



## Manitoba Pickleball League Rules

**GENERAL** – The Manitoba Pickleball League (MPL) is a competitive team-based format. The following rules apply to all play within the MPL. All play follows the current Pickleball Canada Official Rulebook (USA Pickleball Official Rulebook – Global Pickleball Federation Edition), other than those changes noted in this document. The MPL Rules Committee reserves the right to change, add or delete rules as deemed necessary. Not all possible incidents and ramifications may be covered in the following rules. It is hoped that participants can work to a suitable resolution without the need to elevate issues.

**PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS** – MPL is open to players over the age of 18. All participants in the league are bound by these rules. **It is not required but highly recommended that all players be members of Pickleball Canada and Pickleball Manitoba (or other provincial/territorial membership body).**

### LEAGUE RULES:

**A. ENTRY FEE** – A team must have paid the team entry fee prior to participating in the league each season.

**B. PLAYER SKILL LEVEL RATINGS** – Team captains should strive to fill their team with suitable level players per the advertised division level. The MPL reserves the right to move a team to the division it deems appropriate.

### **C. TEAM ROSTERS:**

- 1. Team Captain** – Each team designates a team captain, who is responsible for understanding the rules, paying the team entry fee, roster additions/spares, league communication, communication with other teams (e.g., weather), setting lineups and entering/confirming/reporting results.
- 2. Roster Size** – Each team must have the minimum number of roster players as specified in the season registration (usually 4 players). Roster size can be up to the maximum size specified in the season registration, to allow for vacation/injuries (usually 6 players). Roster players can only play for the team they are registered on (can't spare on a different team).
- 3. Roster Changes** – Teams are allowed to make changes (additions/deletions) to their roster prior to the start of playoffs.
- 4. Spares** – Ideally roster players are used for all matches, but non-roster players can be used as needed. Spares could be because the team doesn't want to commit to another roster player, or the spare doesn't want to make the commitment to play as often as required. Spares can play for any number of teams during the regular season.
- 5. Playoffs** – Only roster players are eligible to play in the playoffs. In addition, each roster player must have completed a minimum of one regular season match in order to play in





the playoffs. A spare who has played on more than one team in a season can only play for a single team in the playoffs (i.e. must become a roster player on that team).

**D. SCHEDULE and LOCATION** – MPL will provide a weekly match schedule. Any failure to notify the opposing team of the need to reschedule a match will result in a win for the opposing team (extenuating circumstances will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis). If teams are unable to play a scheduled match, they can arrange with MPL for an alternate day/time (no guarantee of availability) or play at another location. **Any matches not played (and not made-up) due to extenuating circumstances (e.g. weather) will not be included in the results. Otherwise, any matches not played will result in a loss for the team that cancelled the original scheduled date.**

**E. BALLS** – The MPL provides Selkirk Pro S1 balls for all matches at MPL arranged facilities. Rescheduled matches at other locations/dates/times should use a suitable ball for the location (e.g. orange Onix indoor balls for gyms). In the event league balls are unavailable, the teams should agree to use whatever is available to complete the match.

**F. MPL MATCH:**

- 1. TIME LIMIT** – All matches have a 2-hour time limit. At the time limit, all games in progress are awarded MPL match points as described below (i.e. 0 or 1 MPL match point depending on the current game scores). Matches completing prior to the 2-hour time limit allow the teams to continue to use the courts for additional exhibition play up to the time limit. Where the court is not in use after the time limit (e.g. an outdoor court), if both teams agree then it is acceptable to continue the match past the time limit,
- 2. FORMAT** – Matches consist of 4 players per team playing 3 rounds of doubles matches, plus some seasons include an additional round of mini/regular singles (see the season registration and scoresheet). All rounds consist of 2 games to 11 (**win by 2 capped at 13**). This leads to each player playing 6 doubles games (plus 2 shared mini/regular singles games if included in the season). Visiting team has choice of end, serve/receive, or defer (as in the official rulebook) for the first game in each round. Teams switch ends and serving team for the second game in each round.
- 3. ROUND OPPONENTS** – The MPL scoresheet provides a template for the team captains to fill out to generate the round matchups. At the start of each round, the visiting team captain provides their team combinations for the round. The home team then adds their team combinations to the scoresheet. **Selection of the round matchups must be made such that no two rounds (singles round excluded) have the same 4 players on the court. This includes when substitutions are made for the second game of a round.** For example, if the visiting team uses the same team combinations in round 1 and round 2 then the home team **MUST** change their team combinations to prevent the same 4 players from being on the court in round 2. If an error in round matchups (same 4 players on the court) is detected after a game has begun then the game is completed as





is and the correction to the matchups is made at the earliest possibility (at the start of the second game in the round if possible or at the beginning of the next round at the latest).

