



Manitoba Pickleball League Rules

GENERAL – The Manitoba Pickleball League (MPL) is a fun and competitive team-based format. 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 except by special approval. All participants in the league are bound by these rules. **It is required that all players be members of the MPL on the Pickleball Canada system (see rules C.2 and C.4).**

LEAGUE RULES:

A. LEAGUE FEES:

1. **Entry Fee** – A team must have paid the team entry fee prior to participating in the league each season.
2. **Performance Bond** – Each team must also submit \$100 into their performance bond account (payable with the entry fee). If at any time the account falls less than \$50 then it must be topped back up to \$100 before the next match or risk forfeiting the remainder of the season. Any balance in the account will be returned to the team at the end of the season. Debits from the account occur as follows:
 - a. Using a spare who hasn't followed the waiver requirements or who isn't a member of the MPL on the Pickleball Canada system when required (see rule C.4) – first offence \$0, subsequent offences \$20 + gst.
 - b. Using an unapproved spare in the playoffs (see rules C.5.a and C.5.b) – first offence \$0, subsequent offences \$20 + gst. Note: The match may also be deemed a forfeit.
 - c. Using a roster player who isn't a member of the MPL on the Pickleball Canada system – first offence \$0, subsequent offences \$25 + gst.
 - d. **Request to reschedule a match (whether successful or not) – \$30 + gst.**
 - e. Forfeiting a match without alerting the MPL and the other team – \$50 + gst.

B. PLAYER SKILL LEVEL RATINGS – Team captains should strive to fill their team with suitable level players for the division level entered. The MPL reserves the right to move a team to the division it deems appropriate. The MPL also reserves the right to move team(s) around mid-season if necessary/possible.

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), bringing balls to each match (see below), 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 players can only play for the team they are registered on (can't spare on a different team). **All roster players must be registered members of the MPL on the Pickleball Canada system.**
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 to prevent forfeits. Spares can play for any number of teams. Spares who are a member of the MPL on the Pickleball Canada system can play any number of matches. Non-member spares can play up to two times (with one or two teams) without registering **but must submit the Pickleball Canada waiver (available on the MPL website).** **Prior to the third time playing in a league match, the spare must be registered as a member of the MPL on the Pickleball Canada system.**
5. **Playoffs** – All roster players who have played in a minimum of one regular season match are eligible to play in the playoffs (those not playing a match become part of point b below). Roster shortages in the playoffs are handled as follows:
 - a. First, all spares that have previously played for the team during the regular season or playoffs must be asked to spare in the playoff match.
 - b. If the team is still short, then proposed similarly skilled replacement player(s) are to be sent to the MPL for pre-approval. The MPL may discuss the suitability of these player(s) with other teams (the playoff opponent and/or others) and may deny cases of significant roster improvement.

It's understandable that "life happens" events occur (injury, vacation, working, etc.). Teams shouldn't use these rules to try to improve their roster for the playoffs.

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 (with or without spares), they can arrange with MPL for an alternate day/time (no guarantee of availability) or play at another location (not arranged by the league). **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 home team is required to supply balls for each match. Franklin X-40, Life Time LT Pro 48 or Selkirk Pro S1 outdoor balls are to be used on outdoor surfaces (even if played indoors). Orange Onix indoor balls for gyms.

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. All rounds consist of 2 games to 11 (**win by 2 capped at 13**). This leads to each player playing 6 doubles games. 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 matchups. The visiting team captain provides their lineup to the home team captain at least 24 hours in advance (ideally 48-72 hours) of the match. The home team captain then creates the scoresheet using the visiting team information and adding the home team lineup.
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. The full lineup must be written on the scoresheet prior to the start of the match – place the first 4 players in the numbered locations (e.g. A1 to A4/H1 to H4 or AF1/AF2/AM1/AM2/HF1/HF2/HM1/HM2) on the scoresheet and the remaining players in the substitutes box. 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). The default matchups for each round are generated by the scoresheet and then in each round a substitute can play on one court (can't play on both courts in the same round) by substituting for either numbered player in either or both games.
- a. If the substitute plays both games in the round for a numbered player, then cross out the numbered player and write the substitute (e.g. if Mark is the substitute for Ann, then change "Ann" to "~~Ann~~ Mark").
 - b. If the substitute plays in the first game of the round, then write their name before the numbered player (e.g. change "Ann" to "Mark / Ann").
 - c. If the substitute plays in the second game of the round, then write their name after the numbered player (e.g. change "Ann" to "Ann / Mark").

Note 1: The numbered players and substitutes sitting out games on one court are not allowed to play on the other court in that round.

Note 2: The FAQ on the website shows an example scoresheet with explanations.

- 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.



- 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).

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 elimination match is tied (same number of MPL match points) at the end of the last round (or time limit), 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 home captain then chooses two players per court. 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.