



Winter Pennant

RULES

2026 season



SCHEDULE OF MATCHES

- 1.1 14 home and away rounds will be played.
- 1.2 First round commencing 9th May.
- 1.3 Byes on 16th May (Doubles Only), 6th June and 11th July
- 1.4 Last round to be played 22nd August
- 1.5 Finals to be played over 2 weekends commencing 29th August with Grand Final on 5th September

2. Player Eligibility

- 2.1 Players must be registered members of their club, and details must be recorded in full on League Manager by 11:59pm on the Sunday following the match.
- 2.2 New players into a team which are not in the initial squad as a base player when grading was completed must be approved by Tennis SA. If Tennis SA is not notified before match day, you will have until 5:00 PM Monday to notify Tennis SA or penalties may be applied. Newly nominated players, who substantially alter the general standard of the team as originally graded, may not be accepted by Tennis SA. Penalty if player is not accepted – Loss of sets played by that player. Approval is determined by the following criteria;
 - a) Team Balance – Any additional player added to an originally nominated team must not strengthen the team beyond the competitive balance of the division. The team should not become stronger than any other team within the division.
 - b) Player Strength – No added player may be deemed stronger than the highest-ranked players within the division, as determined at the discretion of the committee.
- 2.3 All players nominated must have registered and activated their own Competitive Player Profile to compete.
- 2.4 Any team playing a player listed on Tennis SA's list of ineligible players shall be penalised by losing any points the ineligible player has accrued and forfeit all sets played.
- 2.5 If a club has more than one team in a division, a player may play four matches before being bound to a team. PENALTY: Loss of all sets by offending player
- 2.6 No player shall play for more than one club in any one series unless with a written clearance from that club and the written approval of Tennis SA. No clearance will be approved after four programmed matches. PENALTY: Loss of all sets played by offending player.
- 2.7 Teams may only include a maximum of one player who is aged 11 years or under as of the competition start date. Requests for exemptions to this rule may be submitted to the Winter Pennant Working Group, who may review and grant exemptions at their discretion.
- 2.8 Where a team has no players over the age of eighteen (18) it will be required to supply an adult supervisor for each match.

3. Manager/Captain

- 3.1 Each team must have a Captain appointed for each match.
- 3.2 For regular season matches, the home team are required to print out a score sheet from Match Centre. In the case they do not have their scoresheet printed from League Manager, as outlined above, the Winter Pennant Working Group have the right to issue a penalty in the form of loss of premiership points.
- 3.3 For major round matches, both teams are required to print out a score sheet from Match Centre. In the case they do not have their scoresheet printed from League Manager, as outlined above, the Winter Pennant Working Group have the right to issue a penalty in the form of loss of premiership points.

- 3.4 In the singles & doubles competition, each Team Captain must, prior to the scheduled start time of the match, complete the team score sheet showing the order in which his/her team will play and hand over the score sheet to the Captain of the opposing team. Scoresheet must be signed by both teams at the completion of play.
- 3.5 The Team Manager must attend from the commencement and remain at the Winter Pennant match until the match is completed and will be responsible for the team abiding by Winter Pennant Match Rules, Order of Merit and Code of Behaviour and any other policies as referred to in the Winter Pennant Rules.

4. Balls and Ball allocation

- 4.1 Only Tennis Australia approved balls may be used.
- 4.2 Minor Rounds – Home teams to provide approved balls irrespective of court surface. A minimum of 8 for Open Singles Divisions and a minimum of 6 for all other divisions. Premier Division home teams to supply a minimum of 16 balls.
- 4.3 Major Rounds – Each team shall provide 4 new balls and each Premier Division team to provide a minimum of 8 balls.

5. Courts

- 5.1 Court will not be accepted unless they are of good standard – lines clearly defined and good quality nets with straps. Court drying equipment must be available.
- 5.2 No player can be forced to play on unsafe wet courts or when rain is falling.
- 5.3 Clubs playing on synthetic grass or clay courts which are unable to be used due to waterlogging will forfeit unless suitable alternative courts are provided for the match.
- 5.4 Tennis SA reserves the right to refuse any courts considered unsuitable.

