

US Pickleball Association, LLC (USPA) – 2026 Indianapolis League

2026 Season League Rules

I. **GENERAL.**

The following rules apply to all leagues in the US Pickleball Association (USPA) unless otherwise specified. All leagues will follow current USA Pickleball (USAP) rules unless otherwise specified here.

II. **PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS.**

- a. All participants in USPA pickleball are bound by the USPA rules, as well as those of USAP. Not all possible incidents may be covered in the following rules. Participants in unusual or undocumented situations will have to abide by the decision of the League Director and/or Board. If there is a conflict in an interpretation of any rule, USPA Rules shall take precedence.
- b. All leagues are open to men and women players in their respective birth and gender divisions and mixed divisions regardless of the club affiliation or non-affiliation.
- c. There are three defined leagues (Men's, Women's & Mixed). Participants may play in any league that represents their gender. (You may play in the gender league as well as the mixed doubles league.)

- III. **RATINGS:** All players will play in leagues that are respective of their DUPR level at the time of registration for the season. (Other rating scales may be used in the future, but DUPR will be used exclusively for 2026). Players without a DUPR rating may participate in the level in which they typically participate and should be agreed to based on the Captain's discretion and as supported by supervisors where they play. (Example: Someone plays in Competitive at IPC East plays in the 3.5-4.0 range and should play at that level for a league.) Any changes in DUPR level during the season will not change a player's league unless the League Director and Board see a large disparity in ability and may discuss/move a player.

IV. **PLAYER ROSTER REQUIREMENTS**

- a. **MEMBERSHIP FEE.** All players must have paid the player registration fee for each team they participate in prior to participating in the league each season. (The only exceptions may be made with permission from the League Director or Board based on emergencies. Example: Player A get injured in the first game and the team asks to substitute with an un-rostered player at the same level.)
- b. **WAIVER.** All players must have agreed to the waiver release of liability prior to participation in the league each season.

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- c. **PLAYER SKILL LEVEL RATINGS.** For all ratings, it is the responsibility of the player and team captain to assure the ratings are accurate and defensible, no matter what the level. Team rosters must consist of players with skills that are consistent with the flight skill level in which their team is playing. Appeals may be made to the League Director in advance of the season. The League Director will monitor scores each week and may move a player if they are obviously significantly higher or lower rated than the group they are in. (Example: Kathy Heins is playing in 3.0-3.5 and wins every game 11-0, 11-2, etc. over a couple weeks. She may be moved up to the 3.5 level if there is space for her.)
 1. **DUPR:** If a player has a DUPR rating, they must play within that level. If the “reliability rating” is less than 80%, an appeal may be made but only up or down one level. (Example: 4.06 DUPR with reliability of 62% might be granted the opportunity to play 3.5-4.0)
 2. **Self-Rating:** Players without a DUPR rating may participate at the level in which they have consistently been playing at their club or site. This level should be corroborated by club management and the Team Captain.
- d. **TEAM ROSTER SKILL LEVELS AND AGE LEVELS.**

These leagues are designed to provide fun competition at similar levels. As such, players are expected to play on teams of similar levels. As of now, there are no age-level distinctions, but may be added at a later date.
- e. **PLAYING ON MULTIPLE TEAMS.** Players may not play on more than one team per Division (Mixed or Gender Doubles). (Example: Pam Erickson may play only on one Women’s Doubles 4.0+ team but may also play on a Mixed 4.0+ team.)
- f. **OTHER TEAM MEMBER RULES.**
 1. A player who registers for a team may not switch teams during the season and can only play for that team once the season has started. Any substitute players must be on the roster (unless an emergency as defined in III. A. above). Players who compete in the “Championship Week” must have played at least two times during the regular season and must be officially registered to participate in the final week.
 2. Team members are not required to be from any particular club. Captains may recruit players at any time from any location but players who register without a club affiliation will be submitted to a Draft by the Board. It is the captain’s responsibility to ensure their roster meets the requirements of the Rules of Play.
 3. There may be “at large” teams who do not represent any of the clubs but will play all matches at one of the 6 represented clubs.

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4. In order for a player to participate in “Championship Week” they must have played at least 2 weeks during the season and must be officially registered.

