

Ladder Management Rules

CURRENT and NEW PLAYERS should familiarize themselves with these Rules on a periodic basis as updates will take place.

Purpose of Ladder Rules

These rules are established to maintain consistency of play and record keeping within and between ladders (A, B, C and Novice).

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). The ladder is a competition, not a training forum.

Players will move up or down the ladder based upon their winning percentage. The results of the twenty most recent weeks of play will be used for this calculation. Each week, players will be placed in groups of 4 or 5 in the order of their ranking on the ladder for match play.

You are expected to indicate your intent to play by responding to the weekly ladder invitation. The number of games played and the number of points per game will be determined by the number of players assigned to each court. If 4 players are assigned to a court, players will play three 15-point games in a round robin fashion with the other three players in the foursome. If 5 players are assigned to a court all will play four 11-point games with the other 4 players.

It is required that the players change ends of the court when one side has 8 points or 6 points depending on the number of players on the court to minimize the effects of the sun and wind.

The percentages are based only on the games that are actually played.

After your games have been played, players record their scores on the score sheet that is available in the area. Post the individual scores and the total for all games played. There is a maximum of 45 or 44 points.

All communication with ladder captains is by email to: ?league@grandpickleball.org, where "?" is the ladder letter (ie: cleague@grandpickleball.org for the C Ladder). If a player does not have a unique email, he/she must have an email "buddy".

To Join the Pickleball Ladder Program

1. You must be a Grand Pickleball Club member in good standing.
2. Read and understand the Ladder Rules for Players and Captains on the web site.
3. Have your skill level evaluated for proper placement in the ladder.
4. Contact the Ladder Manager or the Ladder Captain for your skill assessment.

Determining your Skill Level (if higher than Novice)

First:

1. Read and review the outline of Skill Definitions below.

Then:

1. Watch competitive play in the ladder you think your skills are aligned with.
2. Play a few matches with "similarly skilled" players in the club and remember the names of at least two of these players.
3. Contact the Captain of the Ladder where you think you belong, and tell him/her, with whom you have played. The Captain will then make a determination of your skill level based on that information, or may ask you to play with "like ability" players for the purpose of assessment.

Skill Definitions

This is a brief outline of the skill definitions. For the detailed definitions click on the Skill Definitions link on the web site, or go to http://pball.grandpickleball.org/Skill_levels.pdf.

- **A Player:** This player is able to control and place both the serve and return of serve. This player is able to place their volleys and block strong volleys at them at the No Volley Zone, or "Kitchen". This player has strong overheads and can place them. This player has excellent footwork and can move forward, backward and laterally with ease and quickness. This player can both "dink" and put away their shots. This player is consistent in their play and fully understands the strategy of the game and when to use specific shots.
- **B Player:** This player knows the rules of Pickleball, match strategy and tactics. B players possess all shots; such as fore and backhand, lob, overhead smash and dink, and hit them with a high level of consistency.
- **C Player:** This player knows most of the rules and how to keep score after losing track. This player will move to the net behind the return of serve. This player will not fault on more than 1/4 of their serves, or fail to return more than half of backhands or overheads. The C Player has not yet developed skill or consistency in the overhead smash or the drop shots from well behind the No Volley Zone, or "Kitchen". This player can maintain a "dink" exchange at the net.
- **N Player (Novice):** This player knows how to keep score and where to stand at the beginning of each point. This player is learning where to be on the court during a point. All of their strokes are works in progress. This player should move to the net behind return of serve, and should place emphasis on keeping the ball in play. **The Novice ladder is not a training forum.**
- **Beginner or Newby:** This player has had a lesson and is learning how to keep score and where to stand at the beginning of each point. Whether they have a racquet sports background or not, they are at the beginning stages of learning the game of pickleball. Before joining the ladder, these players must get some experience playing pickleball until they know the basic rules of pickleball, how to score and where to stand at the beginning of each point.

Players Schedule

The schedule of play and court assignments will be available when players arrive for ladder play.

Players without email capability will need to setup an "email buddy".

Ladders play as follows: **A: Monday B: Tuesday C: Wednesday N: Thursday**

Note: Scheduled play times will vary based on a set schedule. Watch for updates on the web site.

