

THE PINE LAKES TENNIS ASSOCIATION HANDBOOK

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DEFINITIONS

Associate Member	A player from any other community that becomes a member for the purpose of filling a team vacancy and participating in league tennis through Pine Lakes, but has no voting rights or rights as a resident.
Guest	A visitor to Pine Lakes who resides, during his or her visit, at the house of a resident or a house provided by Pine Lakes management.
Member of Pine the Lakes Tennis Association	A resident or renter who has met the requirements of membership in association as provided by Article IV of the by-laws.
Open Time	All time in which a court sign-up is required rather than individual sign-up. That is, any time after 10:30 am Monday through Sunday.
Owner/Lessor	A person who owns property, either land or a house, at Pine lakes, but who does not fulfill the requirement to qualify as a resident. Such a person cannot be a member of the Pine Lakes Tennis Association. This entity may be a person or persons or even a corporation.
Pine Lakes Tennis Association	A formal, voluntary organization of tennis players at Pine Lakes whose officers are President, who is the chief executive; Vice President; who serves as chief executive when the President cannot serve because of absence or illness; Secretary, who keeps the organization records; Treasurer, who safeguards organization funds.; Officer-at- large, who acts as a liaison between the membership and board.
Renter (Lessee)	A person who rents a house at Pine Lakes.
Resident	A person who regularly lives in his or her own house at Pine Lakes for some part of each year.
Resident, Full Time	A person who regularly lives in his or her own house at Pine Lakes for at least 9 months each year.
Resident, Part Time	Any resident who is not a full time resident.
Summer Season	The period May 1 through October 15.
Winter Rules	More restrictive rules governing sign-up procedures during the winter season.
Winter Season	The period October 16 through April 30.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I Name of the organization: **Pine Lakes Tennis Association.**

ARTICLE II The objectives of the Pine Lakes Tennis Association are to supervise court usage, to monitor league play, to provide periodic tournaments and other social activities related to tennis, and to encourage the development of conditions physical or otherwise that enhance the enjoyment of tennis at Pine Lakes.

ARTICLE III The authority of the association derives from its members, as expressed by their votes and the election of officers.

ARTICLE IV

- a) Membership is open to any resident, renter/lessee or associate member. The resident or renter/lessee must reside or expect to reside at Pine Lakes Country Club for one month or more.
- b) Membership runs from January 1 through December 31 of each year.
- c) The annual dues for the following year will be assessed by the board and membership at the annual meeting.
- d) The renewal dues are payable by January 1 for members who are here. Late arrivals or new members can pay dues upon arrival or joining. Members who are delinquent in the payment of annual dues will give up the following privileges until such payment is made: Voting at general meetings and elections, as well as participation in tournaments and league play, and other PLTA activities.
- e) Anyone 85 years and older who has been a member of the Tennis Association for 10 years or more is exempted from paying dues.

ARTICLE V **Quorum:** The presence, in person or by absentee ballot, of thirty-three percent (33%) of members, will constitute a quorum. Decisions will be made by a simple majority of the voting membership present.

ARTICLE VI **Absentee Ballot:** If unable to attend, a member is entitled to vote by absentee ballot. Absentee ballots are available for general election, general meetings, and annual meetings. Ballots are available from the secretary. During a general or annual meeting, if an item up for vote is changed sufficiently to alter the intent of the proposal, the ballot would not be accurate and therefore void. The ballot is void for that item only. A majority vote of those present would decide if the intent of the proposal has been significantly altered as to render the ballot void. All voting decisions at general or annual meetings will be conducted by paper ballot from those present, plus absentee ballots. Ballots will be destroyed thirty (30) days following their utilization.

ARTICLE VII **Membership meetings:** General meetings will be held at the discretion of the association officers. At least a week before a meeting a notice will be posted on the bulletin board, giving the time, place, and date of the meeting.

Specialized committee meetings: May be held at the discretion of the committee membership. Meeting notes must be kept and given to the Association secretary within seven (7) days of the meeting. The president will be responsible for appointing these committees.

A nomination committee: Each January the President will appoint a nominating committee chairperson. The chairperson, in turn, will appoint at least three additional members. The committee will consist of at least one veteran member and representatives of a cross section of the member interests. The list of candidates shall be posted one week prior to the election.

ARTICLE VIII Membership list: Will be furnished to members upon request after March 1 for the current year. An, updated listing will be maintained on the bulletin board. Members may update their own lists during the year from this posted list.

