**Halifax Squash League Rules**

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# Overview

The Halifax Squash League (HSL) is a team league that operates out of participating Squash Clubs in the Halifax Region from September to May each year (six sessions). It is open to players who are a **competitive** member of Squash NS, belong to a participating club and have a Club Locker (CL) rating of 3.75 or less (subject to review). Session one is an exhibition and warmup round and sessions two through five contribute to crowning division champions. The number of teams that can participate from a club is based on the number of courts they can contribute. League matches are scheduled on Wednesday evenings in either an early (7-8:30pm) or a late (8:30 – 10pm) time slot at participating clubs. Cost is $40 per player per year, with a discount of $10 to those who have a Club or higher officiating certification. Spares can register for $5 for the season.

Clubs enter teams composed of 5 players. Four of the five players on a team play each week. Players are assigned to teams by their club based on their CL rating with the top five being placed into the first team from the club, the next five into the next one and so on. The teams are placed into four team divisions, initially based on cumulative rating and then based on performance. Each team then plays each other twice in a six-week session. At the end of each session the top team in a division is promoted to the next higher division and the bottom team in a division is relegated to the next lower division. At the end of every session, players’ placements within teams are also adjusted to ensure that this condition continues to be met. For example: a player whose ranking has improved may move into a team in a higher division. This repeats for a total of six sessions. Essentially teams move up and down between divisions based on performance in each session and players move between teams, in each session, based on their individual ratings. At the end of the competitive season (sessions 2-6) the top team in each division is declared the division champion.

There is an active social element to the league. Players routinely gather after play at Freeman’s on Quinpool Road and the league organizes one or more league parties with at least one being the year-end party.

Matches are player refereed by players waiting to play their matches. Players are strongly encouraged to complete the Squash Canada Online officiating course <https://www.coursepark.com/squashcanada>. Players are also encouraged to attend an in-person certification clinic. Certified referees get a discount on league fees.

# League Organization and Management

The League is managed by a League Convenor and supported by a League Social Organizer, Club Convenors and Team Captains. The league is sanctioned by Squash NS and is governed by Squash NS policies and regulations, available here. <https://nssquash.ca/policies-and-regulations/>. Complaints and reports of infractions should be reported to the League and Club conveners in writing, who will address the issue following the appropriate policy. The league convenor sets the schedule for each session and presides over the HSL Discipline and Complaints committee. Team captains will be designated in Club Locker at the beginning of each session as will the team membership to support contacting players. A general contact list will also be maintained.

# Club Participation and Team Management

To participate in the HSL a Club must designate a HSL Convenor and provide courts for league play. Clubs can enter two teams for every two courts they contribute to a league time slot for the season. For example a club that can provide two courts in each of the early and late league time slot can enter four teams in the league. To encourage the broadest participation by clubs and players, a club can apply to the league to enter two teams if they can provide a court in both the early and late time slot for the season.

## Club Convenor Responsibilities

* Maintaining a list of the team captains and their contact information for each of their club’s teams;
* Informing the HSL Convenor any time a team captain is changed throughout the season;
* Ensuring that home courts are booked each week for the entire session;
* Following up with any teams from their club who have not submitted results via the online entry form on a given week;
* Acting as a conduit for the passage of information to and from their HSL teams and the HSL Convenor;
* Participating in the HSL discipline and complaints process.
* Letting the HSL Convenor know how many teams and courts they are contributing to the league.
* Allocating players to teams based on CL ratings each session.

## Team Building

Teams are composed of five players, four of whom play each week of a six-week session. Exceptionally, a team can have only four players. Clubs build teams by taking registered players from their club roster and populating their teams in strength order. For example, the Fictional Club which has two teams in the league would be able to register 8-10 players. Fictional 1 would have the top 4 or 5 registered players from the Fictional club entered in it based on CL rating and Fictional 2 would have the remaining players in it. These two teams would then play in the divisions their rankings dictate. Team composition is adjusted every session based on individual player changes in CL rating.

## Team Management

### Team members play in decreasing Strength order

Prior to each weekly, match team captains are to populate their roster for the match by slotting their players in decreasing strength order based on current CL ratings.

### Injuries/Illness

Players may "play down" within their team in the event of illness or injury as long as other players do not "play up" by MORE than one position. i.e.: Player #1 may play at position #4 if they are injured or sick (to avoid default), but players 2 to 4 would only shift up one playing position. Such playing down by a normal #1 player can only be done in the event of a true injury or illness.

