

# **Rules & Conditions of Play**

**Tennis Victoria Associations Junior Pennant**

**2025/26**

## CONTENTS

Contents.....	1
Schedule .....	2
Conditions of Entry.....	2
UTR Playing Order .....	3
Emergencies .....	3
Matches .....	4
Attendance and No-Show Provisions, and Forfeited/Retired Rubbers .....	5
Wet Weather Procedure .....	5
Finals.....	6
Interpretation of rules & conditions of play .....	7
Code of Behaviour: Competitive Play .....	7
Protests.....	7
Penalties .....	8

Any sections underlined are new or updated for the 2025-26 season.

## SCHEDULE

1. The 2025/26 Associations Junior Pennant season will be played across 10 home and away rounds, as well as a Grand Final for the two highest ranked teams in each Section at the end of the home and away season.
  - a. This will differ for all 4 team sections, who will play 9 home and away rounds.
2. All matches will take place on Sundays with times will be indicated on Match Centre before the start of the season.
3. The season will commence on Sunday October 19 and conclude with the Grand Final on March 15.
  - a. Sunday March 22 is set out as a reserve day for the Grand Final in the case of a washout, heat out or other exceptional circumstances.
4. No play will take place on the Melbourne Cup Long Weekend (November 2) as well as the season break (November 30- January 25)

## CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

5. All players must have completed their Competitive Player Profile to be eligible to play Associations Junior Pennant.
6. To be eligible to participate in AJP players must meet one of the following criteria-
  - a. have played at least six team matches for their club in their association's junior or senior competition within any 12-month period from September 2022 through to 31 August, 2025 (this excludes Tennis Victoria Pennant matches).
  - b. for players that are only playing school competitions, these players are eligible to represent the association that they last participated in (no matter in what year that this occurred)
  - c. have played at least three matches in the preceding AJP season. (washouts do not count to matches played)
  - d. Regional players are eligible to participate for a metro-based Association on the proviso that they have played at least six team matches in their regional Association within any 12-month period from September 2022 through to 31 August 2025 (this excludes Tennis Victoria Pennant matches).

Associations with players who do not meet the criteria will not be eligible to participate as a Base or Reserve player unless exceptional circumstances are approved by Tennis Victoria.

It is the responsibility of all Associations to ensure that eligibility is met by all players prior to team entry, as well as any emergency players that are used throughout the season.

7. Players are eligible to play out of age as a base player if they meet the following criteria as of the team registration deadline as advertised by Tennis Victoria, or if they wish to play as a reserve player, they need to meet the following criteria as of the date the match is played:
  - a. Boys 12&u need to have a minimum UTR of 6.50 to play in Boys 14&u
  - b. Boys 14&u need to have a minimum UTR of 7.50 to play in Boys Junior Open
  - c. Girls 12&u need to have a minimum UTR of 5.00 to play in Girls 14&u

- d. Girls 14&u need to have a minimum UTR of 6.00 to play Girls Junior Open
- 8. Each team entered must consist of a minimum of four players.
- 9. Associations must nominate a 'home base' for each team at the commencement of the season, which must be a club within their Association unless extenuating circumstances have been approved by Tennis Victoria. A minimum of two courts must be supplied per week.
- 10. All associations participating in the Associations Junior Pennant competition must be affiliated to Tennis Victoria.
- 11. Players must be of age as of 22 March 2026.
- 12. Associations must nominate one Team Manager for each team they nominate. Team Managers will have their contact number and/or email address on the Associations Junior Pennant website and will be the first point of contact for any issues prior to match day (i.e. weather, forfeits) as well as ensuring the smooth running of procedures on match day.

