

As the club grows, the approach to management of the club needs to be reviewed from time to time to adapt to the ever changing dynamics of the club. It is of **prime importance** however, that whatever parameters or rules are adopted, cognisance is taken of what makes the Irene Tennis Club so special. **This must never be compromised.**

The following extract from our mission statement is what makes ITC so special and must always be applied to any rule or management style of the club:

***.....To operate in a friendly, fun and competitive manner in conjunction with the ethics pertaining to the game of "tennis". We strive to encourage family activity.....***

In research done by speaking to clubs that remain successful, vibrant and social, the **one key facet** that ensures members remain happy, loyal and involved in the club, is in the manner in which the teams for leagues are selected.

To this end, the Special Committee appointed by the Special General Meeting have reviewed our current system extensively and have come up with what is believed to be the system that addresses all. The special committee appointed was Clark Coetzee, Alta Smith, Noel Lachenicht, Lynnette Jinks, Adel Rizzo and chaired by Michael Bradfield. This committee appointed Clark Coetzee (Chairman of GNTA) to chair the Special Committee and to assist the committee to implement the challenge system.

We have applied some parameters or rules that will ensure that selection of teams is transparent, simple to understand and consistent in every instance. The members will therefore know exactly in which team they will be playing and at what level. In adopting this method we believe it allows members the necessary flexibility to apply some personal preferences. In so doing, we believe we can maintain the Ethos of the club and keep the Irene spirit intact.

We are also fully aware that adoption may take some time to get used to and may not please everyone initially, but **we ask every member to accept this change in good faith** for the next 12 months and then to provide feedback so that we can fine-tune the rules if necessary.

For the upcoming leagues, the Special Committee will put a ladder together based on a subjective view of players' abilities but the members who played doubles championships will be placed first. Members can challenge within the rules above.

Two Saturdays (10 July and 17 July from 13h30 to 16h00) will be set aside for challenges (Those members who did not play in the championships are encouraged to make themselves available. These challenges will be free challenges – i.e. members may challenge anyone at any level on the ladder. Note that members must inform the person(s) they wish to challenge as per rule 7a under c. Challenge rules .

Other members who did play championships have the same privilege but must arrange these according to the general rules see 4d under c. Challenge rules.

For the upcoming singles championships, a spider draw will be used as decided by the Special Committee.

Your friend in Irene tennis,

The SGM committee

# LEAGUE POLICY and CHALLENGE RULES

## ***a. League Selection Rules :***

- 1) We have adopted a ladder system, one for men and one for women. The league teams are selected ***strictly*** according to the position a member holds on the ladder. This means for doubles leagues, positions 1-6 make up the first team, 7-12 the 2<sup>nd</sup> and so on. For mixed doubles the same rule applies in that the 1<sup>st</sup> four places of the men will play with the women who hold the 1<sup>st</sup> four places on their ladder and so on.
- 2) In the instance where a member is not available for league, in the selection process, everyone is moved up to fill the vacant slot. The person that is not available for league however does not lose their place on the ladder.
- 3) Where a member wishes to play with a specific partner in leagues, one simply applies to the league committee and if accepted the pair can play together in the team where the lowest partner would play. e.g. the man may hold position 12 on the male ladder and therefore would play in say the 4<sup>th</sup> team and the woman holds 2<sup>nd</sup> position on the women's ladder, then because they chose to play together they will play ***as if*** both hold position 12 on their respective ladders therefore in the 4<sup>th</sup> team. The other women on the ladder are simply moved up only for selection purposes and the woman who played down, does not lose her place on the ladder for later selection for other leagues.
- 4) Teams will therefore only change based on the availability of players and by request to play down.
- 5) To play league, one has to hold a position on the ladder. This also alleviates the problem experienced where players join clubs and want to play in the top league but to every other member's disadvantage. Therefore if you are not on the ladder, you are not automatically eligible for league selection.
- 6) To play league one must be a paid up member of the club.

## ***b. Ladder Creation and Management :***

- 1) The point of departure is that the initial ladder is determined by the results of the previous club doubles championships.
- 2) Thereafter, the results of the Singles Club championships will affect the positions on the ladder. E.g. I may hold position 22 on the ladder and I meet a player who holds position 5 in the championships, and I beat the person, at the end of the championships when the ladder is updated I will move in above the number 5 player and he/she will then hold pos 6. If in the later rounds of the championships a player who holds position 12 for instance beats me, they will then take the

position 5 slot, I move down to 6 and the original player 5 is then no. 7 on the ladder.