6. Match Procedure

- 6.1 The scheduled starting time will be 1pm for home and away matches on a Saturday afternoon (unless otherwise notified) – Minimum 2 courts per match.
- 6.2 Hit up time commences at 12:45pm.

Singles Competition

- 6.3 Teams may consist of up to 8 players. No player may play more than one single and one double.
- 6.4 Doubles – Best of 2 tiebreak sets (Tiebreak at 6 all, first to 7 points with advantage of 2) with third set if required being a match tiebreak (first to 10 points with an advantage of 2 points).
- 6.5 Singles - Best of 2 tiebreak sets (Tiebreak at 6 all, first to 7 points with advantage of 2) with third set if required being a match tiebreak (first to 10 points with an advantage of 2 points).
- 6.6 Doubles shall be played first in all divisions except Premier Division – Singles first.
- 6.7 Order of Merit – A player may only move up or down on position each week. A player may not move two positions or more without the approval of Tennis SA. Number 1 or 2 highest ranked player in order of merit on the day must play in the top doubles pairing if they are playing doubles. Other players are flexible to move.
- 6.8 Players not present and ready to play by 1:15pm shall forfeit their doubles.
- 6.9 Any team with less than 4 players present at 2:00pm shall forfeit singles from the lowest position.

- 6.10 If a team has more than four players and a player is injured in doubles they can be replaced (in singles) by a player who has played doubles but was not originally listed in singles. Order of merit rule must be followed.

Doubles Competition

- 6.11 Teams may consist of up to 8 players.
- 6.12 The rotations are:
Rotation 1 – 1&2 v 1&2 3&4 v 3&4
Rotation 2 – 1&3 v 1&3 2&4 v 2&4
Rotation 3 – 1&4 v 1&4 2&3 v 2&3
- 6.13 Men's Rubbers shall be of 2 sets – (Tiebreak at 5 all, 1st to 7 points with an advantage of 2) a total of 12 sets
- 6.14 Women's Rubbers shall be 1 set – (Tiebreak at 8 all, 1st to 7 points with an advantage of 2) a total of 6 sets
- 6.15 Players not present and ready to play by 1:15pm shall forfeit their first 2 sets for men and first set for women.
- 6.16 Players not present and ready to play by 2:00pm shall forfeit all sets.
- 6.17 Scoresheets must be written out before each rotation starts. If someone becomes injured or unable to play they may not substitute in a replacement within that rubber but they may have a replacement for the remainder of the rubbers. The same pairing cannot occur twice if more than four players are used.

Mixed Competition

- 6.18 Teams may consist of up to 8 players.
- 6.19 The rotations are:
Rotation 1 – M1&M2 v M1&M2 W1&W2 v W1&W2
Rotation 2 – M1&W1 v M1&W1 M2&W2 v M2&W2
Rotation 3 – M1&W2 v M1&W2 M2&W1 v M2&W1
- 6.20 Mixed Rubbers shall be 1 set – Tie break to be played at 8 all, a total of 6 sets.
- 6.21 Players not present and ready to play by 2:00pm shall forfeit all sets.
- 6.22 Scoresheets must be written out before each rotation starts. If someone becomes injured or unable to play they may not substitute in a replacement within that rubber but they may have a replacement for the remainder of the rubbers. The same pairing cannot occur twice if more than four players are used.

7. Order of Merit

- 7.1 "Order of Merit" means that players will play in the order of players with greater ability playing higher in the team than players of lesser ability.
- 7.2 Squads will be locked and Order of Merit shall be set by UTR. However, players may move one ranking position up or down (if you are listed as number two on League Manager, you would be eligible to play up or down one position if required without approval) This includes all fill in players, who will need to be placed within the correct position on UTR for the team. Exemptions to this rule may be submitted in writing to the Winter Pennant Working Group, to be considered at their discretion.
- 7.3 Any movement of a player that is more than one position to what is listed on League Manager will result in loss of sets.

- 7.4 All order of merit lists will be updated weekly by 5pm Thursday.
- 7.5 Players must be played in Order of Merit in all teams at all times.
- 7.6 The Winter Pennant Working Group may at its discretion review the Order of Merit for any team at any time.
- 7.7 The Winter Pennant Working Group shall have the power to disapprove the Order of Merit within any team and within any club, and to adjust match results accordingly as it sees fit.
- 7.8 Disputes as to Order of Merit shall be determined by the Winter Pennant Working Group which may impose such penalty as deemed necessary.