Absences

Can't Play - BEFORE Schedule is Published:

If a player is unable to play on the specified day, **they should respond 'NO'** to the ladder invitation.

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 Captain is informed before the published deadline.

Player Missing at Match Time

If there is a player or players missing at match time, the schedule will be adjusted to allow everyone to play. Those players that are late (anytime after the published starting time) will be subject to the NO Show rule (below).

Percentage Establishment

When a new player is added to a ladder, he/she will develop a playing percentage as matches are played. Over time, the results of the up to twenty (20) most recent matches will be used to calculate the player's percentage.

The Ladder program tracks player's rankings to eliminate major "bouncing" up and down the ladder. For instance, if you are a new player and your first score is 45, your percentage would be 100. Logically, your next match would be on court 1 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 one-fourth of the ladder (rounded up) 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.

Player Movement between Ladders

Player movement between Ladders is based on the player's percentage history. With one exception, no arbitrary assessments will be made. The Ladder Captain, in concert with the Ladder Manager, has the discretion to move a player to a higher Ladder, if a determination is made that said player, although not completing the requisite time frame, and/or percentage achievement for movement, is judged to be sufficiently better than the other players, and should be moved up in the interest of fairness.

A player **in the NOVICE or C Ladder** will qualify to move up to the next higher ladder if they have an **UNRESTRICTED** standings percentage of 84 or more for the last 3 out of 4 weeks played. **A player in the B Ladder must achieve a percentage of 88 or more for the last 3 out of 4 weeks played to qualify for movement to the A Ladder. After a player has completed a minimum of 4 weeks, the RESTRICTION RULE will no longer apply for the purpose of determining movement to a higher Ladder.** Likewise, a player will move down to the next lower ladder if they have an unrestricted standings percentage below 65 for the last 3 out of 4 weeks played. **After a player has completed a minimum of 4 weeks, the RESTRICTION RULE will no longer apply for the purpose of determining movement to a lower Ladder.** In either case, the accumulated scores will NOT be carried from one ladder to the other. (Note: "Unrestricted" refers to the 1/4 restricted movement explained in the previous chapter).

A player moving UP to a higher ladder will, typically, be placed in the appropriate position of that ladder, as decided by the Ladder Captains, to establish their playing percentage. Typically at the bottom of the ladder.

A player moving DOWN to a lower ladder will be placed at the top of that ladder until they have played a match, after which they will move up or down the ladder according to their playing percentage. This movement is NOT a choice by the player.

Ladder Captains will notify players of their movement between ladders prior to the move.

IMPORTANT - A player qualifying for upward movement will be given a choice about whether they prefer to move up, or stay in their current ladder. This is being implemented, because sometimes a player (notwithstanding the fact that they have qualified to move up) may feel that they are not ready to compete at the higher skill level. Therefore, the Ladder Captain will speak to the player first, to get their approval. If in the judgment of the Ladder Captain, or the Ladder Manager, it is felt that someone is taking advantage, and gets satisfaction from beating up on players of lesser ability, then Ladder Management has the exclusive right to intervene, and make a decision that is in the best interest of all concerned. If any player refuses movement to a higher Ladder, and later changes their mind, then said player has to re-qualify. To be crystal clear, if as an example.....2 weeks later.....the player's cumulative % for 3 of the last 4 weeks is lower than 84 or better in the Novice or C Ladder, or 88 or better in the B Ladder, then they are no longer eligible to move. A player deciding

to stay in their current Ladder will keep all of their scores intact. Each and every time a player subsequently qualifies for upward movement, they will again be asked whether they want to move.

Interruption of a Match (Recording of Scores)

If the match is terminated before the final game, **DUE to WEATHER**, then scores up to that point will not count, and everyone will get an absence for the match.

If the match is terminated after game three has begun, **DUE to WEATHER**, then the team in front will be awarded whatever points are needed to bring their score to 15 or 11, and the team behind will get the same number of points added to their score...e.g....if the score is 5-0...the team in front gets 10 points added, and the team behind gets the same 10 points added, making the final score 15-10.

