



## Columbus MLP Rules Guide (August 14, 2025)

**1) TEAM CAPTAINS** All teams must designate a team captain to communicate to the league during events and between events. Duties include but are not limited to communicating with the league regarding scheduling, rule clarifications, participating and making selections during the coin toss, communicating time-outs and challenges. If a team captain is unable to fulfill his/her duties, the team must designate a substitute captain.

**2) WARM UP** Teams are expected to warm up on a practice court and report to their designated match court at least 10 minutes before their scheduled match time.

**3) STARTING LINEUPS** Teams will have optionality on which two males and which two females will play during a match. All teams must submit their daily lineups to the other Team Captain the day before each match day (for example, teams must submit their lineup on Sunday for a Monday match)

### **A. Away Team**

Teams designated as the "Away" team for a match will be responsible for submitting their player lineup for each match to the opposing Home Team Captain as well as each game lineup for women's, men's, mixed 1, mixed 2 and the DreamBreaker by 2 pm local time the day before scheduled matches.

**B. Home Team** Teams designated as the "Home" team for a match will be responsible for submitting their player lineup to the Away Team Captain for each match as well as each game lineup for women's, men's, mixed 1, mixed 2 and the DreamBreaker by 6 pm local time the night before scheduled matches. "Home" teams will be able to see the opponent's lineups and respond to the gender, mixed and DreamBreaker lineups.

**4) COIN TOSS** At the start of each match, a coin toss (or similar random selection) will be conducted. The winner will elect to choose one of the following options:

**A. Serve or Receive** The team selecting to serve or receive will maintain that selection for each game throughout the match.

**B. End Teams** will choose one end of the court to begin the match on. Teams will stay on the end they finish game one (1) on and begin the next game on that end. Example: If Team A selects the right end of the court to start game one (1), they will begin game one (1) on the right end but begin game two (2) on the left end of the court. Team A will then begin on the right end for game three (3) and the DreamBreaker (if one is played during the match).

**5) MATCHES** Each match will consist of four (4) rounds to 11 (win by 2) with side-out scoring. The four (4) rounds will be played in this order: Women's doubles (first), men's doubles (second), and two (2) mixed doubles (third and fourth). A team will win a round by winning two out of three games within the round. A DreamBreaker will be played to determine the winner of the match if teams are tied at 2-2 after the women's doubles, men's doubles and mixed doubles games. Teams will play all four (4) rounds even if the score is 3-0 after the first mixed doubles game.

**6) DOUBLES & MIXED DOUBLES GAMES** Each doubles and mixed doubles game will be played with side-out scoring to 11 points (win by 2). Players will change ends when one team reaches a score of six (6). End changes are mandatory for both teams on the sideline.

**A. Scoring** Side-out scoring to eleven (11) with a winning margin of at least two (2) points. Teams switch ends when one team reaches a score of six (6).

**7) DREAMBREAKER (SINGLES TIEBREAKER)** A DreamBreaker is a game to 21 (win by 2) with rally scoring and a team must win while serving. Each team must rotate six players for three (3) singles rallies in a set order. Players serve from the left or right side of the court based on their score. A player will serve on the right side when their team score is even and serve on the left side when the team score is odd. Teams will submit lineups prior to the match. All players will play in three (3) rally rotations until the DreamBreaker is concluded (player 1 plays three (3) rallies, then player 2 plays three (3) rallies, then player 3 plays three (3) rallies, then player 4 plays three (3) rallies, and then the rotation continues through six of the team's players. During the DreamBreaker, each team will be allowed one (1) time-out. Teams will change ends when one team reaches a score of eleven (11).

**8) SERVES** Players will be allowed to use the Drop or Volley Serve. The ball release must be visible will be re-served if not visible. The release of the ball must be no higher than the top of the shoulder. The ball can travel upward after release, but only equal to one height of the ball itself. Until the ball is struck, the swing of the paddle to serve the ball must be traveling in an upward motion. Paddle swing when the ball is served must not be downward or flat (through the ball), it must be upward. The highest point of the paddle head must be clearly below the highest point of the wrist when the paddle strikes the ball.

**A. Service Faults** If a referee identifies a fault in one of the service criteria listed above, they will stop play and call for a re-serve. Each player will receive one service warning per game. All other service faults will result in a side-out or second serve.

**9) TIME-OUTS** Teams will each receive one (1) time-out per game. Time-outs will be up to one (1) minute.

**10) LINE CALLING** Players on court must make an OUT call either verbally or with a finger towards the sideline or baseline. All OUT calls must be made prior to the ball being hit by the opponent or before the ball becomes dead. All players or team representatives on the sideline should not call OUT balls during a live rally. If players on court did not make a play on a rally ending ball or see where it landed, the players or team representatives on the sideline will be allowed to make an OUT call after the ball is dead. In this scenario, if the sideline saw the ball OUT they can call it quickly, and the players on court will need to confirm the OUT call with an immediate verbal call or finger. If neither the players on court or the sideline make an OUT call, the ball will be declared IN. IN calls need no verbal call, but can be indicated with a flat hand out towards the court. If one player on court calls a ball IN and their partner calls it OUT, the ball will be declared IN.

**11) MISCELLANEOUS** Players may cross the plane of the net without first hitting the ball, as long as the player does not create a distraction for the opponent. If a player's entire body (including paddle) crosses the plane without hitting the ball, a fault shall be called.