8. Scoring

- 8.1 Matches shall be decided by rubbers, where rubbers are even, by sets and where sets are even, by games.

9. Forfeits

- 9.1 In singles and doubles matches a team receiving a forfeit shall receive 10 points, 6 rubbers, 12 sets and 72 games.
- 9.2 In doubles only men's matches a team receiving a forfeit shall receive 16 points, 12 sets and 72 games.
- 9.3 In doubles only women's matches a team receiving a forfeit shall receive 10 points, 6 rubbers, 6 sets and 54 games.
- 9.4 In mixed only matches a team receiving a forfeit shall receive 10 points, 6 sets and 54 games.
- 9.5 Forfeit of doubles rubber, except in the case of injury or sickness during the match, bottom double must be forfeited first. Failure by a team to forfeit in the correct order will result in a loss of four (4) Premiership points.
- 9.6 Forfeit of a singles rubber, except in the case of injury or sickness during the match, must be from the number 4 position up. Failure by a team to forfeit in the correct order will result in a loss of four (4) Premiership points.
- 9.7 A team proposing to forfeit a match or a rubber shall notify the opposing team as soon as possible and forward a written explanation to Tennis SA prior to 6:00pm the following Tuesday. The team receiving the forfeit shall forward a completed scoresheet to claim their points.
- 9.8 Any team forfeiting three matches may be removed from the competition.
- 9.9 If a team is to be removed from the competition or if a club withdraws a team from the competition, their matches and previous results will be replaced with a bye and the ladder will be calculated by match ratio.

10. Weather implications

- 10.1 Weather cancellations will be made at the discretion of Tennis SA.
- 10.2 In the event of extreme weather (including but not limited to rain or excessive heat) a message will be placed on the Tennis SA Website - [Inclement Weather Update](#) by 11:00am on the day of the scheduled match.
- 10.3 Matches will be cancelled when the forecast maximum temperature on match day, is issued by the Bureau of Meteorology at www.bom.gov.au at 9.00 am on the morning of matches, is 37' Celsius or more. If the said forecast includes a temperature of less than 37' Celsius then the Committee may still also so cancel the said round in the manner set out above.
- 10.4 Minor round matches –
 - a. If no set is commenced by 3:00pm the match will be abandoned. If no set is completed by 4:00pm the match will be abandoned. Teams must submit

scoresheet as usual. Both teams must put forth their best effort to get matches back on court including the sweeping of courts

- 10.5 In the event of any match being interrupted or incomplete due to inclement weather or darkness the following will occur:
- a. If no rubbers are complete, the match will be considered “unplayed” for purposes of ladder calculation only with the premiership ladder determined using a points ratio (i.e. average points per matches played);
 - b. If at least one rubber is complete and neither team is in an unbeatable position, both teams will receive 2 premiership points, plus one point for each rubber won, and the unplayed or unfinished sets will be deemed split between each team.
 - c. If one team is in an unbeatable position, it will be deemed the winner and given 4 premiership points, plus one point for each rubber won, and the unplayed or unfinished rubbers will be deemed split between each team.

The premiership ladder will be calculated using points ratio (average points per matches played)

- 10.6 In major round matches If no set is commenced by 3:00pm the match will be abandoned unless by mutual agreement. If no rubber in singles competition or first rotation in doubles competition is completed by 4:00pm the match will be abandoned unless by mutual agreement. Teams must submit a scoresheet as usual.
- 10.7 Semi-finals will be played on a scheduled day and if a result is achieved that will stand; if no result achieved the higher placed team at the conclusion of the minor round will play in the Grand Final.
- 10.8 Grand Final matches will be played on scheduled day and if no result is achieved play will continue on or before the following Saturday. Times are by mutual agreement, to be arranged before leaving the courts. The existing score stands and play continues from that score e.g. if the game score is 3-1 then that set continues from 3-1. The same players must play. If no result is achieved after the second week, the higher placed team at the conclusion of the minor round will be declared Premiers.

