COMPETITION RULES

Tennis

Revised | April 2026

1. TEAM ENTRY

1.1 Grades are:

Premier League

Division 1 – can confidently serve, return serve and rally with forehand and backhand.

Division 2 – slower serve, few double faults, forehand and developing backhand.

Division 3 – learning to play tennis. Evidence of serve, forehand and backhand but is inconsistent with rally and return of serve.

Division 4 – learner. Weak service, loopy forehand and backhand. Few rallies occur, learning to score.

The Shield grade is **Premier League**.

All teams are open (up to Year 12).

Shield competitions are only held in Term 1.
Term 4 competitions are non-Shield across all grades.

1.2 Team Numbers:

1.2.1 Premier League consists of 8 players. Teams can have up to 9 players.

1.2.2 All other teams consist of 6 players. Teams can have up to 7 players.

1.3 Schools are expected to provide a minimum of 2 courts for every 2 teams entered in the Saturday competition. 3 is preferable. 4 courts are required to host Premier League round on Monday nights.

1.4 Premier League Tennis can be played on either hardcourt, synthetic or grass surfaces.

2. ELIGIBILITY

Nil

3. UMPIRING

3.1 Players can request an umpire and may be granted following agreement by both coaches.

Where umpiring or oversight is requested because of a scoring disagreement, both coaches must be present.

4. MATCH RULES (INC IGSSA-SPECIFIC RULES)

4.1 Competition is played under International Rules of Tennis, unless stipulated below.

4.2 Premier League:

4.2.1 Premier League will play 4 doubles and 8 singles.
4.2.2 Premier League must play a 6-game set.
4.2.3 Premier League will play a 7-point tiebreaker at 5-all.
4.2.4 In Premier League, doubles games must be seeded. Seeds 1-4 may play in any combination against the opponents seeded 1-4. Seeds 5-8 will play against the opposition seeds 5-8. There will be no crossover of doubles between the top 4 and bottom 4 seeds.
4.2.5 In Premier League, order of play (and merit) for all singles and doubles sets will be determined and communicated to the opposition coach before commencement of play and may not be modified after.

4.3 Divisions 1-4:

4.3.1 Matches will start at 8am, therefore players should arrive at 7.45am.
4.3.2 Divisions 1-4 will play 3 doubles and 6 singles.
4.3.3 Divisions 1-4 may shorten sets in order to finish games by 10am if required. Players should understand whether they are playing to 4 or 6 games before they begin.
4.3.4 Divisions 1-4 will play a 7-point tiebreaker at either 5-all or 3-all.
4.3.5 In Division 4 grade, the second serve may be made from the service line and/or served underarm.

4.4 Premier League:

A team must have at least 6 players to take the court otherwise a forfeit loss results with maximum set and game score applied. A scratch match should be played.

If a team has only 7 players, the 8th single is a 0-6 forfeit loss, and the 4th double is a 0-6 forfeit loss.

If a team has only 6 players, the 7th and 8th single are 0-6 forfeit losses, and the 4th double is a 0-6 forfeit loss.

4.5 Monday Premier League Tennis

Games will start as close to 4.00pm as possible. If teams are late to arrive due to transport distance, then games will be reduced unless the finishing time can be extended by mutual agreement. Coaches should negotiate time before the start of matches. If a team is not ready to play by 4.20pm, it will be considered a forfeit by the late team, however a friendly game may still proceed under agreed revised conditions.

5. RESULTS

5.1 All results from the preceding week's matches must be submitted to Clipboard by 48 hours post-fixture in order for accurate Premiership Tables to be published in a timely manner.

5.2 Incomplete Matches

4.2.1 Wash outs: If a match is washed out part way through, there needs to be at least 4 of the 6 sets completed for a winner to be announced. Otherwise, the match will result in a tie, with 0-point differential.

4.2.2 If a Premier League match is unable to commence for reasons beyond the control of either team, then every reasonable effort should be made to reschedule. If a mutually agreeable reschedule date between the participating schools cannot be reached, then the match result will be a tie, with 0-point differential.

5.3 For IGSSA Premiership tables, three points will be awarded for a win, one for a draw and zero for a loss. In the event of a bye, the team drawn to have a bye will be awarded three points. In the event of a forfeit, the non-offending team will be awarded three points and the maximum winning margin. The offending team will be awarded zero points and the maximum losing margin.

5.4 If **half or more** games from an IGSSA Division are unable to be completed in a single Shield round, then **all games** from that round in that Division will be considered a draw, with a 0-point differential. For the avoidance of doubt, for example, if there are six scheduled Shield games in a round, and three are unable to be completed, then all games in that round are considered a draw.

6. FINALS

6.1 Shield grades – single pool - two semi-finals, 1 v 4 and 2 v 3, will be scheduled, with the winners of the two semi-finals (finalists) playing for the Shield in the Grand Final. The winner of the Grand Final will be awarded the Shield. If season length/number of nominations does not allow for semi-finals, then a 1 v 2 Grand Final will be scheduled, and the winner of the Grand Final will be awarded the Shield.

Shield grades – two pools - two semi-finals, 1 (Pool A) v 2 (Pool B), and 2 (Pool A) v 1 (Pool B), will be scheduled, with the winners of the two semi-finals (finalists) playing for the Shield in the Grand Final. The winner of the Grand Final will be awarded the Shield. If season length/number of nominations does not allow for semi-finals, then a 1 (Pool A) v 1 (Pool B) Grand Final will be scheduled, and the winner of the Grand Final will be awarded the Shield.

