



## ***Franklin County Pool League 8-Ball***

### **MEMBERSHIP**

All FCPL rules and regulations are subject to the discretion of the league director.

All players must be members in good standing to compete in any events conducted by the Franklin County Pool League (FCPL).

Adding and dropping players:

A team may add a member at any time.

A team may drop a player at any time.

Once a player is dropped from a roster, they cannot be added back in the same session.

No more than eight members may appear on a team roster at any time.

To be eligible for post-season play, a member must have played in at least four matches within that session.

Members may not be on the roster of more than one team.

Once a member plays one or more games for a team in a session, that player cannot play for another team in the same session.

Any team using false players may be stripped of any awards or cash it has earned.

If a team drops from the league, or is dropped from the league for league infractions, the team forfeits all rights to awards and/or cash and post-season competition.

### **CAPTAINS**

Each team will have one player on the roster who is the captain (or two co-captains). The captain must have a working phone and email. In the captain's absence during a match, any member may act as captain.

Captains are responsible for the following:

To attend or be represented at league meetings

To lead and direct the team in sportsmanlike competition

To distribute information to team members

To ensure that all team members are members in good standing

To ensure that all match reports are complete

To send all match reports to the director in a timely manner

To collect and forward all necessary fees

### **RULES OF PLAY**

**Legal Shot** A legal shot is executed when an object ball of the player's group is struck first and a ball is pocketed legally or any ball—the player's ball, the opponent's ball, the eight ball, or the cue ball—is driven to a rail.

When two balls are struck at the same time, it is a "split hit," and the shooter will receive the benefit of the doubt. However, many times the "split hit" can be avoided by asking a third party to referee the shot beforehand. The referee's decision is final.

The eight ball may not be the first ball struck until the player clears the table of all the balls in his/her group, at which time the eight ball becomes the object ball.

**Fouls** A foul may be called by a player, a member of either team's roster, or a referee. A spectator may not call a foul. Once a foul has been called, any differences of opinion will be settled between the team captains as outlined in these rules. A foul must be called immediately after the infraction—prior to the player taking another shot. Once the next shot has been taken, no claim of foul may then be raised.

- A. The cue ball is always live and, if touched, results in a foul and ball in hand is awarded.  
**Exception:** During ball-in-hand situations, the cue ball may be touched—by the player only.
- B. Touching an object ball with cue stick, hand, article of clothing, chalk, or any other item (not including the cue ball) while no balls are in motion is not a foul. The opponent has the option to leave it as it lays or place it back to its original spot.
- C. If, during a shot (while the balls are in motion), an object ball is illegally moved and subsequently makes contact with the cue ball, it is a foul and ball in hand is awarded.
- D. Whenever a ball inadvertently falls into a pocket, whether touched by anything other than the cue ball or untouched, it is not a foul. The ball is retrieved and replaced with no penalty.
- E. Under no circumstances is anyone allowed to mark any ball or felted/unfelted surface in any way to aid in the performance of a shot or for any other reason. No penalty will be assessed for this infraction, but any mark in question will be cleaned or removed.  
**Note:** Placing the chalk on any felted or unfelted surface for the means of aiming is not allowed. There is no penalty for this. Simply move the chalk.
- F. If an object ball, other than the eight ball, is driven from the table, the ball is spotted. Play continues as if it had not left the table.
- G. Jumping of the cue ball by scooping under it is a foul, and ball in hand is awarded. An unintentional miscue is not a foul. Jump shots and masse shots are legal when the proper method is applied (striking the upper half of the cue ball). If a location does not allow jump shots or masse shots, then the location's rules on this subject will govern.

**Non-Player Interference** If the balls are moved or a player is bumped so that play is directly affected by a non-shooter during the match, the balls will be replaced as near as possible to their original positions immediately prior to the incident, and play will resume with no penalty on the player affected. This rule also applies to “act of God” interferences such as earthquakes and hurricanes, as well as a light fixture falling, power failures, etc. If the balls cannot be restored to their original positions, replay the game with the original player breaking.