11. Results

- 11.1 Tennis SA will be using the Tennis Australia approved competition software, League Manager. Captains will be required to **enter and confirm** the results of their match on League Manager/ Match Centre by 9:00am on the Tuesday following the match.
- 11.2 Either team may only dispute the match result before 9:00am on Tuesday following the match.
- 11.3 Penalty loss of two points to both teams not entering results by 9:00am Tuesday following the match will apply.
- 11.4 For every unspecified player entered with a match result, two premiership points will be deducted from their team. If a profile is provided by the Thursday following the match, the penalty will be overturned. The Winter Pennant Working Group will also review any instances where an unspecified player alters the result of a match, and additional penalties may be applied as deemed appropriate.

12. Match Disputes

- 12.1 All match disputes must be made by the Team Manager or Captain by email to the Coordinator at Tennis SA (mitchell.reilly@tennis.com.au) by 9:00am on Tuesday following the match and the referral must contain a precise statement of the issue(s) in dispute and the relevant facts

giving rise to the dispute. The statement will be sent to the other party by Tennis SA in line with Rule 11.2. For any Code of Behaviour Issues, refer to Rule 17.

- 12.2 Please be aware that all teams are responsible for following the rules and regulations stated. It is the team's and club's responsibility to dispute a ruling if they believe they have been unduly affected by the result of a rule breach. Penalties will only take place after a dispute has been made and proven true. If teams are to break the rules the opposition has the right to dispute the result
- 12.3 Tennis SA must, within two days of the date of request for such adjudication by any party, request any response to the dispute from the other party.
- 12.4 The Winter Pennant Working Group has the power to adjudicate any dispute referred to it for determination in any way in its absolute discretion but subject to the principles of natural justice, these rules and regulations and any Policy (if relevant).

13. Interpretation of Rules and Regulations

- 13.1 Any question arising from or in connection with the interpretation or construction of these rules and regulations shall be determined by the Winter Pennant Working Group in its absolute discretion.
- 13.2 The Winter Pennant Working Group may alter or amend these rules and regulations from time to time without prior notice.

14. Appeals

- 14.1 A party may appeal a determination made by the Winter Pennant Working Group pursuant to Rule 11.3, by providing written notice to Tennis SA within three working days of the determination. The written notice of appeal must contain a precise statement as to the basis and nature of the appeal. If the determination is appealable, Tennis SA may refer the matter to Tennis Australia. Tennis Australia will have the final determination on any appeal against a Winter Pennant Working Group determination.

15. Premiership table

- 15.1 In Singles Competition four premiership points will be awarded for a winning match and two points for a draw plus one premiership point for each winning rubber.
- 15.2 In Doubles Competition four points to be awarded for a win and two for a drawn, plus one point for each set won.
- 15.3 Premiership tables to be decided by points and in the case of equality of points at the end of the minor round, the team with the best percentage for and against (rubbers, then sets, then games) shall be deemed minor premiers. In divisions with a bye, or "unplayed" matches the premiership table will be decided by match ratio. (Match ratio is the Premiership points divided by the number **of matches played**). **If equal on match ratio then by rubbers, then sets, then games.**

16. Finals

- 16.1 The four teams securing the highest number of points shall play off in the major round. In the event of a bye in a draw or partly cancelled round, the four teams securing the highest match ratio shall play off in the major round. In the semi-finals and grand-finals the higher ranked team will have the option of hosting a home final. If the team declines, the decision as to where the match is to be played shall be made at the discretion of Tennis SA.
- Week 1. Semi-Final 1. 1v4 Semi-Final 2. 2v3

- Week 2. Grand Final. Winner of Semi-Final 1 v Winner of Semi-Final 2
- 16.2 In the event of a drawn match in the finals (i.e.) Equal number of rubbers, sets and games, the winner shall be the higher placed team at the conclusion of the minor round.
The third Saturday will be reserved to complete Grand Final matches not completed due to the weather. All players will be expected to be available if this situation eventuates.

See Rule 9 for further details.