ARTICLE IX

- a) The Association shall be managed by a Board of Directors composed of five (5) persons. Directors must be members in good standing of the Pine Lakes Tennis Association, who are owners of homes on leased or estate property. Each director shall hold office for the term for which he is elected and until his successor is elected. All directors will be elected for a two (2) year term. It is the intention of these bylaws that a staggered Directorate be maintained beginning with the 2022 annual meeting and election, with two (2) persons being elected for two years and three (3) board members completing the final year of their two year term. To maintain a staggered directorate, the board may hold seats in future elections open for one or two year terms, when necessary or appropriate. In such cases those receiving the higher number of votes shall be elected to the longer term.
- b) The presence of three (3) of the directors, one of whom must be president or vice president, shall be necessary at any meeting to constitute a quorum to transact business. The act of a majority of Directors present at a meeting when a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Directors. Directors may not vote by proxy or by secret ballot at Board of Directors' meetings except that secret ballots may be used in the election of officers.
- c) The Board of Directors, at their annual meeting, following the Association annual meeting, shall elect a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and an Officer-at-large. The Board shall have the power to appoint a successor to fill any vacancy in any office occurring for any reason whatsoever. Any Director may be removed by a majority vote of the Board of Directors whenever, in the judgment of the board, the best interests of the Association are not being served.
- d) Members of the Board may serve in any given office for a maximum of two consecutive years. Normal succession of office will be from vice president to president.
- f) **Duties of Officers:**
 - **President:** The responsibilities of the president are to preside at all association meetings; see that all rules and procedures are followed; work with both the secretary and treasurer regarding records, expenditures, and financial statements; to be ready to deal with questions of association membership; and to appoint or designate committees and persons to carry out specific assignments, such as tournaments, intra league play, physical facilities evaluation, press coverage for Whispering Pines, etc.
 - **Vice President:** The vice president will act in place of the president when the president is incapacitated, absent, or is called on by the president to act for him or her. In addition, the vice president will also perform other duties, as assigned by the president.
 - **Secretary:** The responsibilities of the secretary are to take minutes of meetings, maintain all organization records, and provide copies minutes when requested.
 - **Treasurer:** The responsibilities of the treasurer are to receive and deposit payments made to the organization, disburse funds to satisfy obligations of the organization, keep all financial records and issue reports on the financial condition of the organization, and make these available to members upon request.
 - **Officer-at-large:** The officer-at-large will act as a liaison between the membership and board and perform duties as assigned by the president.

ARTICLE X Commissioner(s) of Competitive Tennis: The Commissioner(s) is appointed by the President, who has previously conferred with the other members of the Board of Directors. The Commissioner(s) position requires a person familiar with all the rules and the by-laws of the North Ft. Myers and the Pine Lakes Tennis Associations in which all Pine Lakes teams participate. In addition, one must be familiar with the decorum for conduct within each organization. The Commissioner(s) has the right and privilege to attend every and all Board Meetings. The Commissioner(s) commands a voice that can influence decisions and may do so if one chooses.

Examples:

- Players and team conduct may be disciplined by the Commissioner(s).
- The Commissioner(s) will oversee and review all ranking of players and the Team Selection Process.
- The Commissioner(s) may reject team selection results if “irregularities” appear.
- The Commissioner(s) may resolve issues of question within the by-laws.

The Commissioner may choose a co-Commissioner that would be approved by the Board, or the “co” position can be chosen by the Board.

ARTICLE XI Amendments to the By-Laws or Procedure: Any by-law or procedure can be changed by a simple majority, when a quorum is present and voting, at any scheduled general membership meeting.

ARTICLE XII Rules of Order: Robert's Rules of Order will be followed so as to give everyone a chance to speak on any question coming before the meeting, especially prior to a vote.

PROCEDURES

COURT USE COMMITTEE

The president will appoint a court use committee each year in March, which will meet after new teams are selected. Members will be the commissioner, board representative at-large, captains of all teams, a representative from social/drop-in tennis and coordinators of other special programs. The board will consider the plan presented by the committee at an open meeting and adopt a court use plan by a majority vote of the board. Once a plan is adopted by the board, any changes must be requested in writing and presented to the board for consideration and possible approval.

COURT SIGN-UP AT PINE LAKES

A PLTA member designated by the board of directors, will post the court schedule for the coming week at 9:00 AM every Saturday morning.

