



## **MASTERS INTERPROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS RULES**

### **Purpose:**

Tennis Ireland (TI) through the National Masters Committee strives to see the 4 Provinces field the most competitive Inter-provincial Masters Teams in Ireland while also supporting the other domestic Irish Masters Tennis circuit events and in particular the National Masters Events. The objective is to have the strongest possible fields competing in these events and use them as a stepping stone to the World Championships for the best players.

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## MASTERS INTERPROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS RULES

1. The Inter-Provincial Tennis Championships (The Championships) shall take place between the Provinces of Ireland each year and will be played under the Rules of Tennis and the Rules and Regulations and Code of Conduct of Tennis Ireland.
2. The Championships will be divided into 3 events. Age groups may vary, year on year) depending on International events. Where possible, age groups will be sorted when they initially go into the calendar.
3. No Player may compete in two separate Master Interprovincials unless having been called up as a sub in a lower age group on the days of the event.
4. All players must have a TI PIN and have a TI Tournament Software Account.
5. Each team in each event, shall consist of not less than 4 male and 4 female players, to be nominated in order of singles merit, together with a non-playing captain. For the Masters 65 + event, doubles pairings must be registered with the host province in order of merit and these pairings remain in place throughout the event.
6. The eligibility of a person for Provincial selection shall be determined by:  
Province of Birth  
Or  
Place of permanent residence from 1<sup>st</sup> January in the year preceding the Championships  
Or  
In the case of Connacht any player at least one of whose parents or Grandparents was born in Connacht.  
Or  
Be a registered Member of a Tennis Club within the Province from 1<sup>st</sup> January in the year preceding the Championships. (over 12 months)  
Or  
Have lived in the Province for 10 years or more  
A player is not eligible to play for a province if they have played for/Represented another province in the previous 3 calendar years.
7. Each event shall consist of the required number of matches, played on a Round Robin basis, between the competing Provinces as follows:

|     | <b>Male</b>   | <b>Female</b> |
|-----|---------------|---------------|
| 7.1 | No. 1 Singles | No. 1 Singles |
| 7.2 | No. 2 Singles | No. 2 Singles |
| 7.3 | Doubles       | Doubles       |

**\* 2 doubles only for Masters 65 +**

7.

8. The composition of a team for each tie, eg Over 35 Leinster versus Munster, may be varied at the discretion of the non-playing captain (or nominated Captain) save that in respect of Singles matches a team must adhere to the nominated order of merit as between the two Singles players from that Province. The Non-Playing Captain, (or nominated team member) of each team may sit on court during a match and then may only communicate with their own player(s) at a change of ends.
9. A full list of the teams, nominated in order of merit for each event, shall be furnished to the host Province no later than 7 days preceding the commencement of the Championships. All teams to be published on TI software no later than 3 days prior to the event.
  - \* any late changes to be notified prior to commencement of the event.
10. The team nominated for a specific tie, in each event, shall be furnished to the Referee no later than 15 minutes prior to the starting time designated for that tie. In each tie the No. 1 Men's Singles match must commence before the No.2 Men's Singles match and the No.1 Ladies Singles match must commence before the No.2 Ladies Singles match etc.(unless agreed between Provinces & Referee)
  - \*For the Masters 65+events the first doubles will be played first followed by 2nd doubles. If for International Calendar reasons the 65 events are brought into the lower age group event, then singles will be played. |However, as with international rules, no player may play more than one singles in the same day.
11. If a Singles player in a team withdraws due to injury, following nomination for a specific tie, then it is at the discretion of the Non-Playing Captain to decide how to play the remaining matches. However, the order of merit must be maintained.
  - If any player retires injured or can't start a match due to injury, with the agreement of the referee and the other captains, another team member within the same age category can play a second match. A medical assessment should be carried out on the injured player by the on-site physio before any substitutions are made.
  - Alternatively, if a player, whether from an older age group (not involved in that Interprovincial) or called up, comes in as a substitute after the team has been nominated to the Host Province, (such a player will still be deemed eligible for selection for their own age group) for a specific tie, then the order of merit must be maintained. e.g., Singles 1 will be played by original Singles 2 player if Singles 1 is injured, and substitute will slot in at Singles 2 or Doubles with 1 of the Doubles players moving up to the Singles 2 spot.
  - If by agreement, a player plays two matches in a tie, then the running order for that tie may be amended to allow for adequate rest time for that player.
12. If a Province cannot field a full team in an age group then, with the agreement of the Referee and the other Non Playing Captains, a team of 3 may compete.
  - This may occur due to

- A player on a team has an illness or picks up an injury very close to the date of the Interpro weekend and the Province cannot find a player to fill the fourth position on the team.
- A Province has difficulty getting a fourth player for one of their teams and despite all their best efforts have no option but to compete at the Interpro weekend with three players.