**The Rack** The eight ball will be in the middle of the rack with a striped ball in one back corner and a solid ball in the other back corner. All 15 balls must be touching. The head ball must be located on the foot spot. The player not breaking will set the rack. The player who is breaking may request a re-rack for compliance with the above stipulations.

### Opening Break

- A. The cue ball must be played from behind the headstring. A foul for failure to break from behind the headstring may not be called after the shot—it should be called to the breaking player's attention before the shot and corrected.
- B. The rack must be struck before a foul can occur.
- C. The rack must be struck first before the cue ball hits any rail. Failure to do so results in a foul. The balls are re-racked, the racker becomes the breaker, and the breaker becomes the racker.
- D. The rack may be struck at any point.
- E. It is a legal break when a ball is pocketed or four object balls are driven to a rail.  
Failure to execute a legal break is a foul. The balls are re-racked, the racker becomes the breaker, and the breaker becomes the racker.
- F. If a player scratches on a legal break, it is a foul. The incoming player has ball in hand behind the headstring and may shoot at any ball outside the kitchen (other than the eight ball).
- G. If a player scratches on an illegal break, the balls are re-racked, the racker becomes the breaker, and the breaker becomes the racker.

**Open Table** It is an open table until one ball of a group has been pocketed on a called shot that is free from a foul or a scratch. If no balls have been made on the break, it is an open table.

**Choice of Stripes or Solids** Once a player makes a ball on a called shot that is free from foul, the player is assigned that group and the opponent the other group.

**Eight Ball Pocketed on the Break** Eight ball pocketed on the break wins the game. Eight ball pocketed on the break with a cue ball foul occurring loses the game.

**Balls Jumped Off the Table** If the shooter drives any object ball off the table, except the eight ball, it is not a foul, and the ball is spotted using the Spotting Balls rule below. If the shooter drives the eight ball off the table, it is a foul and loss of game.

**Spotting Balls** Balls to be spotted are placed on the foot spot. When a ball interferes, the ball to be spotted is placed below the interfering ball as close to the foot spot as possible.

An object ball may be frozen to another object ball but may not be frozen to the cue ball. However, it may be placed as close as possible to the cue ball. The cue ball is always live. A player may ask to have a referee (person not playing said game) place the object ball to avoid any fouls.

**Combination Shots** The eight ball may not be the first ball struck in a combination shot at any time, including an open table. It is a foul and ball in hand is awarded.

When the table is open, a solid ball may be struck first to pocket a striped ball, or a striped ball may be struck first to pocket a solid ball.

Once a group has been determined, the shooter must strike a ball in his/her group first, after which any ball (including the eight ball) may be included in the combination.

**Ball Frozen to the Cushion** When an object ball is frozen to the cushion, it is only a legal shot if after contact:

The cue ball strikes a rail, or

The object ball is driven to another rail, or

Any other ball is driven to a rail.

**Loss of Game** It is a loss of game when:

The cue ball is scratched while playing the eight ball as the object ball.

The eight ball is jumped off the table at any time.

The eight ball is pocketed on the break and there is a foul.

While shooting the eight ball, it is pocketed in the wrong pocket.

While shooting an object ball other than the eight ball, the eight ball is pocketed.

The course of the cue ball or eight ball is altered in what would have been a game-losing situation.

While playing the eight ball as an object ball, failure to strike the eight ball first is not loss of game; it is a foul and ball in hand is awarded.

## **SCORING**

The winner of a game of eight ball is awarded ten (10) points for legally pocketing the eight ball. The loser receives one (1) point for each of their balls pocketed.

If a player makes the eight ball on the break or completes a break and run, the player will automatically receive ten (10) points. The loser receives zero (0) points. Please make note on your scoresheet of any eights on break or break and runs.