If the match is terminated before or during game three **DUE to INJURY**, the final score of game three will be determined by the same methods detailed above, under **DUE to WEATHER**.

No Shows

If you are a "No Show" (you have not arrived by the start of Ladder play), you will be **suspended from ladder play for 4 weeks**. If you're a "No Show" a second time within a 12 month period, you will be **suspended from ladder play for a period of 8 weeks**. A 3rd "No Show" during a 12 month period, **suspends you from play for 12 months from the date of the infraction**.

Rule Changes

These rules are subject to change. A written proposal should be submitted to the Ladder Manager. He/she will review and discuss your suggestions with you. The Ladder Manager will review your proposal with the Ladder Committee and then make a final decision. You will be informed of that decision with an explanation should it be necessary.

Edit History

Prepared: January 29, 2004

Last update: See list of updates

2/2/04 - Added start date clarification for movement between ladders. Also clarified review period to agree with Boards decision (4 out of 5 weeks).

3/1/04 - No longer show Inactive players on the club's website. Modified the one-third percentage establishment rule with the addition of a new program developed by Bill Booth to record and communicate players' scores, ranking, etc. See notes under Percentage Establishment. This new program should be introduced during March 2004.

Modification to No Shows - You can makeup a match prior to the players schedule being published for next week. You must notify your ladder captain of the scores.

3/9/04 - Added clarification to Can't Play after Schedule is Published section. Specific wording added to actions to be taken at match time with no shows. Changed 1/3 and 1/2 rules to just the 1/3 rule with the new program. Also, updated the match injury section from rationing the scores after the midpoint of the third game to anytime after the start of the third game.

3/24/04 - Injury returns to competitive ladder play.

5/21/04 - Deleted PICL; Added changes to Novice Ladder; Changed definition re: Player movement UP and DOWN between ladders.

10-3-04 - Clarified who can and cannot be a SUB.

10-23-04 - Deleted references to PICL

12-27-04 - Added emphasis on emailing absence notices rather than calling. Changed rules of movement between N and C ladders. Removed reference to N ladder being a Player Development Center. Added Bye/Sub subject to No Show rule.

2-15-05 - Clarified ladder movement downward, and the Sub's responsibility to show up for the match.

3-11-05 - Removed the paragraph about Injury Returns to Ladder Play

5-16-05 Changed determination of players' movement between ladders from rankings-based to percentage-based. See "Player Movement Between Ladders". Updated the list of Skill Assessors. Deleted reference to Xs.

6-7-05 Clarified scoring procedures if a SUB fills in after the match has begun. See chapters on SUBs, SUB Scores, and Interruption of a Match.

8-5-05 - General editing throughout. No policy changes or additions.

10-1-05 - Revised BYE assignment to be at the discretion of the Captain. Clarified positioning of player moving from Inactive to Active status to be based on percentage.

01-01-06 - Changed percentage requirement for movement between ladders to 84% up and 65% down, 3 out of 4 times. See "Player Movement Between Ladders".

05-09-06 - Added paragraph to Inactive chapter, regarding returning to Active at same ranking after a long absence.

05-15-06 - Changed the restriction rule from one-third to one-fourth the ladder up or down. See "Percentage Establishment".

05-20-06 - Added paragraph on how to join the ladder. Removed chapter regarding skill assessors. Changed wording to indicate that new players are to assess themselves using the tools provided on the web site. Clarified that the Novice ladder is not a training forum, that beginners are to learn the basic skills and rules of pickleball before joining the ladder program.

05-30-06 - Reinstated skill assessors.

01-05-09- Amended, clarified, changed etc., a number of rules from top to bottom. Too many to enumerate here.

02-09-09- Amended PLAYER MOVEMENT BETWEEN LADDERS.

03-19-09--Amended PLAYER MOVEMENT from B to A Ladder (To take effect 4/1/09). Amended INTERRUPTION of a MATCH.

01-15-13--Grammatical changes made only by George Cox

10-15-14 - Change "Can't Play - AFTER Schedule is Published" rule as requested by Ladder Manager, grammatical changes and conversion from php to pdf.

April 2017 - Changes related to transition to TrackitHub. Several changes - too many to enumerate here.