V. TEAM REGISTRATION.

- a. DEADLINES. All participants must have registered online by the published registration deadline. Teams will be formed and communicated after the registration deadline.
- b. CAPTAINS. All teams must have a designated captain and co-captain. Captains shall monitor their rosters as players begin to register for correctness and adherence to league rules. Captains must submit their lineup for the week online at least 3 hours prior to play. Captains are responsible for submission of team scores within 24 hours of play. This can be coordinated with club personnel.
- c. TEAM NAMES. Each of the 6 clubs will have team representation. Additionally, there will be 2 at-large teams, named for the captain of the team.
- d. UNIFORMS. Teams may have matching uniforms or apparel but are not required to do so. Team attire must match USAP rules on clothing color.
- e. ROSTER SIZE. There is no limit to roster size but must have a minimum of 4 players and must be able to field a team each night of play. Captains should be aware that for players to participate in the “championship week”, they must meet the player playoff qualification criteria.
- f. ROSTER ADDITIONS. Captains may add players to their roster through the player registration process. Any player participating in the “championship week” must have played at least two times and must be officially registered on the roster.

VI. COURTS, BALLS, PADDLES, COMMUNICATION.

- a. COURTS AND FACILITIES. Each of the 6 original clubs is required to guarantee the use of two courts for 2 hours of play (8-10pm) where possible. (There may be exceptions and will be accommodated by the remaining clubs.) These will be coordinated with the League Director and will be communicated to players in advance.
- b. BALLS. Balls used for all league games must be JOOLA balls and will be provided by the host club. There should be at least two balls per court during league play.
- c. PADDLES. Paddles must be USAP approved for sanctioned tournament play.
- d. COMMUNICATION. The League Director will communicate with all players and Captains in the event of schedule changes, weather related issues or other concerns. It is the expectation that all players and Captains will read and respond to any communication (when warranted) within 24 hours or earlier if necessary (emergency situations).

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VII. SCHEDULE AND LOCATIONS.

- a. SCHEDULING REQUIREMENTS. The League Director will schedule matches based on the skill level and gender requirements as well as the availability of each of the 6 clubs. All league captains must submit their roster online prior to the deadline published. (See Team Registration Section IV.)
- b. MATCH TIMES. Match times posted on the schedule are the times the match is required to begin, and must not be delayed more than 5 minutes. All play MUST conclude no later than 10pm, including the DreamBreaker tie-breaker. At 10pm, the match must end with the final score indicating the wins/losses.
- c. MATCH LOCATION & FREQUENCY. Match locations will be published in the schedule. The League Director will attempt to schedule matches as equally as possible for sites, depending on availability.
- d. SCHEDULE CHANGES. There will be few if any schedule changes. Each team is expected to show up each week to play. In the event of a weather emergency or other reason for play not to occur, the match will show as a DNP (did not play) and will not be counted in the final standings. If that does occur, final standings will be based on winning percentage rather than wins/losses.
- e. FORFEITS. Teams should do all they can to avoid a forfeit for the match. Forfeits are considered “poor sportsmanship” and with the number of players in the greater Indianapolis area, should not need to happen. Teams must secure players for the match each week. If a player gets injured during a match, it is possible to find an “immediate sub” who is not a rostered player if approved by both captains OR by the League Director. The following consequences will be applied if a team forfeits a match or matches:
 - 1. First forfeit: The forfeiting team will be given a loss for the night and the captain will be reminded that this is not a good practice.
 - 2. Second forfeit: The forfeiting team will be removed from the league and all their matches will be removed from the standings.

VIII. MATCH PLAY.

- a. FORMATS. All games are played to 11, win by 2 points. The only advantage on the court is in the event of a tiebreaker. The visiting team will get to see the lineup of the home team first.

The match play will begin with each team designating players as Player A, B, C and D. The following chart demonstrates how the match round robin will occur:

	Players - Home	Score	Score	Players - Away
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Round 1 Ct. 1	A & B			A & B
Round 2 Ct. 2	C & D			C & D
Round 3 Ct. 1	A & B			C & D
Round 4 Ct. 2	C & D			A & B
Round 5 Ct. 1	A & C			A & C
Round 6 Ct. 2	B & D			B & D
Round 7 Ct. 1	A & C			B & D
Round 8 Ct. 2	B & D			A & C
Round 9 Ct. 1	A & D			A & D
Round 10 Ct. 2	B & C			B & C
Round 11 Ct. 1	A & D			B & C
Round 12 Ct. 2	B & C			A & D
TIEBREAKER (if nec.)				

IX. MATCH DAY

a. MATCH TEAMS.