## UTR PLAYING ORDER

- 13. Each team is expected to be aware of their respective UTR Playing Order prior to their upcoming fixture. It is the responsibility of both team managers to confirm the correct team playing order before play commences.
  - a. Players must play in Singles UTR playing order to two digits (or one digit for 12&u players) after the decimal point as displayed on Match Centre at the time of the match, with the highest rated player playing in #1 position and the lowest rated player playing #4.
  - b. Reserve players must not strengthen the team and should be of equivalent or lower UTR than the player they are replacing.
  - c. The player with the highest doubles UTR to two digits (or one digit for 12&u players) after the decimal point as displayed on Match Centre at the time of the match must play in the doubles rubber #1.
  - d. The highest rated doubles player may play doubles with any other team player. The remaining two doubles players can play in the doubles rubber #2.
  - e. If two or more players display the same UTR on Match Centre, their ratings can be considered as equal, and the team can determine their playing order relative to each other.
  - f. Any player with a rating only displaying one digit after the decimal that is playing in a team with players with ratings to two digits will be considered to have a rating of x.x0 for purposes of playing order. Example 5.6 rated player would be considered to have a rating of 5.60.

## EMERGENCIES

- 14. Emergencies may not strengthen a team, except in A grade divisions, and should be of equivalent or lower UTR than the nominated player they are replacing in that match. Emergency players cannot have a singles UTR higher than the player they are replacing.
  - a. In A grade divisions, an emergency player can strengthen a team but must play in UTR order.

15. Any team not playing correct UTR order as of the time of the match shall lose any singles rubbers where the player has played out UTR playing order.
16. Any player nominated in a team may not play as an emergency in a lower grade team. No player, having played three times in a team, is eligible to play in an equivalent or lower team.
17. If an association has more than one team in a grade, nominated or emergency players can play with both teams through the home and away season. Once they have played three matches with one team, they are tied to that team. If an emergency player plays three matches, they are eligible to play in finals.

## MATCHES

18. Each match must consist of a minimum of four and a maximum of eight players.
19. Tennis balls which are nationally approved will be adopted by Tennis Victoria for the Associations Junior Pennant competition. At a minimum, eight new balls must be provided by the home team for each match, however twelve new balls can be utilised to ensure each rubber utilises fresh balls.
20. Tennis Australia's Code of Behaviour, National Extreme Weather Policy and Member Protection By-law will apply to all matches.
21. No alterations can be made to the place, date or time of a match, without the approval of Tennis Victoria.
22. All doubles rubbers are to be played first, followed by the singles rubbers. The away team has choice of first singles rubber, the home team has second choice, away third, home team fourth.
  - a. Singles can be played first, but this must be at the agreement of both teams.
23. Matches must be played across a minimum of two courts. Up to four courts may be used for a match, but this requires mutual agreement from both team representatives.
24. Matches cannot change surfaces once commenced unless mutual agreement is reached by both teams. During finals, this decision is at the Referees discretion (if one is present).
25. Each team must record singles players in their UTR singles order and doubles pairings on the score sheet prior to the commencement of play.
26. Each match will consist of two doubles and four singles rubbers. Doubles rubbers are to be an eight(8) game pro-set at eight(8) games all a seven(7)-point tie-break will be played). Singles rubbers are to be the best of two(2) tie-break sets. At six(6) games all (in any set) a seven(7)-point tie-break will be played. At one(1) set all, a match tie-break (10-point tie-break) will be played.
27. Home and away matches must cease at the times listed below, with any game in progress to be completed unless both teams agree to continue play.
  - a. 8.30am matches will cease at 1pm
  - b. 1.00pm matches will cease at 5pm
28. Wash-outs and unfinished matches (without a result) will be a draw in home and away matches.
29. If one team has an unassailable lead in an unfinished match, they will be awarded the full match points. Otherwise, the points will be shared.
30. The winner of each match shall be decided by the number of rubbers won and, if equal, then by the number of sets won and, if equal, then the number of games won. A match tiebreak will not count as a set or a game and will only decide the winner of the specific rubber.

31. Four points shall be awarded to the team that wins the overall match and two points will be awarded to each team when the match is a draw. Each set in singles will be worth one point, with an additional point being awarded for a straight set win (three points total on offer for each singles rubber), and two points will be awarded for each doubles set won. Teams without the full four players will still be eligible to win the match points.
32. Food and drink are to be provided by the home team after the match.
33. Match results must be recorded online at [matchcentre.tennis.com.au/dashboard](http://matchcentre.tennis.com.au/dashboard) by the home team no later than 9.00am on the Monday following each match. In the event of a draw, wash-out or walkover, the home team must still record the result online.

