

**Official Rules
for
National Capital Squash (NCS)
League Play**

1. ORGANIZATION

a. NCS will sponsor team competition (four players per team in the winter and three players per team in the summer, except as noted below) for five divisions and levels of skill:

1. NCS Open

Eligibility: Unrestricted, for players at the highest skill levels.

This division shall have five-player teams in the winter and four in the summer. Ladder position #2 shall have skill level no higher than 5.2. Ladder positions #3 through #5 shall have skill level no higher than 5.0.

If a player has a US SQUASH skill rating over 5.4, his opponent may be given handicap points in certain circumstances. See the handicap points section below.

A team must have at least three rostered players in the winter and two in the summer with a Minimum Skill Level of US Squash 4.5;

Scheduled Match Day: Tuesday

Scoring: Each game shall be played to eleven (11) points, using point-a-rally (PAR) scoring

2. NCS 4.5

Eligibility: Skill level up to 4.5.

A team must have at least three rostered players in the winter and two in the summer with a Minimum Skill Level of US Squash 4.0;

Scheduled Match Day: Wednesday

Scoring: Each game shall be played to eleven (11) points, using point-a-rally (PAR) scoring

3. NCS 4.0

Eligibility: Skill level up to 4.0.

A team must have at least three rostered players in the winter and two in the summer with a Minimum Skill Level of US Squash 3.5;

Scheduled Match Day: Thursday

Scoring: Each game shall be played to eleven (11) points, using point-a-rally (PAR) scoring

4. NCS 3.5

Eligibility: Skill level up to 3.5

Scheduled Match Day: Monday

Scoring: Each game shall be played to fifteen (15) points, using point-a-rally (PAR) scoring.

5. NCS 3.0

Eligibility: Skill level up to the level set by the Division Coordinator, Vice President of League and the president.

Scheduled Match Day: Weekends

Scoring: Each game shall be played to fifteen (15) points, using point-a-rally (PAR) scoring.

b. Each division will be organized by a Division Coordinator with authority, as constrained by provisions of these rules, to schedule matches, define playoff criteria, and determine player eligibility for regular season matches, playoff matches and division tournaments. The Division Coordinator will enforce all rules and assess appropriate penalties for rule violations.

c. Except where otherwise specified in these rules, a Division Coordinator's decision on any appeal, protest, or interpretation may be appealed to the Vice President of League. Any such appeal must be made in writing by a team Captain. On all appeals, the decision of the Vice President of League is final.

2. ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

a. All players must be members of NCS. Team captains are responsible for verifying the NCS membership of all players who take the court for their teams.

b. Each player must have the appropriate skill level for the division in which he or she is playing. Players with skill level at or below the eligibility levels in paragraph 1.a. may play in that division. Skill levels above that are not eligible for that division, unless the player appeals within four weeks of the first match for that division or a lower skill level division and the appeal is approved by the Vice President of League.

(Explanatory Note: Except as noted, player eligibility will be determined by the most recently published US Squash rating at the beginning of the season. Eligibility then remains fixed for the duration of the League season, i.e. changes of skill rating during the League season do not change eligibility status.)

c. A player classified in a lower division may play in a higher division.

d. Any match played by an ineligible player shall be scored as a default, and matches played below the ineligible player in the team line-up may be scored as defaults at the discretion of the Division Coordinator. Team captains will be notified when a match has been scored as a default.

e. Whenever possible, a new player with no published rating will be given official skill level ratings by NCS skill rating volunteers assigned by the Vice President of League. Any player who has not been officially rated may be given a provisional rating by the Division Coordinator, based on the player's performance in division matches, and the provisional rating will determine the player's division eligibility pending an official rating. A provisional rating may be appealed to the Vice President of League. Such appeal must be made in writing within 30 days after the player is notified of the rating. The Vice President of League may require the player to obtain an official rating.

f. No player may play for more than one team in any single division during the same season, unless given specific written approval by the Division Coordinator. This rule shall not apply to NCS 3.0 play. Such approval shall be limited to cases in which a change of residence or employment prompts the player to change his or her club membership.

g. To be eligible for Division Playoffs, a player must meet the requirements of Rules 2.a and 2.b, and must have played in a minimum of 25% of the team's matches. The 25% figure shall be rounded up to the next higher whole number if the calculation yields other than a whole number. A player who defaults a match is not credited with a reported match for this calculation, although the player who receives the default is.