- 3) Every singles game in the championships will therefore always be deemed a challenge match for positions on the ladder. Doubles and mixed doubles results in the championships do not affect the ladder position..
- 4) In the future there will be back draws in the club championships which allow for more games and for players to improve their positions on the ladder. Championships may thus take longer but offers players the chance to improve their standing.
- 5) IF a member decides they do not want to or cannot enter the championships they will forfeit 4 places on the ladder and can challenge after the championships on a free challenge.
- 6) SOCIAL TENNIS (ON SATURDAYS AND IN THE WEEK) HAS **NO** INFLUENCE ON THE LADDER WHATSOEVER. This keeps the social aspects of the club and ensures that friendliness and the fun aspects of social tennis prevail.
- 7) The only other way to improve one's position on the ladder is to challenge for the position during the year and is subject to the challenge rules as defined hereunder.

### ***c. Challenge Rules:***

- 1) Positions 1 to and including position 8 on the ladder can only be decided by a singles challenge match. This is because the top leagues play singles.
- 2) Challenges for positions 9 and lower can then be decided on either a singles or a doubles challenge. The choice is that of the ***challenger***. The challenged player/players must accept the challenge request. This then sorts out the ladder where players that are stronger doubles players can achieve their rightful ranking for doubles leagues. If the challenged player(s) refuses to accept the challenge, it is reported to the League committee. The league committee will try to resolve the issue. Failing which, the challenged player losing 4 places on the ladder.
- 3) No challenge match may be registered within two weeks of the start of any league. This applies to current and new members.
- 4) Standard challenge rules:
  - a. You may only challenge a maximum of 3 places above your position. (Except for when free challenges are available.)
  - b. After the Club championships every member has one free challenge at any level on the ladder to be played within three months after the

championships are completed. Thereafter the standard challenge rules apply.

- c. New members have (2) two free challenges to be played within 4 months otherwise these are forfeited and the standard rule applies.
  - d. Challenges may take place on any day agreed to by the person(s) involved in the challenge or on a Saturday, but must be completed by 13h30 (none after 13h30 on a club day).
  - e. One can only challenge the same person twice in one year. A minimum of a 2 month gap must exist between the two challenges.
  - f. Once a challenge has been registered according to the process below, the challenger must confirm the date and time with the League committee chairperson within three days of registering the challenge.
  - g. The challenge match can be played on or before the confirmed start time but no later than 15 minutes after the scheduled start time.
  - h. Should a player that has been challenged not arrive for the game timeously, he or she will move down 4 places on the ladder and the challenger then has the right to challenge someone else within the three places above him/her. Only prior notice of illness (with doctor's sick note) or tragedy or unavoidable work-related incidents will allow for a reschedule. The Special Committee reserves the right to assess the legitimacy of the reason provided.
- 5) Singles Challenge Match format:
- a. 2 tie break sets and a third 10 point tie breaker.
  - b. If the challenger wins he/she moves above the loser on the ladder.
  - c. If the challenger loses he/she remains in the current position.
- 6) Doubles Challenge Match format:
- a. The person being challenged cannot be higher than 3 places above the challenger.
  - b. The players, one place above and one below the challenged player, make up the doubles challenge.
  - c. The format is a round robin whereby the challenger plays 9 games with each of the other three players.
  - d. The total games won by each player will determine the log position of all four players. If the challenger has the lowest score then he/she remains in their original position, the other three will move into their positions based on the number of games won.
- 7) Registering a challenge:
- a. Discuss the challenge with the person you want to challenge.
  - b. Fill in the challenge form and register it with the tennis administrator (Ambre).
  - c. Within three days, confirm the date and time you have agreed with the person(s) you are challenging. The date cannot be more than 14 days after the date it was registered.

- d. Once completed, the winner of the challenge match, (in the case of doubles challenge, the one who ends up at the top of the challenge), hands the scores in to the Coach who adjusts the ladder in line with the result.

In fairness to other members of the club and for the selection of teams we encourage and urge members to play social tennis regularly.