Before the court schedule is posted, times will be blocked out for pre-schedule court time, as adopted by the Board. Any additional one time weekly requests need to be given to the designated court posting person at least 48 hours in advance of the posting, in order to determine the feasibility of the request. Sign-ups will not be allowed before 9:00 AM. PLTA members who are in line by 9:00 AM will start the sign-up procedure as stated below.

1. Original Sheet Posting Procedures

When the sheets are posted and available to sign up for prime time and open court time and there is a line of players waiting to sign up, the following procedure will be followed. The player first in line may sign up their foursome for one court time. If a player wishes to sign up for an additional court time they will go to the end of the line. The next player will sign up then go to the end of the line if they wish to sign up for an additional court time. A second or third court time cannot be taken by the same individual for the same time and same day. A player signing up must be one of the players using the court. That procedure will continue until everyone has signed up for the times they want.

2. Additional Procedures

- a) Prime Time is 9:30 – 12:30 Monday through Friday
- b) When signing up you must, use a pencil and print names
- c) After original sheet posting, individuals signing up should be one of the players using the court
- d) Players may sign up for only one prime time session per day.
- e) During prime time only Pine Lake's residents, house guests, and renter/lessees may sign up for court time. The board of directors must approve court use by organizations or persons who reside outside of Pine Lakes.
- f) Doubles play only is permitted during prime time, unless the court is vacant 24 hours before use. Then members playing singles or using the ball machine may sign up for a court with in the 24 hour time period.

3. Forfeit Rule

- a) Show up for play a few minutes ahead of time. When you are late, you jeopardize your use of the court.
- b) If only one of the signed players has shown up, the court becomes a free court.
- c) If, by the time a foursome is present and no other player has claimed the court, the reservation may be reinstated.

4. Ball Machine

Sign up for the ball machine use during prime time is not permitted unless a court has not been reserved 24 hours prior to starting time, or unless for use by a team. Sign up should include user's name and the words "Ball Machine." The court may be reserved for up to 1 1/2 hours.

5. Equipment

Please take care of all court equipment. Brooms and rollers should be stored in the shed provided for them. Carpets should be hung up off the ground so that they dry out as rapidly as possible.

The ball machine, blower, extension cord and even the tennis balls should be used with care and stored away properly after use in the shelter provided on court #2.

ETIQUETTE

INTRODUCTION:

Observing these precepts of good behavior will likely make the sport of tennis pleasant and more enjoyable for everyone. The concept of competitiveness does not encompass rudeness. Loud, abusive, or profane language, racquet throwing, or hitting balls indiscriminately is prohibited.

1. Do not hit stray balls aimlessly to another court. Instead, pick up the ball and hit it so that it goes directly to one of the players on the other court. However, wait until players on the other court have completed a point before returning the stray ball.
2. Returning a service that is obviously out (and called out) is a form of rudeness and, when the receiver does this deliberately to bother the server, it is poor gamesmanship.
3. Players from other courts and spectators should not cross over from one side of the court to the other while a match is in progress. They should take the long way around which is outside the fence.
4. Do not enter the court while the ball is in play, but wait for a break in the action. Make your entrance as unobtrusive as possible.
5. Smoking or spitting anywhere within the fenced court enclosure is not permitted at any time.
6. The server should have three balls on his side of the net at the start of a game. The server's partner and the opponents should help in this regard. Similar good manners apply to singles play.
7. Once you have signed up for a tournament, make every effort to honor your commitment to play. Exceptions, such as illness, injury, or personal emergency, will occur and tournament schedules will be changed accordingly.
8. After a match or a set, which marks the end of competition for two teams or opponents, all participants should approach the net and shake hands with each of the opponents.

THE CODE

INTRODUCTION:

This code is concerned with promoting and maintaining fairness and proper court facilities throughout the sport of tennis at Pine Lakes in the absence of officials. Thus, the code goes beyond mere enjoyment of the game, but is a strong attempt to ensure that all players are committed to the principle of equal treatment for all. Since everyone's own natural interest is his or her chief interest, the code emphasizes that all doubt must be resolved in favor of one's opponents. All abusive, intimidating, or distracting behavior is strictly prohibited.

GENERAL

1. Do not stall, sulk, or complain. Such demonstrations are not part of play and should not be used to gain an advantage over your opponent. Intentional distractions, such as racquet waving, yelling at your opponent, stamping your feet, etc., made to affect adversely the play of your opponent, are against the rules.
2. Wear proper tennis attire, including a shirt and tennis footwear. Bathing suits are not acceptable tennis clothing.
3. Do not place towels, clothing, accessories, or equipment over the net posts, net, or on the court. At the request of an opponent, such items should be removed immediately.