Every player on the three-person team MUST play one match against each Province and each player on the team can only play one extra match against each province. The players are ranked and the order of merit must be maintained.

- (1) Player A
- (2) Player B and
- (3) Player C.

13. One point shall be awarded for each match won in each tie and the Province securing the greatest number of points shall be the winner of that age group. Should there be tie between two teams then the team who won the head-to-head will be deemed winners of the age groups. If there is a three-way tie then sets for will be counted. If this produces a winner, then they will be deemed winners of the section. If sets are equal, then it will go to sets against and if this brings it down to two teams then it will revert to head-to-head.

To determine the winner of the overall event, the following will be used.

- Winner of an Age group will be given 4 points
- Runner Up in an Age group will be given 3 points
- Third Place will be given 2 points
- Fourth Place will be given 1 point

The Province securing the greatest number of points will be deemed the winner.

14. Each match shall be the best of two normal tie-break sets and a Match Tie Break (first to 10 win by 2). All Tie breaks will change at 1 point and every 4 points thereafter.

15. 3 new tennis balls to be provided for each match.

16. All players must wear accepted tennis attire & footwear.

17. The schedule of matches in each event shall be determined in such a way that there is even progress between the provinces/teams during weekend. The schedule is to be fully published on Tournament Software three days before event & notification and link of same advised in advance to all provinces.

18. Where, for any reason, an event is not completed before the winning province has been determined, the decision of the TI National Masters Committee of Tennis Ireland in consultation with the Director, Referee & Assistant Referee of the event will prevail.

19. The organisation of the Championships shall be vested in the Councils of the host Provinces in each year and every Province shall, prior to 1<sup>st</sup> April in each year, nominate a representative to Tennis Ireland to deal with necessary administrative matters relating to the Championships.

20. The venues for the Championships shall have not less than 12 courts of uniform surface with floodlights, together with adequate changing, viewing and catering facilities. Should the designated courts become unplayable, for any reason, the event may, at the discretion of the Referee, be transferred to courts of a satisfactory standard, which may be of a different surface. It is the responsibility of the TI Competitions Committee to ensure that the venues selected meet the minimum facilities criteria and arrange for inspection of the facilities if necessary.

21. The host Province shall nominate a Director, Referee and an Assistant Referee in respect of each event.

22. The venue surface and make and brand of ball to be used shall be notified by the host Provinces to the Provincial Branches not later than 2 weeks before the event each year.

23. The host Province will notify Tennis Ireland and the other Provinces of arrangements and costs not later than 2 weeks before the event each year.

24. The Referees shall hold a Captains' Meeting at least 45 minutes before play begins on the first day of the event or at a suitable agreed time prior to play. All Players should be present at least one hour before play is due to start on the first day of the event for the Official Team Photographs.

25. Should a point arise which, in the opinion of the Referee, necessitates consultation with the competing Provinces, the Referee may call a meeting consisting of two representatives from each Province, one of whom shall be the non-playing captain. Every Province shall, prior to the commencement of play in each event, nominate their other representative. A list of representatives from each province to be provided in advance to host province Director, only nominated representatives and any member of the Masters committee present at the event may attend such meetings.

26. Each Province is responsible for paying all costs incurred by their teams before they leave their accommodation and the venue. All meal & beverage costs associated with each provincial team, to be paid to the host province as soon as is practicable. Invoices for these costs will be posted to each province for full payment. Preferred payment terms will be advised in invoice.

27. These rules supersede and amend/replace all preceding rules in respect of the Championships and shall come into effect from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2025.



## **Appendix:**

### **Clarifications in relation to the Order of merit.**

The item that must be confirmed by each Province and can't be changed for the duration of the Competition as per Rule 8 above is the order of Merit.

*However, it doesn't mean you can't vary who plays doubles during the competition. Any of the players can play doubles. However, at all times the players who line out for singles must do so in order of merit. So, for instance if the No. 1 Player in the order of merit plays in the doubles with say the No. 3 Player in the order of merit, then the No. 2 Player in the order of merit must play No. 1 singles and the No. 4 Player in the order of merit must play the No. 2 Singles. There are many other permutations possible. However due to the strict adherence to the order of merit for the duration of the Competition the No 1 Player in the order of merit can never play in the No. 2 Singles and the No.4 Player in the Order of merit can never play in the No. 1 singles.*

*Rule 11 above covers the procedure for confirming the actual line-out for each tie within the Competition.*