## ATTENDANCE AND NO-SHOW PROVISIONS, AND FORFEITED/RETIRED RUBBERS

34. Matches will commence at the time as published on Match Centre, with all players of each team to be in attendance.
35. For all matches, if at least three members of a team are not present 30 minutes after the original start time, then the match will be forfeited.
36. If there are not four players available and present 15 minutes after the start time for doubles rubbers, then the offending team must forfeit one doubles rubber. If there are two or three players present, the other doubles rubber can still be played.
37. If there are fewer than four players on site 15 minutes after the start time, any singles rubbers that can be played should do so in addition to the available doubles rubber. If, at the conclusion of all singles rubbers, the missing player is still not present, that singles rubber is then forfeited.
38. Where a team elects to play a rubber that may be awarded to them as a default because of an opposing player's late arrival, once the relevant rubber has commenced (1 point played) that team may not subsequently claim that rubber as a default for punctuality reasons.
39. If a team only has three players in attendance, one doubles rubber and one singles rubber should be forfeited. The position forfeited should correspond to the UTR of the highest rated base player from the team not playing in that match. The team can still compete in the other rubbers and potentially win the overall match points.
40. A rubber forfeited by a team for any reason (i.e. punctuality, injury) without the rubber commencing should be marked as 'Home Team Forfeited' or 'Away Team Forfeited', without any scores being entered for that rubber. The rubber sets and games will be added to the teams tally through Match Centre automatically.
41. A rubber halted due to injury should be entered in Match Centre exactly as it was when the rubber stopped, and marked 'Home Team Retired' or 'Away Team Retired'. The rubber, sets and games will be added to the teams tally through Match Centre automatically.

## WET WEATHER PROCEDURE

42. The Wet Weather Procedure is as follows:

- a. In the event that a match cannot commence or continue by reason of inclement weather, unless the Team Managers of both teams mutually agree to reduce or extend the time, the match shall be abandoned after the expiration of any one continuous period of delay of sixty minutes(60) after the original start time, or from the time that play was interrupted.
  - b. Teams should make every effort to play a match. Teams found to have displayed less than a best effort to dry courts and play matches may be liable to a match forfeit.
  - c. A rubber halted due to inclement weather should be entered in Match Centre exactly as it was when the rubber stopped and marked 'Washout' or 'Heat out'. Any sets still in progress will have points shared.
43. The Abandoned Washout Procedure is as follows:
- a. In the event of inclement weather, the Team Manager of the home team or a nominated Association representative can agree with the visiting Team Manager or nominated Association representative to declare the match a wash out without any member of either team having to turn up to the match site. This agreement can be made at any time within 24 hours of the Commencement time for the match. Teams should always endeavour to play matches wherever possible, and this should only be done in the event of a high volume of rain or extreme heat being forecast for the morning of the match.
  - b. In the event of this type of washout, the visiting Team Manager or nominated Association representative must provide the home Team Manager or nominated Association representatives with the names of his/her nominated team members for the match within 24 hours of the match being called a wash-out. This can be done via telephone, email or SMS text.
  - c. If mutual agreement between the Team Managers or between the nominated Association representatives is not attained prior to 30 minutes after original start time, the match will proceed as scheduled.
44. For Grand Final matches where a delay occurs because of adverse weather conditions after the commencement of play, the match shall be abandoned by both teams after a continuous period of 90 minutes and the match will be pushed back and played on the Emergency Grand Final weekend.
45. In the case of adverse weather conditions during the Emergency Grand Final, the first-place team will be declared the winner.

