

CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
Tennis Ladder Guidelines
(updated June 18, 2009)

I. PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT:

- A. The Clayton Parks and Recreation Department Tennis ladder offers a great opportunity to meet and enjoy friendly competition with players of similar ability where good sportsmanship is encouraged and expected.

II. LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION

- A. The league shall be administered by the Clayton Parks and Recreation Department (CPRD).
- B. The CPRD reserves the right to make any changes that they deem necessary for the betterment of the league and its play.
- C. CPRD will use www.tennisengine.com as the online ladder system to track match results and update the rankings. Each registered player will be entered into the web-based system by the CPRD. Each registered player will then receive an email notification from www.tennisengine.com confirming their participation in the ladder. All results will be entered by CPRD. Players may access the rankings by following the “View Current Leagues” link on the www.tennisengine.com website. The title of the league is the “Clayton Parks and Recreation Department – Clayton, NC.”

III. ELIGIBILITY

- A. All players must be at least 18 years of age by June 18, 2009.
- B. All players must have signed the waiver/registration form and paid all fees before starting play.

IV. GENERAL

- A. Each player must play one match per month. If a match is not played during one month, the player drops to the bottom of the ladder.
- B. Length of season – TBD
- C. Structure – Ladders will be set-up for women and men in divisions of 3.0-4.0 and 4.5 and up. A player may only be on one ladder at a time. She or he can move from one ladder to another if they feel they have signed themselves up for the wrong division. In changing divisions, the player will have to start at the bottom of the new ladder and she/he cannot take points with them from the old ladder.

V. RANKING / MAKING CHALLENGES

- A. Initial ranking positions will be determined by a random selection. Players added to the ladder after August 1st will start at the bottom of the list.
- B. Normal challenges – A player may challenge other players within a plus (+) or minus (-) 6 positions of her or his current ranking.
- C. Free challenges – Each player has one free challenge (they may challenge anyone on the ladder). The free challenge must be used within the first six weeks of the starting date of the league.
- D. To make a challenge – A player must call or email appropriate players according to the current rankings. A player may make no more than three challenges at a time. Any other challenges should be made only after these matches are played. However, if someone challenges you, you must accept the challenge even if you have already challenged someone else but have not yet played the match.
- E. Players have to wait seven days to challenge or accept a challenge from the same player.

- F. Accepting Challenges – as soon as possible, but not more than 72 hours after being challenged, a challenged player must offer two reasonable days and times for the match within seven days of the challenge or give a default.
- G. A player may not accept more than three challenges at a time. These matches must be played before other matches can be accepted. You should tell the challenger that you are already under challenge and, as a courtesy, should give the challenger the name of the first challenger and the day set for the match. (Reminder: A player may make a challenge even though they have already accepted a challenge for the same time period.)

VI. RANKING POINTS

The ladder will use a 20-Point Ladder System which is great for encouraging league activity with a range of proficiency among its members. Members gain points by winning matches but also gain points, in line with their effort, even when losing matches. Active players will earn good rankings, talented players may rise quickly, and a player must remain active to maintain ranking.

- A. 20-Point Ladder System will be used.
 - i. If the winner is higher ranked he receives 20 points added to his previous point value.
 - ii. If the winner is lower ranked, his previous point value is replaced by the value of his opponent's points - plus 20 points, thus "leap-frogging" his opponent.
 - iii. The loser receives 1 point for each game that she/he wins.
- B. This ladder design includes the most important feature of a traditional ladder, i.e. when you beat a player you move into a position above her/him. But unlike a traditional ladder, the loser receives a reward for her/his effort that is proportional to the performance of that effort. Conceivably, the loser may earn 19 points by losing a three set match in tiebreakers (7-6, 6-7, 7-6).
- C. Ladder rankings are determined entirely by performance, while stimulating play in two important ways.
 - i. A strong player can move to the top in one match but will surely be passed by others if she/he doesn't keep active. This prevents stagnation in the ladder.
 - ii. A losing effort gets rewarded for performance, but not enough to allow a player to maintain a high position simply by playing a lot of matches, often a problem in point accrual systems. Every losing effort also produces a higher-ranked winner. Winning is rewarded considerably more than just participating.
 - iii. This ladder system gives a good credible ranking in a flexible and dynamic format. Anyone on the ladder can challenge anyone else, up or down, providing motivation for all players to participate. Anyone can rise as high in the rankings as performance justifies, yet no one can sit on their laurels.
 - iv. If a player is involved in multiple matches in a single calendar day, each match bonus is credited - but only as if each match was the only match that member played on that given day. In other words, "leap-frog" bonuses are not awarded to players who subsequently beat that player on the same day that he achieved a "leap-frog" bonus.

VII. MATCHES

- A. Time, date, and court should be mutually agreed upon.
- B. The challenger shall provide new balls for each match. If court fees are involved, players should share the cost evenly.
- C. All matches will be best two out of three sets. The player winning 2 out of 3 sets wins the match. Scoring should be conventional with a twelve point tie-breaker played at 6-6.
- D. Courtesies – ten minute warm-up. Please allow enough time for three sets.
- E. Official USTA rules apply to all matches.
- F. A match is null and void if, prior to match time, players agree that weather conditions are such that the match is not playable. The challenged player must then give two additional days and times within the next seven days for a match or give a default.

- G. Matches interrupted because of weather, darkness, or court time limitation should be continued from the point of interruption within the next seven days. If the challenged player cannot offer two additional days and times, she or he must give a default.
- H. Valid Match – A match is valid when at least one set has been completed.

VIII. REPORTING MATCHES

- A. Winners must notify CPRD within 24 hours after a match is played or after a default occurs.
- B. The match score and who challenged must be noted.
- C. Send via email to lpayne@townofclayton.org or call Linda at 553-1550.

IX. DEFAULTS

A default occurs when:

- i. A challenged player cannot or will not offer two reasonable days and times within the next seven days for a match.
- ii. A challenged player cancels a match or drops off the ladder before the match is played.
- iii. A player is more than 15 minutes late for a match.

X. RANKING PROCESS

- A. Valid match results reported will be processed each week to produce an updated ranking that will be accessible at www.tennisengine.com.
- B. The ranking week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday.