

# Rules and guidelines for members 07/08 season

Like any club, we have a few rules which members are expected to observe. We also have a few suggestions that will help you get along with other members, and get the most from your tennis at Cotham Park. Here they are:

## When you arrive

Don't walk across the back of the courts to the clubhouse while a point is in progress or between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> serves. Wait for a break in play.

## Clothing and footwear

Only recognised sports clothing, please. For the good of our courts and your feet, only flat soled tennis shoes are allowed. (Simon Margetts, the racquet stringer, can supply recommended shoes.)

## No smoking in clubhouse

Smoking is not allowed in the clubhouse or on courts. You may only smoke in the area immediately outside the clubhouse (where the chairs are). If you do smoke please be considerate to other members and put your fag ends in the bin.

## Chewing gum

Chewing gum is not allowed on courts or in the clubhouse.

## Changing

Please use the changing rooms, not the clubhouse. If you're concerned about keys and other valuables, take them onto court with you.

## Balls

Balls are kept in the tray in the clubhouse. Please take only three balls on court and return them when finished. Balls are supplied for Club Play only. Practice balls are kept in a basket. Juniors are to use the practice balls when they play.

## Playing times

For full details of when courts are reserved for specific purposes, see the booking sheets on the clubhouse notice-board.

## Booking courts

At times when courts can be booked (see playing timetable for our courts and courts at Redland High School) please use the booking sheets that are on the notice-board just inside the door on the left.

Courts may be booked for a maximum of two hours. When you have to cancel a booking please remove your name from the booking sheet. If a booked court is not occupied within 15 minutes of the time it has been booked for then the booking will be considered cancelled.

## Club play - doubles

### Evenings

Monday - competitive play. We recommend that players have a rating of 9.1 or better.

Tuesday - all welcome.

Wednesday - league standard. League training and practice prior to summer league and during summer league.

Thursday - beginners and drill sessions.

Friday - singles except during summer league.

### Afternoons

Monday and Saturday - all welcome.

## Rules governing Club Play

Write your name below the last name on the board when you arrive, and at the end of a set. Winners' names go on the board first.

The person whose name is at the top of the board chooses three others from the top eight. Those whose names are already on the board must be chosen before consideration is given to those coming off court whose names are not yet on the board.

If the top five names include two or more men and two or more women then a Mixed Doubles set must be selected. If the top five names include only one man or woman then a three and a one or a same gender set must be selected.

Please start playing immediately a four is available and a court is free. The only reason for delay is if a set is about to finish and there is a need to mix up players.

Warm up for two minutes and then play a short set - first to six games.

When your set is finished, leave three balls by the net. If you want to play again, the winners' names should be written on the board first.

## End of session

Please wind down nets and return club balls to the tray, practice balls to the basket. Take any glasses back to the Clubhouse and clean them. Remove any rubbish and dispose of it.

## Locking up

If you're the last to leave (day or night), please ensure that all three clubhouse doors and the gate are locked.

## Visitors

The visitor's fee is £3 for adults and £1 for juniors. If you have a visitor, please sign the visitors list on the notice-board, and put the money in the box (limited to 6 visits per visitor per year).

If you have a visitor who wants to play during club times, please talk to a committee member.

## Car parking

The club has equal rights with Living Well and Arrow Bowling to use the car park on a 'first come first served basis'. Please do not park on the double yellow lines.

## Care of courts 3 and 4

After each set the courts MUST be dragged and the lines swept. Drag the court in a spiral starting at the outside and finishing in the middle. When you get to the middle lift up the mat to remove the sand that has collected on it. If this leaves a small pile of sand then just go over it with the mat to level it out. Dragging the courts in the above manner will reduce the amount of sand being removed from the courts. This will then maintain the playing characteristics of the court and ensure that the binder layer does not get worn. The court is designed to play like a clay court and this is only possible with the correct levels of infill. If the court is used when the fibres are exposed they can be permanently damaged causing the base to compact and harden. This will then cause a loss of drainage and the slide consistency will also be affected. The life of the courts will then be shortened.

## Retrieving Balls

Avoid wasting time collecting balls between points. If your opponent has to walk a significant distance to get a ball, look around your side to see if you can use that time to collect a ball that is a similar distance away.

The server should always make sure they have two balls at the start of each point. We strongly advise wearing tennis clothing with pockets or a ball clip for keeping the second ball. It is best not to play with a ball in your hand. Never leave your second ball by your feet it is dangerous!

## Calls

You may make calls on your side of the net only. Make sure your opponents hear your call.

No matter how obvious it is to a player that the opponent's ball is out, the opponent is entitled to a prompt audible out call. If the ball is good say nothing and play on. Always give your opponents the benefit of any doubt.

## If you are not sure if your opponent's shot is in or out, it is in!

You should not call balls wide when they land near the far sideline (because you do not have a good enough view) unless the call is obvious and your partner was somehow hindered from seeing the ball land. If you are the receiver and your partner is on or near the service line at the start of a point, your partner has the best view of whether a serve is in or long. You can make a call if they don't, but always defer to their judgement. You generally should not disagree with your partner's calls anyway unless they have made a very clear mistake. Always respect your opponent's calls. Except in the case of a first service, if you see that your shot was out and your opponent plays on stop and concede the point. You or your partner must never call your own first service out, this has to be left to your opponent who may choose to play, giving you the benefit of any doubt.

Balls are often called out when they land on the outer edge of the line, this is wrong! The rule is that the whole ball must land outside the line to be called OUT.

## If a ball is 99% out it is 100% good!

When a player genuinely doubts an opponent's call, the player may ask: "Are you sure of your call?" If the opponent reaffirms that the ball was out, the call shall be accepted. If the opponent acknowledges uncertainty, the opponent loses the point. There shall be no further delay or discussion.

If the point is interrupted (often by a stray ball from a neighbouring court) and you wish to call for a let, do so immediately and raise your hand, otherwise play on. You cannot claim a let after the point has been lost!

Call and agree the game score at the start of each point and the set score at the start of each game. The server should take responsibility for calling the score clearly.

## Choosing a four

When you are a new member picking a suitable four can seem a little daunting - don't be afraid to ask for help! It is generally good etiquette to pick the players who have been waiting the longest but also try to pick an even set. For example it is not normally a very good idea to mix very strong players and very weak players - neither will thank you for it! However if you have two strong players and a weak player try to choose another fairly weak player to even it out. We normally pair the strongest with the weakest to make the set as even and therefore as competitive as possible. If your four has just come off court and there is no one waiting in the queue it can be a good idea to wait if another set is about to finish so that players can be mixed up a bit and you do not end up playing with the same three all afternoon.

## Rules & Useful Information

The Code of Tennis gives a guide to default behaviour for all unofficiated matches on matters that are not covered by The Rules of Tennis such as line calls, interrupted points etc.

There is a copy of the Code of Tennis in the Club Rules folder in the Clubhouse as well as the LTA handbook.

That's it. Enjoy your tennis!