17. Qualification for Major Round

- 17.1 To qualify to play in a major round match, a player must have played the required minimum number of minor round matches in that division or a lower division within the relevant competition, and must be a listed base player within the team (five matches are required for a division that plays 13 or 14 matches. Four matches are required for a division that plays 12 or less matches.)
- 17.2 If a team does not have at least 4 qualified base players available, clubs may lodge a request for exemption to bring a qualified player from a lower division into the team. Exemptions will not be considered for players who alter the strength of the team.
- 17.3 To fill its lowest Division team in major round matches, applications, stating a case, may be submitted to the Winter Pennant Match Recorder for approval to play an unqualified player. Approval may only be given to registered players of that club of appropriate standard being lower ranked than all players in the team. A player who has qualified to play finals in a competition conducted at a similar time would not be considered for approval.
- 17.4 Any match that has a completed rubber will count towards qualification provided all listed players attend the venue and submit a scoresheet in League Manager/Match Centre. If the match is affected by inclement weather and no rubber is completed, then this will not count towards qualification.
- 17.5 All clubs shall notify Tennis SA if they would like any changes made to their Order of Merit no later than 9am on Tuesday following the last match for the season. All players not qualified for finals should be changed to Reserve Players. Any changes required will be communicated with the relevant clubs no later than the Friday following. Teams must then play in the approved singles, doubles and mixed doubles order of merit and all orders of merit shall not be alterable for the Finals Series. Penalty for playing sets out of order – forfeiture of those sets to love.

18. Code of Behaviour issues

- 18.1 All matches shall be played in accordance with the behavioural standards outlined in Part II: Expected Behaviours of the Tennis Australia Code of Behaviour: Competitive Play (the Code)
- 18.2 Any alleged breaches of the Code should be reported by filling out and lodging the [Tennis SA Competition Code of Behaviour Report](#) by COB Tuesday following the match in which the incident took place.
- 18.3 The Winter Pennant Working Group may meet on a weekly basis to consider any alleged breaches of the Code. The Winter Pennant Working Group will consider any reports/complaints, then determine, with regard to all the material provided to it, if a breach of the Code or the Winter Pennant Competition Rules has occurred and consider appropriate penalties in accordance with clause 18 of these Rules.
- 18.4 Team Captains and Team Managers are responsible for:
(a) Educating all players in their team on their responsibilities under Tennis Australia's National Policies (particularly the Code and Disciplinary Policy) and

(b) Managing all players in their team in relation to match play and sportsmanship. All matches shall be played in accordance with the Tennis Australia Code of Behaviour for Weekly Competitions.

19. Penalties

- 18.1 The Winter Pennant Working Group may impose penalties for any breach(es) of the Winter Pennant Competition Rules and/or the Code. The Winter Pennant Working Group may resolve a dispute in any way it sees fit and/or impose a penalty, subject to the principles of natural justice. Penalties that may be imposed by the Winter Pennant Working Group include (but are not limited to) suspension from the Winter Pennant Competition of no more than four weeks, the forfeit of matches or sets, and the loss of premiership points, on any club, player or spectator found to have breached these Rules and/or the Code.
- 18.2 The Winter Pennant Working Group reserves the right to refer breaches of the code to the Tennis Australia Integrity and Compliance Unit for further investigation and to be resolved in accordance with the Code.

20. Lights

- 20.1 Once light up time is reached, matches must be completed under lights.
- 20.2 If the venue does not have lights, play must be suspended at light up time.
- 20.3 Any rubber that has not commenced by 5:00pm must be abandoned and marked down as 'unplayed'.
- 20.4 Please refer to the 2026 light up times below.

21. 2026 LIGHT UP TIMES

Month	Date	Round	Time
May	9 th	1	5:26pm
	16 th	2	5:20pm
	23 rd	3	5:16pm
	30 th	4	5:13pm
June	13 th	5	5:11pm
	20 st	6	5:11pm
	27 th	7	5:13pm
July	4 th	8	5:16pm
	18 th	9	5:24pm
	25 th	10	5:29pm
August	1 st	11	5:34pm
	8 th	12	5:39pm
	15 th	13	5:44pm
	22 nd	14	5:49pm
	29 th	FINALS	5:54pm
September	5 th	FINALS	5:59pm