### Spares

Spares can come from within a 5-player team, from the club waiting list or from another club’s waiting list. ***A player can only play for one team in any given week.***  Spares must be in at the appropriate level for the team they are sparing for. If too good they should be put into a higher-level team for that club and other players pushed down to the fill lower spots. Sparing may not be used for the sole purpose of strengthening a team when a regular player is otherwise available. Examples:

* Non-playing team members can spare up or down between teams however, strength of sparing requirements must be factored in. For example: If a club has 2 teams of 6 players and on a given night only 3 players in the upper team are available then the best available player from the lower team would move up to spare on the upper team preserving strength order. Normally only one player should move up or down between teams when sparing within the same club. If two or more players need to be routinely shifted, a club should re-evaluate the viability of its club teams.
* Independent spares (players not assigned to a particular team) may also be used as needed. Spares are to play at a level that best matches their play level and sparing should match the team they are subbing for. If the only available spare is too strong or too weak to sub for a team, then the spare should be best fit into the overall club strength. For example: Say a club has 3 teams and the lowest team needs a spare. If only one very talented spare is available the spare should be fit into the upper team (matching his/her strength) and other players would be trickled down to lower teams with the lowest available player dropping down between teams to play on lower teams.

### Team Captains and Responsibilities

Each individual team must have a designated Team Captain. If the regular Team Captain is unable to play or be present, another member of the team must be appointed to act as the Team Captain. Responsibilities include:

* Ensuring that four players are ready and able to play for each league match (including securing spares or rescheduling matches).
* Entering the player roster for that week’s matches into Club Locker for positions 1 to 4 based on current decreasing CL strength order.
* Providing score sheets for home matches.
* Contacting the opposing team captain in advance to discuss all matters pertaining to the match (i.e., rescheduled matches).
* Confirming that rescheduled matches are completed by Saturday at 10pm.
* Ensuring everything runs smoothly.
* The Home team captain is responsible for entering the match results into CL by no later than 10pm on Saturday of each week. Unless the opposing team asks to reschedule a match, in which case the team making the request is responsible for entering the match scores. Please enter match results as soon as possible.
* Failure to enter results will result in a 0 score for both teams for that week.

# Individual Eligibility and Registration

To be eligible to play:

* A player must be a **competitive** member in good standing of Squash NS.
* Have an account in the Squash membership management software system, CL.
* Have a CL rating of less than (3.7500 or 4.00 TBC).
* Belong to a participating club.

Registration is through Club Locker and usually opens in August. Both Squash NS and your Club Convenor will communicate registration information when it becomes available.

Club registration caps are based on the number of courts provided to the league. Waiting lists will be maintained for each club, which will act as their spare pool. Every effort will be made to ensure players are assigned to a team, this may include inter-club transfer of players.

# League Play and Scoring

* A weekly encounter is a four-player match against an opposing team in the same division in either the early or late time slot.
* Prior to the match, team captains are to populate their roster for the match by slotting their players in decreasing strength order based on their CL ratings at the time the roster is set.
* Games are to start on time. A 15-minute grace period is applied to no shows after which the player defaults. Defaults result in a 5-point penalty per player. If necessary matches are to be rescheduled beforehand to prevent unnecessary travel.
* Matches are PAR 11 best 3/5 games.
	+ Matches are player officiated. The home team is responsible for providing refs for the first matches. Winners are to referee the next match assisted by their opponent as Marker. This is to help develop refereeing experience and competencies in league players.
* Team Scoring is as follows:
	+ The match winner receives 5 points, and the match loser receives 1 point per game won plus 1. So a 3-2 win would contribute 5 and 3 points respectively to their respective team totals.
	+ The winner is determined by the highest point total.
	+ In the event of a team tie, the game scores are totaled, and the team with the highest total is the winner.

# Team Standings and Movement

## Session standings

Team standings are based on performance (standing) within the session. Team standings are used to determine team promotion/relegation each session. In the event of a tie, the head to head result between the two teams is the tie break. In each division, the top team moves up a division and the bottom team moves down a division at the end of a session.

## Overall Standings

Team standings in session 2-6 are used to determine overall league standings. At the end of each session the team is awarded the points corresponding to their rank in the league, and this is added to their total. At the end of the year, the teams are ordered by their accumulated points and the first, fifth, 9th etc teams are declared division winners.

# Code of Conduct and Discipline

## Conduct and Discipline

The Squash NS Code of Conduct Applies to HSL. Teams and players are reminded to be good sports and respect, each other, officials, volunteers and spectators. Verbal or physical abuse, intimidation and unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated and could lead to expulsion from the HSL. Complaints will be dealt with by the Discipline Committee consisting of the Club and HSL Convenors.

## Defaults

Players who default three times will be suspended for the remainder of the season. Teams who register three defaults during a season may be suspended from further play during that season.

# Social

Players are encouraged to gather after matches. The league will organize at least a year-end party and may organize other social events.