

# Match Play Rules

<http://collegesquashassociation.com/rules/match-play-rules/>

All players must be in compliance with the requirements of the College Squash Association (CSA), the NCAA, and their league (Ivy League, NESCAC, Seven Sisters, etc.). Questions or complaints about eligibility should be directed by an institution's compliance officer to the opposing institution's compliance officer and copied to the opposing coach. For more information, see the [Eligibility Rules](#).

## MATCH PROCEDURES

Both men's and women's teams play by the [World Squash Federation rules and guidelines](#). The same basic match procedures apply whether teams are competing in dual matches, round robin competitions, or tournaments.

1. Team warm-ups: Coaches must mutually agree upon arrangements for team warm-ups in advance. Available facilities and the type of event will influence warm-up arrangements, but ideally in dual-match play the visiting team should have access to the match courts beginning 45 minutes before match time for their 30-minute warm up. The home team (or, in neutral sites, the team designated in advance as the home team by a racquet spin) may warm up prior to the visiting team on the match courts or on additional non-match courts.
2. Exchange of line-ups: Coaches must exchange line-ups simultaneously at least one hour before match time. Exchanging line-ups before the match gives coaches time to review the line-ups, make inquiries about them, and state any protests before the match begins.
3. Introductions: Before the match begins, both teams should gather on one court for introductions. The teams should line up opposite each other along the side walls of the court. Each team should line up in ladder order, starting at the front wall with the number one player, followed by the number two player, and so on, in descending order of play. Captains may stand with coaches at the front wall.
4. Order of play: If five courts are being used for the match, the even-numbered matches (2, 4, 6, 8, and 10) will play first. The odd-numbered matches (1, 3, 5, 7, and 9) will play in the second shift. If three courts are being used for the match, matches 3, 6, and 9 will play first, followed by matches 2, 5, and 8, and then by matches 1, 4, and 7. The number 10 exhibition match will take place on the first court to become available after the scoring matches have finished.

5. Pre-match warm-up: The purpose of the warm-up is to bring the ball to playing temperature; the players should be ready to play before stepping on court. The warm-up should last no longer than 5 minutes. The referee should keep track of the time; call “half-time” at 2 1/2 minutes, indicating that the players should switch sides; and call “time” at 5 minutes. During the warm-up, each player should hit no more than two shots to themselves before hitting the ball to their opponent.
6. Time between matches: If five courts are being used for the match, there will be up to a 15-minute break after the completion of the first match. The second-shift players will agree in advance as to when the 15 minutes of preparation time is complete and when they are due on court. The second-shift referee will time the five-minute match warm-up along with their other referee duties. If three courts are being used for the match, the players should be ready to begin their warm-up on court within three minutes of the completion of the previous match on that court.
7. The 90-second break: A player may have at most 90 seconds of break time between games and between the warm-up and the start of the match. The 90-second break is when players are coached. During this time either player may hit the ball. Other than these 90-second periods play is continuous. The referee should keep time and call “15 seconds” when only 15 seconds remain in the break.
8. Marking and refereeing: The marker and referee for each match will be players from the respective teams. Players from the home team (or, in neutral sites, the team designated in advance as the home team) will referee for the even-numbered matches and mark for the odd-numbered matches. Players from the visiting team will mark for the even-numbered matches and referee for the odd-numbered matches. For more information, see [Marking/Refereeing](#).
9. Coaching: Only official college or university coaches and teammates may coach a player in intercollegiate match play. Coaching may take place before a match begins and during the 90-second intervals between games. A coach may not speak to, or reprimand, an opposing player during the course of play or during the 90-second breaks, nor may they do so after a match. Additionally, coaches may not interfere or comment verbally in any way with the referee or marker. If a coach feels that there is a problem with on-court behavior, refereeing, or marking, they need to address the problem with the opposing coach, at which point both coaches will observe the match. For more information, see [Ethics Guidelines](#).
10. Reporting Results: The home team must report match results to US Squash within the specified time period of the conclusion of the match or penalties will be incurred. When two teams are playing at a neutral site,

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the winning team is responsible for submitting the results to US Squash.  
For more information, see [Ranking Rules](#).

11. Delays: In the case of an unavoidable delay of a match (if, for example, the previous match runs long), the head coaches must meet prior to the original match start time and agree on a new start time. If yet another adjustment is required, the coaches will meet again and readjust the start time.

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Note: Host coaches are responsible for notifying visiting coaches of the dual match format that will be used at least three days in advance of a match.

If men and women's teams are both competing and if sufficient courts are available, they may play simultaneously. Consideration should be given to dual head coaches pending a situation where they may have to coach six to ten players at the same time (such as when both men's and women's teams are playing simultaneously). Fair play in situations like these should be recognized, and both coaches should agree prior to the match whether they can reasonably coach both women's and men's matches simultaneously.