4. **MPL MATCH WINNER** – The winning team of each game receives 2 MPL match points. The losing team of each game receives 1 MPL match point if they scored 6 or more points in the game (0 MPL match points if they scored 5 or less points in the game). The winner of the match is the team with the most MPL match points (total of all MPL match points from all games of all rounds). The match is a tie if both teams have the same number of MPL match points (note that playoff elimination matches can't finish in a tie, see below).
5. **WARM UP** – A maximum 10-minute warm up is permitted at the scheduled start time.
6. **TIMEOUTS & BREAKS** – Each team is permitted one 1-minute timeout per game. A 1-minute break is allowed between games in each round and at the end of each round. **In close matches the 2-hour time limit will likely be tight so keeping breaks to the recommended will give a better chance to complete all the games in the match.**
7. **INJURY/ILLNESS** – If a player is injured or suddenly ill, a maximum 5-minute timeout is permitted. If unable to continue play, a substitute player will be allowed to replace the injured/ill player for the current and remaining games (see the next rule). The injured/ill player may not play in subsequent games (even if they recover then they can't be a substitute for different injured/ill player). If there is no substitute available, then the game is forfeited after the timeout has lapsed. The score of the forfeiting team is recorded as their score at the time of forfeiture and the score of the non-forfeiting team is the higher of 11 or the forfeiting team's score plus 2 (maximum 13). **All remaining games in the match continue but any game(s) involving the injured/ill player will not count towards the MPL match winner.**
8. **SUBSTITUTIONS** – Teams that have more than the required number of players present may utilize their full roster during the match (having additional players present covers the case of an injury/illness making many games unplayable). The full lineup (up to 6 players maximum) must be written on the scoresheet prior to the start of the match. Substitutions are only allowed between games (could be the first or second game of a round), except due to injury or illness (see previous rule). **Unlimited substitutions are allowed throughout the match (only at the start of a game as mentioned above). With the condition that the earliest a player can substitute back in is the beginning of the next round. In addition, a substitution is not allowed if it would break rule #3 above (causes the same 4 players as in a previous round).**
9. **LATE PLAYER(S)** – If player(s) are missing at the start of any game (e.g. at the start of the first game after the 10-minute warmup, at the start of the second game of the round, at the start of the first game in the second round, etc.) then that game is scored 11-0 for the other team. If the missing player(s) show up they can play in subsequent games.





**10. WEATHER (or other unforeseen circumstance)** – At the discretion of the team captains, the match should be suspended during inclement weather. If conditions improve, then play continues from the point of suspension. If play can't continue, then all games completed prior to the suspension are included in the match results (games in progress at the time of suspension are ignored). If at least two full rounds have been completed, then MPL match points from all completed games are used to determine the MPL match winner. If less than two full rounds are completed, then the match is cancelled and will need to be rescheduled.

**11. SCORES & REPORTING** – Team captains will sign the scoresheet at the end of the match and the winning team captain will keep the scoresheet until the end of the season. The winning team captain is responsible for submitting the results by emailing a legible photo of the scoresheet to [manitoba.pickleball.league@gmail.com](mailto:manitoba.pickleball.league@gmail.com).

**12. DISPUTES** – Team captains (or designates for the match if team captain(s) are not present) should be consulted/take control of any on court disputes. If there is a dispute that can't be resolved, then the scoresheet should be updated to indicate that the match is being played under protest. The match is then played to its conclusion or the team refusing to play risks defaulting. The team captain of both teams should then file a report (email [manitoba.pickleball.league@gmail.com](mailto:manitoba.pickleball.league@gmail.com)).

**G. SEASON/ROUND STANDINGS** – In round robin stages (including playoff round robins), MPL match wins are worth 2 points each and ties are worth 1 point each. Ties in the overall season/round standings are broken using the following steps, using games from the current round only. If a step fully resolves the tie, then the process is complete. If one or more teams are removed from the tie, then the process starts over from step 1. If no teams are removed from the tie, then the process moves to the next step.

1. Head-to-head results (skip this step if all tied teams haven't played all other tied teams an equal number of times).
2. Total MPL match point differential in all matches between the tied teams.
3. Total MPL match point differential in all matches played against all teams.
4. The higher ranked team from the previous round (if there is a previous round).
5. Random draw.

**H. PLAYOFFS (single or double elimination, not round robin playoffs)** – Teams will be seeded according to the final season standings. The playoff format will depend on the number of teams in the division and the number of weeks available for the playoffs. In the case that a playoff match is tied (same number of MPL match points) at the end of the last round, then the tie is broken as follows:

1. Until the time limit is reached, play additional pairs of doubles games (both courts active, 1 game to 11, win by 2, capped at 13) until the tie is broken. Total point differential of the two games determines the winner. The away captain chooses two players per court for each pair of games (the away captain can choose different or the





same two players for the next pair of games if needed). The home captain then chooses two players per court (can be the same 4 players on court as in a previous round). Visiting team has choice of end, serve/receive, or defer for all games. If the time limit is reached, all games in progress are immediately stopped, the current pair of games are ignored, and the winning team is determined by the next steps in order.

2. Team with more games won through all rounds.
3. Team with the highest game point differential for all games of all rounds (not MPL match points but sum of individual game point differentials).
4. Higher ranked team at the start of the playoffs.

**I. SINGLES (if included in the season) –** The following rules apply in addition to the official rulebook:

1. More than one player from each team plays on each court (one from each team is on the court at a time with the other player from each team waiting on the bench). The two players on each team alternate with each other every 4 rallies (NOT points). Each game is played regular/service scoring (i.e. not rally point) to 11, win by 2, capped at 13.
2. The second game of the round must have all players playing against a different opponent than they played in the first game of the round.
3. It is up to each pair of opponents to decide whether they wish to play mini singles or regular singles for each game (choice can't be changed mid-game). On each court, pair #1 could choose to play mini while pair #2 chooses to play regular (or any of the 4 combinations, mini/mini, mini/regular, regular/mini or regular/regular for the two pairs of opponents on each court). Regular singles will be played only if both players desire regular singles. Mini singles will be played if either player desires mini singles.
4. Mini singles requires the center line to be extended through the non-volley zone on both sides of the net. However, the courts we are playing on do not have this line. Rather than have teams tape and remove the line each match, the MPL is asking for players to be extra cooperative with balls landing near the imaginary center line in the non-volley zone. The player hitting the ball should call it out if it's obvious to them. The player receiving the ball should call it in if it's close. If there are a significant number of contested line calls, then please let the MPL know, and court tape can be provided.
5. In mini singles when play is cross-court (both teams have even score or both teams have odd score), the entire non-volley zone from side line to side line (not just side line to center line) is active. Put another way, this rule makes it illegal to hit an Erne by using the center line when play is cross-court.