



CPL RULES GUIDE 2024

INTRODUCTION

Cary Pickleball League (“CPL”) is an innovative team competition where teams compete against each other over the course of several matches using Rules adapted from (Major League Play Rules or MLPlay™ Rules) that encompass a novel and friendly format, with twists on traditional matchups and scoring for Games, Matches, and Tiebreakers.

Teams compete against each other in Matches. A Match consists of six Games, starting with one women’s doubles Game, one men’s doubles Game, and then four mixed doubles Games. If two teams are tied after these six games, an innovative tiebreaker known as the “DreamCrusher” is played, with a rotational system involving four players from each team (2 Women and 2 Men).

TEAMS AND CAPTAINS

NUMBER OF TEAMS

The 2024 season will consist of 7 teams unless an 8th is located. After the pre-season, we will divide the league into groups of four based on skill and wins/losses during pre-season. These divisions will be “Dink” & “Drive”. Should we only have 7 teams, each team will play every team once.

CAPTAINS

All teams must designate a Team Captain, who will be responsible for various captain duties including communicating with CPL officials regarding scheduling, mixed doubles team designations, and singles Tiebreaker rotations (see below). The Team Captain may be a non-player and must be present for all Matches. If a Team Captain is unable to fulfill his/her duties, the Team must designate a substitute captain. During the event, all communications related to the rules of the competition must come from the Team Captain only and are to be addressed



by PRCR or whom they designate with that authority. Any interpretation by anyone other than PRCR or the designated representative(s) will not be an official CPL stance on the rules.

Captains will be responsible for determining who plays in each match. Captains will determine: (Women's Doubles team, Men's Doubles team, 4 Mixed Doubles teams, and which 4 players will compete in the DreamCrusher if needed).

TEAM NAMES

Team owners must submit a name for their teams, which must be approved by CPL. Team owners are responsible for ensuring that their team names, logos, and any other branding used by the team do not violate the intellectual property rights of any third party and are appropriate for Cary's Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Department (PRCR). Do not use foul, sexually explicit, alcohol, drug-based language, or naming which is intended to confuse schedules/brackets (ex. BYE) in your team's name. Should you choose to have a team logo, it must also be approved by PRCR.

TEAM UNIFORMS

All players competing in matches must have matching uniforms. No players may wear any inappropriate patches, logos, or branding. CPL reserves the right to forfeit matches should a team fail to cooperate with the requirement to wear a team uniform.

PLAYERS AND SKILL LEVEL

Teams may consist of 4 women and 4 men players.

A minimum of 2 Women and 2 Men are required each night. (6:45 p.m. and 8:15 p.m. are forfeit times.) Players must be at least 18 years of age.



Our goal is to host a competitive and balanced league. This league is intended for players with a USAPA/DUPR ranking of 3.5 or higher.

The definition of a 3.5 player is: **(Owners, please make sure your team can consistently execute the following)**

FOREHAND: Improved stroke development with a moderate level of shot control.

BACKHAND: Learning stroke form and starting to develop consistency but will avoid it if possible.

SERVE / RETURN: Consistently gets serve/return in play with limited ability to control depth.

DINK: Increased consistency, with limited ability to control height/depth. Sustains medium-length rallies. Starting to understand variations of pace.

3RD SHOT: Develop the drop shot in a way to get to the net.

VOLLEY: Can volley medium-paced shots thereby developing control.

STRATEGY: Moves quickly towards the non-volley zone (NVZ) when the opportunity is there. Acknowledges the difference between the hard game and soft game and is starting to vary their own game during recreation and tournament play. Can sustain short rallies. Is learning proper court positioning.

THE SEASON AND COMPETITIONS

DATES & LOCATION

Games will be held on Mondays at the Cary Tennis Park. Your team will play either the 6:45 p.m. or 8:15 p.m. match. The pre-season will begin March 11th and the regular season will run from April 8th through June 3rd, 2024. This may extend should we have weather cancelations.



FLIGHTING

Our goal is to have 8 teams. If we are successful at finding these 8 teams we will divide the league to make the league as balanced as possible. We will play the first 3 weeks of the season to see which teams are rising to the top and which teams are falling behind. We will take the top 4 teams and bottom 4 teams after the 3 weeks and place them into their respective divisions (Dinks & Drives). The season will follow with 6 rounds and a seeded bracket tournament.

If we only have 7 teams, we will play everyone in the league once and then use the season record to seed the single elimination tournament.

WARMUP

A 15-minute warmup time will be allocated each night before the first match.
6:45 pm. – 7:00 p.m. & 8:15 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Lineups

This season we are moving away from the coin toss. We will use the schedule to determine HOME and AWAY. The following is how we will submit lineups.

HOME: The Home team will get to see the AWAY team's lineup first and then set their lineup accordingly.

AWAY: The Away team must declare the mixed doubles teams first but gets to see the HOME team's lineup for the DreamCrusher. The AWAY team will select which side of the court they would like to begin the match on.

SEASON FORMAT MATCHES

For 2024, it is anticipated that each Match will consist of six Games to 21 (win by 2) with modified RALLY scoring (Every error is a point). The six Games will be played in the following order: women's doubles & men's doubles followed by four



mixed doubles. A singles tiebreaker (“DreamCrusher”) will be played to determine the winner of the Match if teams are tied at 3-3 in the Games.