The team which finishes higher on the regular season ladder has the right to host any semi-finals, or the Grand Final, at their choice of home venue. In the event that the preferred home venue is not available, IGSSA will schedule an alternative venue in consultation with the school with hosting rights.

In the event that finalists are from different pools, the hosting rights will be granted to the team which earned more ladder points. If teams in one pool played fewer games than the teams in the other pool, overall ladders will be adjusted on average wins.

Finalists will be determined by total points initially (i.e., win/loss tally) and then SD (Score differential) if points are equal but a split needs to be made.

If the Score Differential is also equal, then the team who has won in Head-to-Head games in any Shield matches from the regular season will advance. Where more than one H2H Shield game has been played, total score from the two games shall be combined to determine a winner. For example, if Team Blue and Team Red played two Shield games in the regular season, with Blue winning the first 3-0, and Red winning the second 2-0, Team Blue would advance. If a further split needs to be made, then a point countback is to be made on all Head to Head Shield games.

6.2 If a finals fixture is tied at the end of all matches, then the split method is sets won, then games won, then play 2 x doubles if required.

6.3 If either or both semi-final matches cannot be played, the higher-ranked team will advance to the Grand Final.

6.4 If no Grand Final fixture can be played and team(s) are on tied points in Shield grades at the end of the season, the Shield winner will be identified using the following criteria:

i. Head-to-Head – Calculate the premiership points for fixtures played

between *each team involved in the tie* only. The school with the most Head-to-Head premiership points wins the Shield (providing equal number of Head-to-Head games between tied teams exist). If there is still no clear winner from Head-to-Head calculation, then:

ii. Score Differential – Calculate the score differential for all fixtures played. The team with the greatest score differential will be awarded the Shield. If there is still no clear winner from the score differential, then:

iii. The Shield will be shared between all teams on tied points.

6.5 GRAND FINAL ONLY – Team sheets (seedings) MUST be submitted to the IGSSA Executive Officer by 12pm on Match Day for circulation to both schools.

6.6 The IGSSA First Singles trophy will be awarded to the player with the most Shield matches won over the season. If one or more players are tied on matches won, the games score differential will determine the winner.

7. EQUIPMENT

7.1 Match quality balls are to be supplied for all grades by the home team.

During minor rounds, the home team will supply at least one tin of (4) match quality balls per two players in a team, with balls retained between sets.

During major rounds and finals, for Premier League and Division 1, both home and away teams will each supply 3 tins of (4) match quality balls, and new balls will be used for each set.

During major rounds and finals, for all other divisions, both home and away teams will supply 2 tins of (4) match quality balls, with balls retained between sets, except as needed.

SPORTSMANSHIP GUIDELINES

Sport plays an essential role in the personal and social development of students, fostering teamwork, discipline, and resilience. To ensure that every student has a positive and enriching experience on the field or court, it is important that we prioritise sportsmanship, respect, and enjoyment in every

competition.

IGSSA's Sportsmanship Guidelines are designed to maintain a healthy balance in competition, ensuring that students from all skill levels and backgrounds have the opportunity to feel engaged and supported. In this spirit, collegiality and open communication between schools and coaches are vital. By working together, we can create an environment where the well-being of our athletes comes first, where every match is competitive yet compassionate, and where the values of respect, fairness, and encouragement shine through.

These guidelines are a reminder that while winning is part of sport, the ultimate goal is to nurture a love for the game and foster strong character in all our students.

CONSIDERATIONS

It is expected that all players will embrace and respect Tennis etiquette, including:

- Collegiality and communication are important between schools/coaches.
- Players should introduce themselves to their opponents at the beginning of sets and before play commences. At the end of each set and before leaving court, players will meet at the net and shake hands.
- Balls should be returned promptly and directly to the serving player, under net if possible, or by an underarm hit at cooperative pace. At change of ends, players should retrieve match balls from their end of the court and exchange them directly and by hand to the serving player.
- Players will strive to make accurate and fair line calls and may only make a call for an event which occurs on their side of the net, unless that event is a fault. Line calls will be made in good faith and dissent from players whom the call does not favour should be avoided.
- In the case that a player has genuine concern that their opponent's line calls are consistently unfair, they may request the presence of umpires, and the coaches of both teams will spectate for as long as they both deem necessary to resolve the dispute.
- Players may celebrate won points, but celebrations should be performed with consideration for opposing and surrounding players, should be proportionate and brief, and must not be disruptive to play.
- Where a significant and obvious skill imbalance is apparent, players should refrain from executing advanced strategies (i.e. running doubles formations, approaching net during serve, etc.), and rather focus on simple and direct play.
- Where non-playing students are spectating, encouragement of playing teammates should be kept respectful at all times, and if spectating, students should commend all well played points, regardless of team.
- Spectating players should not "crowd" the courts of players currently on-court, and should remain at an appropriate distance from the area of play at all times.
- If a player is accidentally hit on the body by a ball, a quick and courteous apology gesture is appropriate.
- Both players are to ensure that scores are called out clearly before service, if no umpire is present.
- A handshake is appropriate at the end of play.