If a player wins the game as the result of an error of the opponent, the winning player receives ten (10) points for the game. The loser receives one (1) point for each of their balls pocketed. This game will be a circle game and is not calculated into either players' handicap or stats.

Any game in which a scratch on the eight or an early eight occurs will be circled on the scoresheet for both players. A circle game is not calculated into either players' handicap or stats.

## **COACHING**

**Match Play** Any player on a team's roster may coach during a timeout. The coach may be changed from game to game.

While the opponent is at the table, the player waiting his/her turn may converse with anyone on the roster. Once the opponent's turn has ended and all balls have come to a stop, all conversation must end, or it is considered a timeout. Once the opponent has concluded his/her turn, the player waiting must report directly to the table.

## Timeouts

- While at the table, only the coach may advise the player and then only once during any game.
  - There is a one-minute time limit per timeout. Violation of this will result in ball in hand to the opponent ONLY if a 15-second reminder was announced.
  - Other players may not converse with the coach or player during a timeout.
  - Once a coach has completed a timeout and has left the table, the timeout is over. A coach may not return to the table to extend a timeout even though the player has not resumed play. It will be considered a second timeout, and ball in hand will be awarded.
  - The player has the right to refuse a timeout. However, if the coach approaches the table, the timeout must be taken.
  - The coach may not place a ball in hand on the table to set up the shot but may advise on the ball placement. If the coach places the cue ball during a timeout, a ball in hand is awarded to the incoming player.
  - It is not a timeout or a coaching violation for anyone to remind the player to call the pocket on the eight ball, to call a ball-in-hand foul, to remind the shooter that they are shooting at the wrong balls (stripes or solids).
  - There is no penalty if a player or teammate requests a second timeout. However, if a second timeout is taken, it is a foul and ball in hand is awarded.
- Exception:** When a player has two or less object balls left and is playing a ball other than the eight ball and a second time out is called, it is a foul and ball in hand for the incoming player.
- If at any time the shooter is playing the eight ball out of turn (with their own balls remaining on the table) and a second timeout is called, it is a foul and ball in hand for the incoming player.
- All coaching violations will fall under the rules of Etiquette.

## ETIQUETTE

**Disqualification** The league director has the right to disqualify any player from a game or tournament for unsportsmanlike conduct or actions detrimental to the game or league.

### General Etiquette

Do not harass the player at the table in any way.  
All players must remain back from the table and may not circle the table while a player is shooting.  
Try to keep movement to a minimum during an opponent's shot.  
Applaud good performance, not poor performance.  
Extend the type of courtesy you would hope to receive.

**Disputes** During the course of spirited play, it is inevitable that disagreements will arise. The following steps should be considered in resolving the problem.

**Prevention:** Many times, a problem can be anticipated and prevented. If a hit is going to be close, ask someone beforehand to referee the shot and abide by the referee's decision. If a ball is near a cushion and the frozen ball rule may have some bearing, announce beforehand to your opponent that the ball is not frozen and let your opponent have the chance to check it.

**If a problem has occurred and now must be resolved:**

Allow the captains, uninterrupted by the players, to attempt to reach an agreement.  
Allow the captains to request a ruling from a mutually acceptable third party.  
Consider the possibility of replaying the game.  
If needed, contact the league director.  
If all else fails, agree to disagree, and file a protest.

**Protest** The match must be completed, and only the captain may lodge a protest. The protest must be lodged at the time of the dispute and immediately communicated to the league director. The decision of the FCPL will be final and is not appealable.

**Note:** Once the scoresheets have been signed by both teams, the match is finalized, and no protest may be submitted thereafter.

## **MATCHES**

**Scheduling** All matches are scheduled to start at 7:00 PM on Thursdays, unless another time and day are mutually agreed upon by the team captains or announced by the league director. By 15 minutes after the scheduled starting time, competition must begin. After 15 minutes, the first game is forfeited and subsequent games every 15 minutes. After 45 minutes, the match is considered a team forfeit unless notified earlier by the opponent. Forfeit rules apply.