BALL CALLS

1. In returning service, the receiver or his partner may make an out call on any ball that he or she sees as clearly out.
2. When you are looking across a line, don't call the ball out unless you can clearly see part of the court between where the ball hit and the line. This means if you are half a court away and the ball lands within two inches of the line it is almost impossible for you to call it with accuracy.
3. It is your obligation to call all balls on your side, to help your opponent(s) make calls when it is requested, and to call against yourself any ball that you clearly see out on your opponent's side of the net.
4. No player should question an opponent's call unless asked. Players are human and mistakes will be made. When an opponent's opinion has been requested and given, it must be accepted. The opinion of a player looking down a line is much more likely to be accurate than that of a player looking across a line.
5. Regardless of how far out a ball is going, do not catch it or stop it with your racquet until it has hit the ground. If you do, the rules state that you have lost the point.
6. Calls involving a ball's touching a player, a player's touching the net, a player's touching his opponent's court, i.e., invasion, hitting an opponent's return before it has passed the net, or a double bounce can be very difficult to make accurately. Any player, who becomes aware that he or she has committed a violation in one of these areas, should announce the violation immediately. In all of the above areas, the prerogative of decision belongs to the player involved.
7. A ball is not out until it is called out. Any ball not called out is good. If you do not see the ball, you may ask your opponent's opinion; however, when an opponent's opinion has been asked and given, it must be accepted.
8. Any ball that cannot be called out is presumed good. A player cannot claim a let on the basis that he or she did not see the ball. Remember, a ball that is 99.9% out is 100% good.
9. In doubles, if one partner calls a ball out and the other partner calls it good, there is some doubt; therefore, the ball is good.
10. If you call a ball out and then realize it was good, you should correct your call.
11. If any ball from the opposing side (serve or otherwise) is called out and later the call is reversed, a let must be played if a good return of the ball was made. If the return is not made or is a bad one, the reversal of the call gives the point to the opposing side.
12. Any out or let call must be made instantaneously. If the return of a serve lands out (i.e., called out), it is too late to call a let.
13. If you have any doubt as to whether a ball is out or good, you must give your opponents the benefit of the doubt and play the ball as good. A let should not be played.
14. A ball invading your court from another court is the basis for a let and can be called by either side. The ball, however, should roll on, or otherwise hit, your court to legitimate such a call.
15. **Do not** enlist the aid of spectators in making line calls.

OTHER GAME BEHAVIORS

1. To avoid controversy over the score, the server should announce, in a voice audible to all players, the game score (e.g. 30 40) prior to serving each point. The set score should be announced (e.g. 5 4 if set cards are not in use for the court. This should be done at the beginning of the game.
2. If players cannot agree on the score they may go back to the last score on which there was agreement and resume play from that point. If such a point cannot be found, they should spin a racquet.
3. The receiver should make no effort to return the serve if the receiver's partner is not ready. By inference, if the serve is struck, it indicates that the receiver was ready. The server and receiver are responsible for the readiness of their partners.
4. When the server causes a delay between the first and second serve, the server has one serve to come. When the receiver causes an unreasonable delay, the server is awarded two serves. When the delay is caused by outside interference and it is prolonged, it is the receiver's prerogative to decide if the the server has one or two serves to come.
5. The receiver or his partner may call foot faults on the server after the server has been warned once.

LEAGUE PLAY

INTRA LEAGUE PLAY (INTRAMURALS)

During the winter season, a Friday league is operated for the benefit of association members. The announcement for this league is to be posted during the period November 1 through November 15 each year. Details regarding league play, sign up procedures, etc., will be given by the Intra-League Director in this annual announcement. Any questions should be directed to the Intra-League Director.