### TEAM LINE-UPS

Team line-ups must be based on order of merit, with the best player at number one, the second-best player at number two, and so on. The most accepted and traditional method of establishing an order of merit is the challenge ladder system. If a player wins a challenge match, they move up the ladder; if they lose, they move down. Other possible methods would be using US Squash rankings or tournament results. Coaches must be sure that whatever systems they use are logical and consistent throughout the season and throughout the ladder, and acceptable to their teams and to other coaches.

**Illness and Injury:** A player should not lose their place on a team ladder simply because they have been ill or injured for any length of time. However, the longer a player is unable to practice and play matches with their team, the more likely it is that their capabilities would diminish while the capabilities of their peers would improve. Therefore, a player returning to the line-up after an extended absence (2 weeks or more) should either be re-inserted at their old position or offered a challenge against the player who was in the position immediately below them when the absence began. Should the returning player lose this challenge, they should be allowed to play at least one more challenge down prior to their participation in their first team match.

There must be a competition-based rationale for a returning player's spot in the line-up. The longer a player has been out, the more compelling the need for downward challenges to re-establish the order of merit.

**Changes to Line-ups:** A line-up cannot change in terms of order of merit on consecutive days of competition. A line-up can, however, be adjusted when a player or players are added or removed from it. When a player is added to or removed from a line-up, all other players are moved accordingly in the established order of merit. For example, if the number 4 player on a team is injured and has to be removed from the line-up, the number 5 player would move up to the number 4 position, the original number 6 player would move up to the number 5 position, and so on.

**Challenges to Line-ups:** Each coach is obligated to provide opposing coaches with match line-ups in a timely fashion for review and inquiries. An opposing coach can challenge a player's ladder position based on their match and challenge record that season. A coach must have available upon request an up-to-date printout of all team matches played (or access to the CSA website/US Squash Ranking Software) and a list of challenge results available for the opposing coach to inspect before each match.

**Event Line-ups for Regular-Season Tournaments, Round-Robin Events, etc.:** At the start of a weekend tournament or round robin competition, each coach must provide the host coach with an event line-up that lists all of the participating players in ladder order, with number one being the strongest player, number two the next strongest, and so on. The event line-up may list up to twenty players if necessary, and each player's position should reflect their most recent challenges and their position in previous match line-ups, as required by CSA guidelines. The host coach of a weekend tournament or round robin will post the event line-ups for review by all other coaches.

If a player misses the first part of a tournament or is dropped from a team's playing line-up at some point during the event, they can be placed back into the playing line-up in the same position listed in the event line-up.

**Line-ups for National Team Championships:** These guidelines apply for both women's and men's tournaments. All teams must submit final line-ups to the Tournament Director by Monday noon (EST) on the Monday prior to the start of the team tournament.

Teams may submit line-ups of 11 players; however, only the top-10 players are eligible to compete in the top-9 ladder positions.

If multiple players in the top-9 ladder positions are injured during the tournament and unable to compete, a petition for an exemption may be made to the Tournament Referee. Please note that exemptions will be extremely rare.

All line-ups will be posted for review by 8:00 PM on the Monday prior to the event. Coaches have until 5:00 PM on Tuesday to protest a team line-up to the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director and Executive Committee will review all protests and make a decision on each one by Wednesday at noon and communicate the results to the membership.

As a general rule, late changes will not be allowed, and players may not be added to the roster after the deadline. Any proposed late ladder changes (occurring past the posting deadline on that Monday) must be reviewed by the Ranking Chair and Executive Committee, explained by the coach, and approved before the start of the event. The coach is responsible for providing the necessary information to the committee. In the case of line-ups not being submitted on time, the last used line-up in an official intercollegiate CSA dual match will be the one used in the tournament by that team.

#### **CONTROL OF HOME VENUE**

It is the responsibility of the home coach to control the venue (crowd control and proper playing conditions of the facility, i.e., clean courts, lighting, etc.) to provide for a fair and competitive match. This includes preventing the verbal or physical abuse of players, markers, referees, visiting team members, spectators, and coaches. Examples of inappropriate crowd behavior include banging on walls during and between points, disruptive talking and cheering during points, or delaying play between points with prolonged cheering. The visiting coach should bring any infractions to the attention of the home coach, and the home coach must address the crowd between points as soon as possible. (Spectators may be asked to leave the facility if inappropriate behavior continues, and Public Safety/Campus Police may be contacted if necessary.) If the home coach can not correct inappropriate crowd behavior, they should use the conduct warning procedure and begin penalizing their own players starting with "Conduct Warning," moving next to "Conduct Stroke" and so on to "Game and then Match," if necessary.