Matches may be rescheduled by mutual agreement of both captains and prior notification to the league director at least 24 hours beforehand, but no matches may be rescheduled during the final two weeks of the session. If a team needs to postpone a match, notification prior to 4:00 PM on the day before the match is allowed without penalty. Notification AFTER 4:00 PM on the day before the match will result in a forfeit.

**Playing of Matches** By mutual agreement of the captains, a player may be permitted to play all of his/her games consecutively; however, this would be a rather rare occurrence and a generous concession on the part of the opposing captain.

If a player is going to be late, he/she may be bypassed in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> rounds only. If that player does not arrive by the time all other games of rounds 1 and 2 have completed, a player must be inserted, a ghost must be used, or the games are forfeited. A forfeit score of 10-0 is awarded to the opposing team for each game not played. Any player in the lineup may be inserted into the ghost spot.

If a game is played by an incorrect player, the game is voided and the correct players must replay the game, regardless of who was at fault.

**Lineups** Each week, updated handicaps and/or roster changes will be sent out via email to captains.

Each captain will complete the weekly scoresheet for his/her team, listing the players who will be competing and the handicap of each. Any new player who has yet to attain a handicap will start as a 3. If a player has an established handicap in another league, they will start at that skill level. (See the limitation on adding new members in the Membership section of the rules.)

The team handicap will be totaled and rounded up/down during regular-session matches. They will not be rounded during playoffs.

For example, if the team total is 12.0 to 12.4, the team total will be 12.0; if the team total is 12.5 to 12.9, the team total will be 13.0, etc.

The team with the lower handicap will have the difference between the two handicaps added to its score after each round.

**Order of Play** For the first round of games, the visiting team will break, and the home team will pay for the games and rack the balls. This arrangement will alternate throughout the four rounds.

**Team Scoring** Total up ball count each round, including the handicap. Two round points will be awarded for each round won. If a round is tied, each team will be awarded one round point. At the conclusion of the fourth round, add both team's total ball count, including the handicap spot from each round. The team with the greater total will be awarded three overall points. If there is a tie, each team will be awarded one and one half overall points. (The Tie Breaker round is only used in playoffs.) The total of both teams' round points and overall points should equal eleven.

## **FORFEITS**

**Team Forfeits** When a team forfeits a match, that team will receive zero (0) wins and eleven (11) losses. The team that wins by forfeit will receive eleven (11) wins and zero (0) losses.

**Game Forfeits** When a team forfeits a single game, a score of 10-0 will be entered for that game. This will be a circle game and does not get entered toward any player's handicap or stats.

**Weekly Fees** When there is a forfeit, both teams are still responsible for sending in their weekly fees and paperwork stating a forfeit.

## **GHOSTS**

If a captain announces the potential use of a ghost, that captain has the option of waiting until the end of the second round for their player to arrive or may start using the ghost right away. If a ghost is used and then a player shows up, that player may be entered into the lineup but may not replay any games missed.

The ghost may be entered anywhere on the roster. The opposing player chooses who the ghost will be on a round-by-round basis. The ghost plays at his/her current handicap or 3.0, whichever is greater.

If five members of the team are present, using a ghost is not allowed.

**NOTE:** *Ghosts are not allowed in playoffs*

**If one player is absent:** When one player is absent, the above ghost rule applies. This may require the recalculation of the total team handicap on a round-by-round basis.

**If two players are absent:** When two players are absent, the above ghost rule applies. This may require the recalculation of the total team handicap on a round-by-round basis. The second absent player will be handicapped as a 3.0 and forfeits the game. A score of 10-0 will be entered for any game that is forfeited. Any forfeit is a circle game and does not get calculated into any player's handicap or stats. Please note on the scoresheet.

**Replacing players:** Once a player has played at least one shot in a game, he/she cannot be replaced during that match without the league director's approval.