SETS

For 2024, each Match will consist of one: Women’s Doubles, Men’s Doubles, and 4 Mixed Doubles, and each game will be played for 21 points. The goal each night is to win as many matches as possible.

GAMES

For 2024, each Game will be played with modified RALLY scoring (Every error is a point) to 21 points (win by 2). Players will change ends when one team reaches the score of 11. Rally scoring will be played until a team reaches 20, at which time the team reaching 20 is subject to a freeze on rally scoring and must score all future points while serving. If the trailing team reaches 18, that team too will be subject to a freeze on rally scoring and must score all future points while serving. If both teams are tied 19-19, then both teams are immediately frozen when it becomes 20-19. All Games must be won by 2 points. Simply put, you must earn your final points.

PLAYER CHANGE OF SIDE/SERVE

During rally, scoring players do not switch sides after winning points. Player A for each team serves and receives on the right side when the score is even, and Player B serves and receives on the left side when the score is odd. A team may choose to switch player sides during time-outs or end change.

If your team decides to switch sides, you must inform the opponents you are switching prior to the game resuming.

PLAYER INITIATED TIME-OUTS

Teams will each be allotted 1 time-out per Game (up to 1 minute per time-out).



INJURY/OTHER TIME-OUTS

Additional time-outs may be called by CPL, to address equipment issues, or for any other reason deemed necessary by CPL or PRCR. The number of time-outs is subject to change. Time-outs may also be called for player or fan injuries. Player injury time-outs may not exceed ten minutes, and the length of non-player time-out shall be kept to a minimum but determined at the discretion of the CPL or PRCR. If an alternate is subbed into a Match for any reason, that alternate is now in that Match for the remainder of the event. The injured player may not play in any additional games that night.

OFFICIAL BALL

A USAPA Approved ball in OPTIC YELLOW/GREEN will be the Official Ball of the Cary Pickleball League for 2024.

REFEREES

Referees will NOT be provided for all Games. Players may call NVZ faults and service foot faults on the opponent's side of the court. If there is any disagreement among players about the called fault, a replay shall occur.

**Please note the rule update on "Wrong Score Called": The rules concerning what happens if the wrong score is called by a player or a referee have changed. If a player thinks a wrong score has been called, a player may stop play to ask for a correction before the ball is served. If it has been served, the rally is to be played out and the score correction (if any) is made before the next serve occurs.

One lead referee will be provided during tournament play.

OTHER COMPETITION RULES

Except for the rules listed below, all rules of the CPL Competition are governed by the most current rules of USA Pickleball.

Exceptions to this are as follows: 1) Rally Scoring 2) Coaching is allowed during play 3) One time out per game 4) Lineup process and AWAY team will select their starting side of the court. 5) "DreamCrusher" Tiebreaker.



DREAMCRUSHER (SINGLES TIEBREAKER) TO DETERMINE THE WINNER

CPL and/or PRCR will determine the format of the tiebreaker to be used if team Matches are tied 3-3 in Games. For 2024, if two teams playing a Match are tied 3-3 after the doubles and mixed doubles Games, a singles DreamCrusher will be played. For 2024, a DreamCrusher is a Game to 21 (win by 2) with modified rally scoring, where each team must rotate its 4 players for 4 singles rallies in a set order until the DreamCrusher is completed. Immediately following the completion of the fourth and final mixed doubles Game, the Home Team will have 1 minute to designate the first player selected in the order of rotation of its 4 singles players for the DreamCrusher to CPL or PRCR. The Home Team's #1 player will be disclosed to the Away Team. The Away Team will then have 1 minute to designate its opposing Player 1 to CPL or PRCR. This process will be repeated until all 4 players on each team are selected. The DreamCrusher will use the same rally scoring used in Games as described above. All team members will rotate in 4-rally rotations until the DreamCrusher is concluded (Player 1 plays 4 rallies, then Player 2 plays 4 rallies, then Player 3 plays 4 rallies, then Player 4 plays 4 rallies, and then the rotation repeats in the same order).

In terms of sides, singles players will serve from the side (left/right) of the court, based on their team score, as is typical in singles. The player will serve on the right side when that player's team score is even, and when the team score is odd, the player on that team will serve from the left side of the court. During the DreamCrusher, each team will be allotted one time-out. Teams will change ends when one team reaches the score of 11 points.

SINGLE ELIMINATION TOURNAMENT

A single elimination bracket will be held at the end of the season. Format for the bracket will follow the same as during the season: (Women's Doubles, Men's Doubles, and 4 Mixed Doubles matches with the DreamCrusher if needed).



SEEDING FOR TOURNAMENT

Seeding for the end-of-season single-elimination tournament will be determined first by total matches won, then points allowed, and then coin toss. Bracket seeding will be: #1 vs #4 and #2 vs #3.

Rain Outs and Cancellations

New for 2024 is RAIN! This season is being played outdoors and Mother Nature does not always cooperate with us. In the event of a cancellation, PRCR will inform the Captains by 3pm on Monday. Should there be a canceled evening, those games will be moved to the end of the regular season. If teams wish to make up their matches on their own, please inform PRCR so we can adjust accordingly.

If there is lightning in the area, all players must return to their vehicles until there is an all clear. If possible, matches will resume. Should a single game be in progress when a cancellation occurs, the game will restart from the beginning at a later date. The matchup between the two teams will resume with the current wins/losses at the time of the cancellation.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT:

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