INTER LEAGUE PLAY

1. The Inter-Community Leagues in which Pine Lakes participate and are governed by this process are:
 - (a) SWIFT "Senior Women In Fun Tennis"
 - (b) RED
 - (c) WHITE
 - (d) BLUE
2.
 - (a) All Team Members must be members of the Pine Lakes Tennis Association and current residents of Pine Lakes for at least two (2) consecutive months. Participation and play in the North Ft. Myers leagues is governed by appropriate league by-laws. In the event a men's team or a women's team requires an additional qualified player or players from outside of Pine Lakes, all qualified candidates within Pine Lakes must be given first consideration. The player or players, upon approval, must become a Pine Lakes Tennis Association associate member and pay the annual membership fee. Associate players are restricted to a maximum of three (3) players per team. In addition, an associate player or players can only play on a year to year basis.
 - (b) New teams can be added whenever enough qualified players sign up and the appropriate league can handle the addition of another team. All phases of the Team Self-Ranking Process and the Team Selection Process will be observed and approved by the Commissioner(s). The Commissioner(s) will either approve or reject any team voting and call for a new vote if there are irregularities. The Commissioner(s) may choose assistants as they deem necessary.
 - (c) A New Player arriving at Pine Lakes after the teams are formed will be considered for a team.
 - i. To determine the team on which the new member should be placed, he or she will meet with and play tennis with the captain and players of the team of interest. If there are two teams within the same division or league then both captains will consult with one another to determine which team the player would fit best.
 - ii. It will be up to the captain(s) in consultation with the Commissioner(s) to either accept the player or suggest another team.
 - (d) When circumstances warrant a qualified player (see 2a) can be recruited for a team after the team's formation in March. In order to recruit a player the team's captain must first seek the approval, with a majority vote, from their team to add a new player to their roster.

3. TEAM SIGN-UP SHEETS

Sign up sheets for each of men's and women's league teams for the next fall/winter season will be posted from February 14th to February 28th of each year. Anyone signing up for a higher league level that is not selected at that level will automatically be considered for the next lower level. Players must be signed up to be considered for team selection, as requesting a spot on a team, at a later date, may not be approved.

4. TEAM FORMATION

Teams need to be formed in accordance with their respective League Rules and Regulations/ Requirements.

Please note: As there are differences between the Men's and Women's League Rules and differences in the opportunity for men and women to play competitive tennis, there are two different processes for team selection.

(a) MEN — BLUE WHITE RED

- (i) All players, excluding associate players, who have signed up at a team level that are to play at that level according to the respective league bylaws will vote on whether there should be 1 or more teams.
- (ii) This list of players, excluding associate players, will then self rank. The procedure for the "self rank" is as follows:

The Team Self-Ranking Process

- A. Players from each existing team will be listed alphabetically on a ballot including all substitutes at this team level.
- B. All these players for the team will participate in the ranking process.
- C. Any player that doesn't have knowledge of all players on the ballot will exempt themselves from the ranking exercise. No partial ballots are allowed.
- D. Players will rank best player #1, second best is #2 etc.
- E. All self ranking exercises will be conducted and reviewed by the Commissioner(s).
- F. The top players form the Team, if the vote was for two teams, see G and H.
- G. The 4 top-ranked players will be divided into 2 teams. Normally players ranked 1 and 4 will be on team A, and players ranked 2 and 3 will be on team B. However, if each of the top four players and the Commissioner(s) agree, they can divide themselves among the two teams in a different manner.
- H. These 4 players on teams A and B will alternately select the remaining 4-6 players for each team using the Self Ranking results as a guideline. Team B will normally select first.

(b) **WOMEN - SWIFT**

The team selection is as follows:

(i) For all of the qualified women, based on the SWIFT Rules & Regulations, who sign up to play in the SwiftLeague, every effort will be made to provide them an opportunity to do so.

(ii) If there is to be more than one team, then the teams will be formed by;

A. first, following the SWIFT Leagues Rules and Regulations,

B. and then after consulting with all players, choose a method for the formation of the teams. This is to be determined by a majority ruling. The method for choosing teams may include, but not be limited to: keeping an existing team intact, balancing teams, having a draft, forming a competitive team, forming a developing team...as long as the method complies with 2a) above.

BALL MACHINE

The Pine Lakes Tennis Association owns a ball machine. It is housed in a locked shelter at the edge of court #2 and is available only for use by association members.

The shelter also has features for accepting and storing balls to be used in the machine. In addition, the shelter provides storage for the electric blower which can be used by members to clear debris from the courts.

It is the responsibility of every member to:

1. Reserve court time for ball machine use in increments of one hour up to a maximum of 1/2 hours per session when signing up on the sign-up sheet. Sign up should include user's name and the words "BALL MACHINE." Court #2 should be used in preference to the other courts. No machine use is permitted during primetime.
2. Clean up the area (court) after the ball machine is used. Neither stray balls nor debris should be left on the court.
3. Report to any association officer any malfunction of the ball machine as soon as possible.

SUGGESTIONS

Members are encouraged to make suggestions for improvements to any board of directors' member.