint or not—the team manager must notify Counties and email the player's name to [admin@countiestennis.co.nz](mailto:admin@countiestennis.co.nz) by Tuesday following the match.

#### **15. Points for contests shall be allowed as follows:**

- A point is awarded for each match won. A bonus point is awarded to the winning team.
  - In the case of a draw, a count back is made on:
    1. Sets won. Super tie-breakers count as 1 set to 0. If still tied then;
    2. Games won. Super tie-breakers count as 1 game to 0.
  - Top qualifiers in round-robin play win the semi-final or final, if the 2 teams cannot be separated on a countback.
  - Teams winning by default receive full points for the contest, but no bonus point.
  - If a player retires during a match, then the score is recorded as it is (eg 3-2 ret), but if the points need to be calculated in case of the perfect draw, we would assign maximum result (6-2), (6-0) or whatever the score was when the retired player retired.

**16.** In the event of there being more than one section in a grade, then the winners of each section shall play off on the basis decided by the Association to find the winner of the grade. In the event of teams ranking equal on the basis of Rule 15, then the matches between the teams will be recounted based on matches won, then sets won, then games won to try and split the teams. If the teams cannot be split after this process, then a full countback of sets,

then games will be done for the grade. This rule will also apply to grades where there is only one section, and teams qualifying for the semi-finals and/or finals (where no semi-finals are played) cannot be separated on points from the qualifying rounds.

**17.** Starting times shall be the time specified on the draw. Team captains must ensure their players are on court and ready within 15 minutes of the start time.

**18.** All references to 'Association' in the rules mean the Management Committee of the Counties Tennis Association, or any subcommittee or person delegated the authority by the Management Committee.

**19. Umpiring:**

- Grades 1 – 6 are to self-umpire ie: call their own side of the court and score.
- A player can request an umpire at any time. If a player is unhappy with calls or behaviour on their court, they are to immediately place their racquet down on the court and go and get a manager to arrange for an umpire. Only one umpire on the court or umpire's stand (if available) at a time.
- Grade 7 need to have a Manager or a Manager appointed Parent to umpire to oversee the match. (A parent must not umpire their own child's match)
- An umpire can be requested for or changed at any time through a match.

**20. Dress Requirements:**

- Non-marking shoes to be worn. No sandals/jandals/thongs or bare feet permitted.
- Shorts no longer than knee length with suitable pockets for holding the second ball. No jeans or other long trousers are to be worn. Tennis shirts to be worn. No singlets unless proper tennis attire.
- A player can be defaulted if they breach these dress requirements.

**21. Re-grading:**

- Any player can play in a different grade in different seasons.
- Any player who has played in three contests in a grade at different times during the season, shall be considered as qualified for that grade and shall not be played in a lower grade until they have been re-graded by the Association.
- All requests for re-grading of players are to be in writing and it is at the sole discretion of the Counties Tennis Association committee if they approve or decline the request.

**22. Semi-Finals & Finals:**

- a) Where any grade has a semi-final and/or final, for a player to be eligible to play in the final they must have played two matches for that team or a lower-ranked team in the same club and be affiliated to CTA. Any change request at this level of competition

must be approved by CTA prior to Semi-Finals or Final competitions and are to be in writing and it is at the sole discretion of the Counties Tennis Association committee if they approve or decline the request.

- b) The draw format will be decided after clubs have submitted team numbers for each grade. If pool groups are required, then divisional finals to be played e.g. top half – bottom half
- c) Top qualifiers in round-robin play win the semi-final or final, if the 2 teams cannot be separated on a countback.

### **23. Playing at the Tennis Centre:**

- Please keep all courts and surrounds tidy – use bins beside the building to put rubbish in.
- The courts allocated for your teams' contest will be displayed in the clubrooms on the whiteboard. Courts allocated on the draw are only a guideline for preparing the draw. No changes to the allocation written on the whiteboard shall be made without first getting the permission of the interclub controller.
- Ensure a prompt morning start at 8.30am and 10:30am.
- For teams playing on the plexipave courts, please note the specific requirements relating to footwear, plus care and maintenance.

### **24. Disagreements, Disputes, and Exceptions**

All disagreements, disputes, and applications for an exception from these rules are to be referred to the Association, via the Secretary. The Association shall have unrestricted authority in resolving or deciding the matter in dispute. The Association has unrestricted rights to default a player's match, default any team, replay the contest or a player's match, adjust any points, ban players, including manager's or parents; or any other decision etc, where in the opinion of the Association the offense warrants such an action – including but not limited to on and off-court behaviour or any actions that may damage the sport of Tennis and the reputation of Counties Tennis. No party shall have any right of appeal to any such decision. Counties Tennis Association retains the right to change any of the Interclub rules under exceptional circumstances.