3. MATCH SCHEDULING & TEAM CAPTAIN DUTIES

a. Matches will be played as indicated by the official NCS schedule prepared by the respective Division Coordinators. All matches must be played on the scheduled date. Team captains may not reschedule matches. Division Coordinators may reschedule a match, at the request of the team captains, if court conditions or weather conditions make it impractical or unsafe to play the match on the scheduled date.

b. The scheduled start time for all league matches on weeknights is 7:00 p.m. This may be changed by agreement of both team captains or by requirement of the club. The home team Captain is responsible for making at least two (2) courts available for league play on the designated night from the appointed time through the end of the last match of the evening. Exceptions to this requirement may be made at the discretion of the Division Coordinator. Failure to make adequate provision for court time may lead to forfeiture of matches, at the discretion of the Division Coordinator.

c. The visiting team Captain must contact the home team Captain no later than noon on the day of a match to confirm the match line-ups.

1. If a team is known to be incomplete (i.e., lacking sufficient players for a complete team), those players who appear will play starting from the number one position down, and the bottom position shall be forfeited.

2. If a player whose team Captain reasonably expects to appear for a match is not present at the start time for the first match, as set according to Rule 3.b, the Captain may choose to (a) move those players who are present up, and play them starting from the number one position down, or (b) begin play with those who are present in their previously designated positions. If the missing player fails to appear within one hour of the start time for the first match, that player's match shall be forfeited, unless both team captains agreed prior to the start of the first match that play should be delayed to accommodate the late-arriving player. In addition, any matches played out of ladder position, based on players actually present, will be forfeit.

(Explanatory note: If a team Captain whose #1 player is not present at start time elects to proceed with matches #2, #3 and #4 without moving players up to fill in the #1 position, those matches will all be forfeited if the #1 player fails to appear within one hour of the start time.)

4. MATCH PLAY

a. Each member of a team shall play his or her opponent in a match of the best three out of five games. Each game shall be played using the scoring system identified in 1.a.

b. Teams should base their order of play on order of merit. Teams are encouraged to use the following procedures. At the start of every season, halfway through the season and prior to the beginning of the first playoff match each Captain may provide a ladder order listing all of the participating players in rank order to each Division Coordinator. If a team has a player who will be missing a match the team is permitted to slot the player into the appropriate position which will be listed on the original ladder listing. This "listing" will show the players in ladder order (number one being the strongest play, number two the next best and so on). Each Captain is obligated to provide the opposing coach with a match line-up by Noon the day of a match (or as early as possible) which will allow each Captain enough time to review each other's line-ups and raise any concerns with the Vice President of League for resolution. An opposing Captain may challenge a player's ladder position based on their rating, match or challenge record in the current season. A Captain must have available upon request to the Vice President of League a report of all team matches played and a list of challenge results available for the opposing Captain to inspect before each match. Captains are strongly encouraged to create a ladder for their team using either US SQUASH's Club Ladder functionality or the Friendly Match system in US SQUASH's Club

Locker website for recording club matches. Posting such matches online will improve transparency and increase the accuracy of ratings.

(Explanatory notes: During the season a team may draw players from anywhere on its order-of-merit list of players, but they must play in the relative order as it appears on that list or risk default for out-of-order play. For example, if a team has 10 players and chooses players 2, 6, 7, and 10 from its ranking list, then the No 2 player must play at team position 1, the No 6 player at team position 2, the No 7 player at team position 3, and the No 10 player at team position 4.)

New players may join at any time, and should be inserted in the appropriate position by the Captain as determines appropriate. Ideally new players would be assigned an order-of-merit position in consultation with the Division Coordinator before the player's first game. If this is not possible, the Division Coordinator, in consultation with the Captain, will assess the player's level after the first match and accept or reject the proposed playing order. Willful abuse of the ranking of new players by team captains may result in default at the sole discretion of the Division Coordinator.)

c. All play shall be governed by the Rules of Squash of the World Squash Federation, as endorsed by US SQUASH.

d. The league ball shall be the ball adopted by the US SQUASH for sanctioned play.

e. Each player shall wear lensed, protective eyewear that meets US SQUASH safety specifications. It is not acceptable to play without protective eyewear under any circumstances, including mutual agreement by both players. A player who refuses to wear protective eyewear will forfeit his or her match.

f. The home team shall have a player referee for ladder matches #2 and #4 in the winter and #2 in the summer. The visiting team shall have a player referee for ladder matches #1, #3 and, for NCS Open, #5. The other player shall server as the marker. If no players are available to officiate, the players shall self-officiate the match or they may mutually agree on another person or persons to officiate.