## FINALS

46. Players must have participated in three matches in the respective team to be eligible to participate in a Grand Final. Prior permission from Tennis Victoria is required on a case-by-case basis for any participants not meeting these requirements to participate in a Grand Final.
47. The total number of points awarded per team determines ladder positions, with the Grand Final being played between the top two teams in each section.
48. In the event that two or more teams are equal on points at the end of the season, the tie will be broken by the number of matches won, and if still equal, percentage of rubbers won, and if still equal, by the percentage of sets won, and if still equal by the percentage of games won.
49. Grand Finals will be played at venues determined by Tennis Victoria.
50. Teams for finals matches may consist of a minimum of four and a maximum of eight eligible players.
51. Tennis Victoria will have full authority to investigate and make a final determination regarding the outcome or rescheduling of all or part of the team match.

Whether a grand final is forfeited is a matter for Tennis Victoria alone to decide.

52. Should there be a tie in a Grand Final, after a five minute warm-up, the nominated doubles pairs from each team shall each play a standard seven point tie-break. (pair 1 v pair 1, pair 2 v pair 2). If tied at one tie-break all, a count-back on points shall be used. Should there still be a tie, this process shall be repeated until a result is gained.
53. Finals will be played without a pre-determined finish time.

## INTERPRETATION OF RULES & CONDITIONS OF PLAY

54. Any question arising from or in connection with AJP or as to the interpretation or construction of these Rules and Conditions of Play shall be determined by Tennis Victoria in its absolute discretion.

## CODE OF BEHAVIOUR: COMPETITIVE PLAY

55. 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)
56. Any alleged breaches of the Code should be reported by filling out and lodging the [Tennis Victoria Competition Code of Behaviour Report](#) by 5pm Tuesday following the match in which the incident took place.
57. Tennis Victoria management may meet on a weekly basis to consider any alleged breaches of the Code. Tennis Victoria management will consider any reports/complaints, then determine, with regard to all the material provided to it, if a breach of the Code or the Tennis Victoria Associations Junior Pennant Rules has occurred and consider appropriate penalties in accordance with clause 60 of these Rules.
58. 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.

## PROTESTS

59. Any association shall have the right to protest as a result of any matter or thing arising during or after a match. Where possible "Match Played Under Protest" shall be recorded on the score sheet when the score sheet is signed by both team representatives. All protests must be lodged by the association, in writing, on association letterhead, containing full particulars of such protest to Tennis Victoria by 5pm on the Tuesday after the match to which the protest relates. Upon lodgement of a protest, Tennis Victoria shall immediately provide the other association with a copy of the protest and give that association an opportunity to lodge a response to the protest by 5pm on the Wednesday after the match to which the protest relates. Tennis Victoria shall consider the protest and any responses to the protest and make its determination. Tennis Victoria will notify both associations having an interest in such protest of its determination.
60. If an Association wishes to lodge an appeal, the appeal must be lodged to Tennis Victoria, by 5:00pm two days from the day the notification of a determination was given. Appeals shall be heard as soon as practicable by an Appeals Tribunal consisting of three members who shall consider the appeal and notify clubs and players of its determination.

## PENALTIES

61. Tennis Victoria management may impose penalties for any breach(es) of the Tennis Victoria Associations Junior Pennant Competition Rules and/or the Code. Tennis Victoria management 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 Tennis Victoria– include (but are not limited to) suspension from the Tennis Victoria Associations Junior 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.
62. Tennis Victoria management 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.
  - a. Tennis Victoria will request from the AJP Coordinator of the first-mentioned team an explanation as to why at least two members of that team were not present at the relevant time; and
  - b. if Tennis Victoria is satisfied with the explanation given by the AJP Coordinator of the first-mentioned team, then it will communicate that explanation to the AJP Coordinator of the other team, and inform the AJP Coordinator of each of the teams that the start time of the grand final will be altered to a time on the same day, or on the reserve day, to be fixed by Tennis Victoria, having regard to the particular circumstances that have led to at least two members of the team not being present at the relevant time; but
  - c. if Tennis Victoria is not satisfied with the explanation given by the AJP Coordinator of the first-mentioned team, then it will inform the AJP Coordinator of each team that the grand final will be forfeited.