



Arizona Pickleball League™ - “Rules of the Road”

1) The Ethos

- **Rule #1:** Compete with dignity.
- **Rule #2:** Put on a good show.
- **Rule #3:** See Rule #1.

2) What matters

Integrity, skill, *and* showmanship. All of them, in that order. This is a “meritocracy.” As the founders of the League, Patrick & Ashley care as much about Season 1, as we care about *getting to* Season 20. So we practice the “**The No Asshole Rule**” (see [Dr. Sutton's book](#) for explanation.)

3) Role of The Commissioner / Dismissal from The League

The “Commissioner” of the Arizona Pickleball League (“AZ PBL” or “the League”) is appointed by the League, and at the sole discretion of the Commissioner, a player, GM, or Assistant Coach may be removed from participating in the League, with or without cause.

4) Role of the General Managers

The League has appointed a General Manager (GM) to each team. GMs are responsible for managing their team, and ensuring all players follow the “Ethos” of The League. Additionally, each GM will designate one player on their team to be the team captain.

5) Free Agency & Waiver Wire

GMs have the authority to A) “cut” a player from their team, B) trade a player, C) pick up new players from Free Agency / the Waiver Wire. All cuts, trades, and pick-ups must be approved by the Commissioner, and approval will not be unreasonably withheld. Players can only be traded once during the course of a season. Three-way trades (aka. “package deals”) are not permitted in Season 1, but will be considered in future Seasons. A player who is “cut” by a team is eligible to apply for Free Agency / the Waiver Wire.

6) Player Non-Exclusivity

Players may play in any other amateur and/or professional pickleball events (PPA, APP, MLP, etc.), so long as it does not conflict with an AZ PBL match that was scheduled prior, as published on [ArizonaPBL.com](#).

7) Injured Reserve

If, for any reason, a player is unable to compete in a match, that player will inform their team's GM in writing at the earliest possible moment. (Text messages are sufficient.) The GM will inform the Commissioner, and place that player on the "IR" for that match, or matches, and then select a player from Free Agency, with final approval granted by The Commissioner, not to be unreasonably withheld. The player on "IR" will not receive a "game check" (as defined in the Individual Contractor Agreement - Player Template) because their "alternate" will receive a game check instead.

8) Alternates

Based on "**the show must go on**" principle, the League will provide 1 male and 1 female "Alternate" for each TNP event in the case of a player "no show" or injury. Alternates will be selected by the Commissioner from the list of Free Agents who have applied for the League. (Alternates will be paid as defined in the Individual Contractor Agreement - Alternates Template.)

9) Setting Mixed Doubles Line-ups / aka. "Co-opetition"

Prior to each match, the GMs and/or team captain will collectively agree upon the "most suitable" line-ups for Mixed Doubles in Quarters 1 & 2. (If there is a dispute, the Commissioner will make the final decision.)

The goal for both teams to field an "intriguing" and "fair" matchup that the fans will enjoy. This is "co-opetition." After all, the slogan of the **Arizona Pickleball League is: Let Us Entertain You™**

10) Sanctioning

The Arizona Pickleball League is the first "team-based league" sanctioned by USA Pickleball (pending). As such, players in the League must be "members in good standing" with USA Pickleball.

11) Men & Women

Biological females will compete as women; biological males will compete as men.

12) League Standings

Teams will be ranked from 1 - 5 based on the following criteria, which was inspired by [MLS Tie-Breaker Rules](#):

- 1) Total number of wins
- 2) Point Differential (PD)
- 3) Points For (PF)
- 4) Rochambeau (Rock, Paper, or Scissors on "shoot".)

For example: If Team A and Team B both have a Win-Loss record 2-2, then the "Point Differential" (the delta in the final score of their matches played) will break the tie. If there is still a tie, then the total number of points scored by each team ("Points For") will be the final tie-breaker. If still tied, then a "Rochambeau" breaks the tie. (Originally, this final tie-breaker was going to be a coin toss, but Danny Jensen suggested Rochambeau, and we all thought that sounded more fun and entertaining... so if your team loses some day, blame Danny. ;-)

13) Season Schedule & Play-Offs

At the conclusion of the regular season (Wed May 17) teams will be seeded for Play-offs based on League Standings. On Tue May 23, the 2 seed will play the 3 seed; on Tue May 30, the 1 seed will play the 4 seed. The winners of those two matches will face off on Tue Jun 6 for The Orchard Championship Cup.

14) Waiver Rules

A GM can pick up a new player from the Waiver Wire, but must also drop a player from their roster, as the maximum team size (not counting an "IR" slot) is 4 players. Waiver priority each week is based on League Standings, the team with the lowest ranking takes priority, then the next lowest team, and so on. During the season, the Waiver Wire runs each Friday at 2pm. The Commissioner will approve all drops and pick-ups, not to be unreasonably withheld.

15) Communication on Team Roster Changes

Changes in a team's roster will be communicated to all GMs in writing (via text message) when they occur.

16) Format of Game Play & Overtime

Instead of the "traditional" Pickleball scoring format (best 2 out of 3 games to 11, win each game by 2), The Orchard Team Scoring Format™ will be used: 4 quarters, cumulative scoring, win by 1, and a game clock.

- A) Each team's points are cumulative throughout the entire match. The team with the most points at the end of 4 quarters (or overtime, if necessary) is the winner of the match. Win by 1.
- B) Points can only be scored on serve, just like traditional scoring. (For the purposes of clarity, this is not "rally scoring." Rally scoring is best for singles, and for beginners.)
- C) Quarters:
 - a) The first quarter is Mixed Doubles
 - b) The second quarter is the *other* Mixed Doubles team
 - c) The third quarter is Women's Doubles
 - d) The fourth quarter is Men's Doubles
 - e) Each subsequent quarter (and overtime period) begins where the previous period ended.
- D) Game Clock:
 - a) Each quarter lasts 15 minutes.
 - b) The game clock runs continuously for 13 minutes unless a team, or the referee, calls a timeout.
 - c) During the last 2 minutes of each quarter, the clock only runs when the ball is in play.

- E) **Over time:** If the match is tied at the end of regulation time, then overtime shall be played: Men's Doubles shall continue for an additional 2:00 minutes (clock runs only when ball is in play). If after those 2 mins, there is still a tie, then Women's Doubles shall be played (and again, the clock only runs when the ball is in play). If after those 2 mins, there is still a tie, then we switch back to Men's doubles. And so on and so on until there is a winner.
- F) Before the start of each match, the referee will toss a coin, and the winner will choose the side or serve.

Version History

- 1) On Tue Apr 4, created v2 which modified the Overtime format from "16 rallies" to "Extra 2 minutes" format. The reason is that we experimented with the "16 rallies" concept, and it was A) too confusing, and B) too difficult for "cold" players to come back in fresh and play well. So we changed to the new format, now documented in this version of "Rules of the Road."

THE END. :)