

IDLE HOUR WOMEN'S LADDER CHALLENGE RULES

Note: Deadlines for have been extended for 2025 as noted below.

A. General:

1. The challenge ladder will run from the end of Philly cup season to September 15th (Oct. 15 for 2025). This date may be extended, depending on the number of days the courts are unusable.
2. A player must be a member in good standing of Idle Hour. Challenge matches must be played only at Idle Hour Tennis Club. Matches are best of three sets using USTA rules. The challenger provides new balls for the match.
3. A player who fails to play a majority of her rostered matches may be removed from the ladder.
4. The rules apply to singles players and teams (two players who are doubles partners).
5. The rules will be interpreted and disputes will be settled at the sole discretion of the Ladder Coordinator.

B. Etiquette and Scheduling:

1. A team must accept valid challenges OR may accept a loss by default. Teams are not required to play more than one challenge match per week.
2. When a team initiates a challenge, it must follow this process: send one notifying text or email to all four players and the Ladder Coordinator.
3. The challenging team will immediately propose two or three possible dates/times for a challenge match, and the challenged team should respond promptly.
4. A challenge match should be completed within 14 days of the challenge. If it proves difficult to schedule a match in the two week timeframe, all players should continue to make a good faith effort to find a suitable date. Text/email all four players and the Ladder Coordinator with the match date/time.
5. If a challenged player or team is away (out of state/country), the 14-day timeframe starts when all players are available (in the area/returned from travel). If a player's absence prevents the match from being played in a reasonable timeframe (determined at the discretion of the Ladder Coordinator), Rule B.6. (injury/travel) will apply.
6. If a player on an established team is injured, recovering from surgery, or away for an extended period, the challenge match will be directed to another court (the next position up).
7. The Ladder Coordinator will contact the Club Manager to reserve a court for the challenge match.
8. If the challenged team withdraws or cancels the challenge match, it is a default loss for the challenged team. If the challenger withdraws or cancels, there is no penalty.

The winning team is responsible for reporting the complete score via one notifying text or email to the Ladder Coordinator and all four players.

C. Existing Teams:

1. Existing teams *with a winning record* may challenge up to two positions above their ladder position. If the challenger wins, they move to the new position and the losing team moves down one position. If the challenger loses, they retain their original position.
2. Existing teams that split, with each player finding a new partner (by Sept 5 for 2025): the newly formed teams will play a challenge match no later than July 15 (Sept 15 for 2025) to determine which team remains on the current line and which team moves to the position below. If the challenge match cannot be played by July 15 (Sept 15 for 2025), the two teams will lose their position on the ladder. They are treated as new teams and may challenge on to the ladder to obtain a position.
3. If an existing team breaks up and a different team is formed with one original player remaining, that team will remain in the original position and be vulnerable to challenges.

D. New Teams:

A new team may challenge any position on the continuous ladder. If the new team wins, it assumes the position and the existing team moves down one position. If the new team loses, it may issue one more challenge to a lower position team. If the new team loses the second challenge, its position will be at the bottom of the ladder.

8/21/25