1. A master schedule will denote which teams play each other each week and at which site.
2. Lineups identifying the players will be submitted at least 3 hours prior to play. Once provided, teams should not deviate from the lineup provided if at all possible. Score sheets must be submitted to the site supervisor by the end of each match and must be submitted to the League Director within 24 hours.
3. Unless otherwise specified, the schedules state the time matches are to start. The following rules apply to late players:
 - A. Matches shall start no later than five (5) minutes after the posted match start time. If a player has not arrived by then, a substitute may be utilized in the place of the late player based on the agreement of the other team or the game(s) can be forfeited. (Example: If player C is late, the first match of CD vs. CD is forfeited with a score of 11-0.)
 - B. Upon arrival, if game(s) were forfeited, the late player may play in any ensuing games. For the late player to play in the second game of a round, they must arrive before the last of the other teams has started the second game in that round.
 - C. If a sub has played but the player arrives, the late player will fulfill the role of player for the remaining matches. If the player does not show up, the substitute may be utilized for the whole match.

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- D. All games forfeited will be scored 11-0 against the team with the late player.
 - b. MATCH PROCESS.
 - 1. All matches must end by 10pm, so keep the time in mind as you transition between games.
 - 2. To begin a match, the teams will determine serve/side prior to playing any game - choose to serve, receive or end.
 - 3. Each game will be played to 11, win by 2. Teams shall switch sides after 6 points. Record scores immediately following the games. Teams should double check the accuracy of the reported scores.
 - c. MATCH SCORING. Each team will be awarded a “win” for the evening if they win more games than the other team (including the Tiebreaker if needed). All standings will include overall wins, game wins/losses, and point differentials.
 - d. TIME OUTS. A single one-minute time out is allowed per game per team. Bathroom breaks should be taken between rounds. One medical time-out is allowed per player per match, limited to 5 minutes, at which time the player may continue, a substitute may be used or the line forfeited.
 - e. COACHING. Per USAP rules, coaching by anyone is only allowed after completion of each game, between rounds and during time outs. Coaching is verbal or nonverbal communication during a game from anyone other than a player’s partner, that is offered to assist a player in a match (i.e. providing direction for strategy, line calls, time outs, etc.).
 - f. USAP NON-REFEREED MATCH RULES. USAP non-refereed match rules apply to all USPA league matches. This includes all line calls which are made only by the players on the court and cannot include any bystanders. If you can’t call a ball out, it is considered IN.
- X. OTHER CAPTAIN AND PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES.**
- a. SCORE REPORTING. The team must submit the match scores within 24 hours of the match. After the score is posted, any team captain will have 24 hours to contest the score. The score will become official if not contested after the 24 hour time period. If a substitute was used, refer to rule VII.I.1. for instructions on completing the online record.
 - b. CONDUCT. Captains and players are to monitor behavior to assure conduct is in accordance with the USPA Code of Conduct.
 - c. RULES. Captains and players are to read and understand the USPA rules and USAP rules.

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- d. DISPUTES. Any issue resulting in a problem that cannot be agreed upon must be reported to the League Director for follow up.
- e. VIDEOTAPING. Videotaping is allowed by USPA.

XI. INCLEMENT WEATHER.

- a. RESCHEDULING. Due to a tight schedule for the leagues and based upon the availability of courts at the sites, it is unlikely for a match to be rescheduled. In the event that it can be, all participants will be notified in advance. Any match not played will not be counted in the final standings, as described in VII. D.
- b. MATCH CANCELLED AFTER START. Once games are completed in a round, that round is considered completed for those two teams, and will not be repeated or replayed. All games completed before the cancellation will stand and be recorded in the online score reporting for the match. If fewer than half of the games were played, the match will NOT be counted in the standings, though all games will be recorded by DUPR. If more than half the games were played, the standings will be recorded as a win/loss and games will be counted towards the standings.

XII. PUBLISHED REGULAR SEASON STANDINGS.

- a. STANDINGS. Throughout the season the standings of each division skill group will be posted and updated on the Piql website. Placement in the standings is based on Overall Wins (OW), Games won (GW), and then Point Differential (PD).
- b. TIES. In case of a tie in OW, the team with the highest number of GW is placed higher in the published standings during the season. In case of a tie in GW, the team with the highest PD is placed higher in the standings.

XIII. CHAMPIONSHIP WEEK

- a. All teams will participate in Championship week, based on their standing from the first 7 weeks of the season. 1st place vs. 2nd place, 3rd place vs. 4th place, 5th place vs. 6th place, and 7th place vs 8th place. Final standings will be reflected by the win/loss of this week.
- b. Final standings will be used to determine “bragging rights” for clubs based on places in each of the leagues. (Example: POP gets the most wins overall for the Spring season and is the Spring Champion Club.)
- c. As outlined in V. F. 4, players who participate in “Championship Week” must fulfill the requirements to play.