**Leaving early:** By mutual agreement of both captains, a player may play his/her remaining games to leave early. If a player leaves early and does not finish the remaining games, the games will be forfeited and a forfeit score of 10-0 will be entered for any game that is not played. A ghost may not be used for a player who leaves early. Any forfeit is a circle game and does not get calculated into any player's handicap or stats. Please note on the scoresheet.

**Minimum number of players:** A match may be played with any number of players. Playing with one or two players, one ghost is to be used and the remaining games are forfeited as stated under Forfeit.

## **POSTPONEMENTS**

**Weather** If a Winter Storm Warning is issued for Franklin County during the hours of league play, the playing of the matches is at the discretion and agreement of both captains. Matches not played may or may not be rescheduled. This will be determined by the league director.

If a match is postponed, it must be made up within four weeks of the postponement. If the match is not made up within the four weeks, the league director will contact both captains and set a date to play the match. If the match is not played on the arranged date, the team who failed to show for the new date will forfeit the match. All league fees are still due from both teams. The match will be played at the originally scheduled location.

All matches must be made up prior to two weeks remaining in the session.

Matches may be rescheduled by mutual agreement of both captains and prior notification to the league director at least 24 hours beforehand, but no matches may be rescheduled during the final two weeks of the session.

If a team needs to postpone a match, notification prior to 4:00 PM on the day before the match is allowed without penalty. Notification AFTER 4:00 PM on the day before the match will result in a forfeit.

## **REPORTING OF SCORES**

During a match, both teams will keep track of the scoring and compare totals at the end of each round—or each game if possible.

At the end of the match, each captain will sign both sets of scoresheets.

Weekly fees are \$7 per player, and each captain will be responsible for collecting the weekly fees from each player that night, for a total of \$35 due per team each week. Even if a team has a forfeit or uses a ghost, the team is still responsible for the fees of the absent player(s).

The captain will then be responsible for getting the scoresheet and the team's league fees to the league director.

**Scoresheets and fees are to be dropped off with the bartender at Smitty's or St. Stan's, in the envelopes provided, by no later than 1:00 PM on the Wednesday immediately following the match.** Handicaps will be calculated and emailed to everyone that Wednesday afternoon for the following night's matches.

## **POST-SEASON PLAY**

**Playoffs** At the conclusion of each session, a number of teams, determined by the league director, will qualify for the league playoffs. These teams will qualify based on winning percentage of match rounds played.

**Ineligibility** Any team with unpaid dues is ineligible for any post-season play.

**Eligibility** Only the members who were on the roster at the end of the session will be permitted to play in post-season matches. A player must have played at least four (4) matches during the regular session to be eligible for post-season play.

**Tiebreak Procedure** The tiebreak procedure for two or more teams will be based on:

1. How they did head-to-head during regular-session play
2. Total games won
3. Total winning percentage of games played
4. Balls made

### **Match Play**

- The handicaps are not rounded up/down for the playoffs.
- If a playoff match ends in a tie, a tie breaker round will be used. The fifth round, labeled Tie Breaker on the scoresheet, will be used to determine a winner. The home team will break in the Tie Breaker round.
- Same rules apply for this round as the first four.
- Handicaps will not be recalculated during the playoffs.
- There are no league fees during post-season play. A copy of the scoresheet is to be texted to the league director as soon as the match is complete—do not bring scoresheets to Smitty's or Stan's during post-season play.

## **HANDICAPPING**

New players play the first week as a 3.0. If they have an established handicap in another league, they will start at that skill level.

The handicap is calculated based on points won divided by games played, and then adjusted upward or downward based on the player's winning percentage—upward if the winning percentage is above 55%, and downward if below 45%, increasing upward or downward as the winning percentage moves higher or lower.

In short, this system, without going into actual computation, places more demand on the higher caliber players, while at the same time placing a little less demand on the lower handicapped player—and isn't that what a handicap system is all about anyway?