

General Information

The format of play is designed so that players play mostly with others of similar skill levels. Your ranking on a ladder is based upon your winning percentage (the ratio of points won to total points possible). Players will move up or down the ladder based upon their winning percentage. The results of the ten most recent weeks of play will be used for this calculation.

Each week, players will be placed in groups of 4 in the order of their ranking on the ladder for match play. You are expected to play every week unless you inform the Captain that you will be absent. All players will play three doubles games in a round robin fashion with the other three players of the foursome. At the start of the game, players will decide who starts serving first and choice of side. It is recommended that the players change ends of the court when one side has at least half the number of points in the game to minimize the effects of the sun and wind or other factors that may affect indoor play. Missed matches are not made up.

The percentages are based only on the matches that are actually played. The ladder is designed to be a perpetual ladder with no particular start or end date. Players can enter or leave the ladder at any time. Optionally, the ladder manager may choose to run the ladder for a specified number of weeks so that there are clear winners at the end. After your games have been played, players record their scores on the score sheet that is available in the area. The score sheet can be printed from the schedule that the program creates on the website. Post the individual scores and the total for all three games. There is a maximum of 45 points (for 15-point games, or 3 times the selected number of points per game) because you do not have to win by 2 points. Optionally, the ladder manager may choose to have the games be won by 2 points. In that case, the scores would still be recorded as the number of points per game with a winning margin of one.

When scores are entered into the program, standings are automatically posted on the ladder page of the website.

Ladder Divisions

Each ladder may have up to 4 divisions. Normally, the ladder divisions are gender neutral and based upon overall skill level. For example, if the USAPA numeric rating system is used, you might choose to have ladder divisions of 4.0, 3.5, 3.0, and 2.5. Alternatively, the ladders could be based upon local rating of A, B, C, and Novice or something similar. Other choices are available to the local ladder manager. Depending upon the number of players in the area, the ladder manager may choose to have everyone in a single ladder or to have a men's ladder and women's ladder.

Movement Between Ladders

If the ladder divisions are based on skill level, the ladder manager should have some rules about moving players up to the next skill division or down a division based on ladder standing. For example, if a player is at the top 1 or 2 positions for a given number of weeks, the ladder manager may choose to move a player to the bottom of the next higher skill division. Alternatively, the ladder manager could base the decision on a winning percentage of a certain threshold over a given period of time. There would be a similar process for moving down to a lower skill level division.

Publishing the Players Schedule

The Playing Schedule will be published on the Ladder link of the USAPA website on a schedule determined by the ladder manager, typically a day or two prior to the scheduled play date. The program also provides for the ability to notify players by email that the schedule has been posted to the website.

Ladder Displays

Only players on the ACTIVE list will be published on the Ladder page of the website under "Standings". Ladder Captains may place any player who cannot play for more than two weeks on an INACTIVE list which is seen only by the Captain. A player on INACTIVE status will remain there until their Ladder Captain receives notice from the player to return to active status. The schedule is displayed each week showing only those players who are available to play that week or are assigned a bye/sub.

Absences

Can't Play – BEFORE Schedule is Published

If a player is unable to play on the specified day, the player should notify the Ladder Captain no later than the day before the schedule is published. This is normally a couple of days before the play date, but will be determined by local rules. The groupings will then be made without that player. The player's most recent score will stand until the player resumes play. There is no penalty for being absent as long as the player has notified the Captain before the stated deadline.

Can't Play – AFTER Schedule is Published

After the schedule is published and prior to the actual match:

If a player is unable to play, the player should do one of the following subject to modification by local rules and procedures:

1. Call a Sub from the published Schedule.
2. Call the other 3 players in your foursome to reschedule your ladder match at a more convenient time, but BEFORE the Schedule for the following week is published. Report the scores to the Captain before the next week's Schedule is published.
3. Call the other 3 players in your foursome to have them agree to take an absence for that week.

Player Missing at Match Time

If there is a player missing at match time, and the other players have not been notified, then those players that are late (anytime after the published starting time) will be subject to the No Show rule (see No Show section). The other players will not receive a score for that match unless a Sub is available. Since the standings are based on a point percentage for the games actually played, it is not a penalty to not have a score recorded. The No Show rule should apply to Bye/Subs also.

Percentage Establishment

The ladder may be configured for any number of points per game. The following example assumes the default of 15 points. Playing percentage is based on the the number of points scored divided by the number of points possible (45 for a 3-game match of 15 points per game). The Ladder program tracks players' rankings to eliminate major "bouncing" up and down the ladder. For instance, if you are a new player starting at the bottom of the ladder and your first score is 45, your percentage would be 100. Logically, your next match would be against the top players, which may not be in everyone's best interest. So the program has a built-in ONE-FOURTH rule which RESTRICTS a player's movement to no more than one-fourth of the ladder regardless of their percentage. Hence, one week you could have 85% and be ranked below a player who has 75% because you moved up only 1/4 of the ladder positions from where you were. The reverse holds true going down the ladder should you have a very bad day. The ONE-FOURTH rule overrides your percentage. Hence, you could have 75% and still be ranked higher than someone with 80% because you moved down only 1/4 of the ladder positions from where you were. An "R" for "Restricted Position" appears next to the percentage on the Standings page.

Inactive Players

Players may enter or leave a ladder at any time or miss a week or more because of their personal schedules. The ONLY requirement is to notify their Ladder Captain BEFORE the match schedule is made out for the upcoming week. If a player cannot play for a period of more than 2 weeks the Captain may place you in an Inactive status until you notify the Ladder Captain that you can play again. The player's percentage stays the same while on the Inactive List. The Inactive List does not display on the web site. Note: Players who have been on the Inactive List will re-enter the ladder at the ranking at which they left the ladder.

Bye/Sub

Byes are assigned if the Ladder Captain is unable to fill out a foursome. Byes are normally assigned from the bottom of the ladder ranking up, skipping any player who has already had a Bye. Assignment of Byes is at the discretion of the Captain. In later weeks when everyone has had a Bye, the ladder captain may choose to start over again. Byes are carried with any movement between ladders. Bye players should be available as a Sub in case a scheduled player can not play.

Sub Scores

Sub scores count if the Sub is one of the players listed on the schedule as a Bye/Sub – and the sub played all 3 games. A Sub's score would not count if the Sub played a partial match (i.e. fills in for an injured player). A Sub's score would not count when the Sub player played an assigned match PLUS agreed to Sub in another match.

Interruption of a Match (Recording of Scores)

Scoring for interrupted matches due to weather or injury should be handled as follows:

1. If the match is **terminated before the start of the third game**, scores should not be recorded.
2. If the match is **terminated sometime during the third game**, points for the third game will be assumed to be in the same ratio of the score up to that point. For example, if the score was 9 to 7 at termination, the winning team would get 15 and the losing team would get $7/9$ of 15 = 12 (rounded to the nearest point).

No Shows

If you are a “No Show” (leaving three players without a match), and you have failed to notify the other players and the ladder captain, local rules should provide for some sort of penalty because the other three players have been inconvenienced. A suspension from the ladder for a number of weeks governed by local policy is recommended.

Rule Changes

This document is a general description of the ladder and a recommendation for general operation. Local ladder managers will probably want to establish their own rules and regulations.