5. INCENTIVE FOR CERTIFIED REFEREES

Each team will be awarded a bonus individual match win (five points) for each player on their roster who is a US SQUASH certified club referee or higher, for up to as many ladder positions played in the division (four players and four bonus wins in the winter, except for up to five players and five bonus wins for NCS Open, and three players and three bonus wins for summer league play except for up to four players and four bonus wins for NCS Open). The bonus wins will be computed when the season is two-thirds complete based on the number of certified referees on each team roster who have played in at least one team match

as of that date. These wins will count in the standings as noted in Rule 7a as if a match was played. The percentage of certified referees on a team roster will also be used as tiebreakers under Rule 7.

6. REPORTING OF MATCH RESULTS, DEFAULT RULE FOR LATE MATCH ENTRY

The home team Captain is responsible for entering the official NCS match results in the score-entry system located on the US SQUASH website within 72 hours after the scheduled match. The visiting team Captain may also enter match results. The reported results must indicate the names of all players, the winner of each match, and the number of games won and lost, including game scores, in each match.

Failure to meet these requirements will result in an automatic default of the home team (a win by the visiting team in each match) by the software and is not subject to appeal. Home team captains must retain a record of all their match results until the completion of the current season.

7. LEAGUE STANDINGS AND PLAYOFFS

a. Each individual match produces five points for the winner and as many as three for the loser. One point is awarded to each team for simply playing the match. Points are also awarded for each game won, plus a bonus point for winning the match. If a team defaults a match, the winning team earns five points and the defaulting team earns zero points. If both teams default, each team is awarded zero points for that match. The Vice President of League, in consultation with the respective Division Coordinators, shall determine the manner and method in which playoffs and division championships shall be conducted, on a season-by-season basis. All pertinent information concerning playoffs shall be made available to team captains at the outset of each season. Team captains shall be advised of any changes on a timely basis.

b. If two (2) or more teams are tied at the end of the regular season, the following procedures shall be used to determine which team or teams advance to the playoffs and their seedings in the playoffs:

- First, the total individual matches won and lost in head-to-head contests between the tied teams during the season;
- Second, the total games won and lost in head-to-head contests between the tied teams during the season;
- Third, the team with the greatest percentage of certified referees on the roster at the end of the season who are eligible to play in the playoffs.
- Fourth, the total games won and lost by each team against all opponents during the season;

- Fifth, the number of matches defaulted by each team against all opponents during the season, with preference given to the team with the fewest defaults;
 - Sixth, the Vice President of League shall flip a coin to determine the winner.
- c. If a playoff match is tied, the following procedures shall be used to determine the winner:
- First, the total games won and lost;
 - Second, the total points scored;
 - Third, the team with the greatest percentage of certified referees on the roster as of the day before the playoff match who are eligible to play in the playoffs.
 - Fourth, the total individual matches won and lost in head-to-head contests between the tied teams during the season;
 - Fifth, the total games won and lost in head-to-head contests between the tied teams during the season;
 - Sixth, the Vice President of League shall flip a coin to determine the winner, unless the tied match in question is a championship final in which case both teams will share the championship.

8. NCS 3.0 Division special rules.

The Division Coordinator, Vice President of League and the president shall have authority to write exceptions to any rule or to write special rules to facilitate play in the NCS 3.0 division.

9. Handicap points in the NCS Open Division.

If the lower-rated player is rated under 5.4, the lower-rated player shall be given handicap points.

If the player is rated at 5.4 or above, but has skill level rating at least 0.3 less than the higher-rated player, the lower-rated player shall be given handicap points.

In either case, the handicap points shall be computed at a rate of 1 point for each 0.08 skill rating point or fraction of 0.08 rating points. For a player rated under 5.4, the handicap is computed by finding the difference in the skill level rating between 5.4 and the higher rated player, dividing by 0.8, then rounding up to the next highest integer. For a player rated 5.4 or above, find the difference in the skill level, subtract 0.3, divide by 0.8, then round up to the next highest integer.

Handicap points are capped at eight points. Each game shall be played to eleven (11) points. The handicap player would start the match with the serve and the handicapped player having a lead equal to the handicap.

For example, a player rated at 5.57 would give 3 handicap points to his opponent, if rated 5.4 or less ($5.57-5.40=0.17$; $0.17/0.8 = 2.125$, which rounds up to 3 points). If one player was rated at 5.76 and the other at 5.41, then the higher rated player would give 1 handicap point to his opponent ($5.76-5.41 = 0.35$; $0.35-0.30 = .05$; $0.05/0.08 = 0.625$, which rounds up to 1 point). In the first example, the opponent would start the match with the serve and each game would start with the score of 3-0 in favor of the lower rated player.

10. AMENDMENTS

These rules may be amended by a majority vote of the League Committee, which consists of each of the division coordinators plus the president and VP of League.