



# **Rules of Racketlon**

**25<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Racketlon is the sport in which you play your opponent in each of the four racket sports table tennis, badminton, squash and tennis. A Racketlon match consists of four sets, one in each sport. The player with the most points in total is the winner and the best all round racket player.

This document contains the official Rules of Racketlon defined by FIR – Federation of International Racketlon.

## **2. DEFINITION AND RULES OF THE FOUR SPORTS**

### **2.1. Definition of Racketlon**

The following three principles need to be fulfilled in order for a game to be called Racketlon:

- a) The game must include the following four sports table tennis, badminton, squash and tennis;
- b) The game must be built on the concept of involving the same two individuals (pairs in doubles) playing each other in all four sports with equally formatted sets in each sport;
- c) Each rally must count, which means running score. The player (pair) who wins most rallies in total is the winner of the match.

Any game that fulfils the three principles above is Racketlon. Any other game involving the combination of several racket sports might be termed "multi racket sport" - but is not Racketlon.

### **2.2. The Rules of the Four Sports**

With the exception of the rules provided in this document, Racketlon is regulated by the rules of each of the four individual sports Table Tennis (see Annex A), Badminton (see Annex B), Squash (see Annex C) and Tennis (see Annex D).

## **3. RULES SINGLES**

### **3.1. Order of Play**

The four sets shall be played in the set order from the smallest to the biggest racket starting with Table Tennis and continuing with Badminton, Squash and finishing with Tennis.

Exceptions to this order can only be granted if the infrastructure makes a different order easier to play, e.g. if any of the courts are offsite and this sport is chosen to be played last. In such cases the complete tournament should be played in this different order and the order of play must be communicated to all participants in advance.

### **3.2. Scoring**

#### **3.2.1. Running score to 21 points with a margin of two points:**

Every rally results in a point to the winner of the rally - i.e. "running score" is applied - and the winner of each set is the player who first reaches 21 points, in team competitions 11, 15 or 21 points. Except at 20-20 (or equivalent for team events) when the set is extended until there is a margin of two points. A set can thus end e.g. 22-20 or 25-23 but never 21-20.

#### **3.2.2. Total points count**

The winner of a Racketlon match is not the one that wins most sets but the one that scores the most points in total. This means that it is possible to lose three out of the four sets and still win the match.

#### **3.2.3. Early interruption**

The match is over and the final score counts when the winner has enough points for the match to be decided. Thus Tennis sets often don't have to be played to the end.

#### **3.2.4. Gummiarm Point**

If, after all 4 sets, both players have exactly the same number of points, a "Gummiarm point" shall be decisive (see below).

### **3.3. Serving and Ends of Court**

#### **3.3.1. The toss**

The initial order of serving, receiving and ends in each of the four sets shall be decided by one single toss before the match starts, according to the following procedure:

The winner of the toss decides whether to start serving or receiving in table tennis. The player, who starts serving in table tennis, starts receiving in badminton, starts serving in squash and starts receiving in tennis. In each set (except in squash, of course) the player who starts receiving, decides what end to start the set from. The server in all sports is to be clearly marked on the score sheet.

#### **3.3.2. Two serves each**

After every two points the serve goes to the other player. At the first of these two serves the server always serves from the right (except in table tennis, of course) to left. The second serve is from the left to the right side.

#### **3.3.3. Switch sides at 11 points**

Ends are switched at the time when 11 points are first reached by any of the players.

#### **3.3.4. One serve each after 20-20**

After 20-20 the serve switches hand after every point until the set is decided. The two first serves are from the right side, the two next serves are from the left and so on. Thus player A serves from the right, then player B serves from the right followed by player A from the left and player B from the left.

### **3.4. Gummiarm Point**

#### **3.4.1. One single point in tennis breaks a tie**

If, after all 4 sets, both players have exactly the same number of points, then one extra point is played in tennis, known as the "Gummiarm Point". The winner of this single point is also the winner of the full match.

#### **3.4.2. A toss decides server**

Server is decided by the drawing of lots. The winner of the lot may either choose to serve or to receive. The loser of the lot may choose from which side (left or right) to serve or to receive.

(The choice on which side to play on is not given, players stay on the side they have played until reaching the Gummiarm Point).

#### **3.4.3. One serve only**

To off-set the server's advantage there is no second service in the Gummiarm Point.

### **3.5. Time Intervals & Continuous Play**

#### **3.5.1. One minute at 11**

A maximum break of one minute shall be allowed at 11 (i.e. when 11 points is first reached by any of the players) in each set.

#### **3.5.2. Three (3) plus three (3) minutes between sets**

The break between sets shall be maximised at "3+3" minutes meaning: (a) Warming up at the next sport has to commence within 3 minutes after the end of the previous set. (b) The next set has to commence within 6 minutes after the end of the previous set.

#### **3.5.3. Continuous play**

Play must be continuous at all times (as far as can be reasonably expected). Umpires and referees have the right to penalise players under the misconduct rule should they breach this.

### **3.6. No Coaching During Play**

Coaching of players is permitted only during the breaks between sets and at the half time break within each set.

Coaching does not include cheering and encouragement between rallies that clearly have no effect on the continuity and tactic of play. The Referee shall decide whether comments are permissible encouragement or improper coaching. The use of external communication aids is prohibited.

The Referee may penalise coaching in any form during play by applying the misconduct rule to the player being coached.

### **3.7. Conduct on Court**

#### **3.7.1. Misconduct penalties**

All FIR tournaments need to nominate a Head Referee before the tournament, who has knowledge of the Rules of Racketlon as written down in this document.

All players need to hand their score sheet to the referees (provided there is a referee) when starting the set in the sport they will be playing.

For any act of misconduct as judged by the referee such as swearing, threatening behaviour, racket or court abuse, delaying or dangerous play, coaching etc., the player shall be penalised as follows on a per Racketlon match basis:

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| a) First incident:  | warning;  |
| b) Second incident: | player loses a point; loses a point (when receiving his warning after sport has finished, the other player will start next sport with 1-0 bonus); |
| c) Third incident:  | player loses the set of the sport/set he is playing   |
| d) Forth incident:  | player loses the match and is disqualified from the tournament.   |

The squash referee shall have the right to waive a minor conduct warning (such as striking the opponent with the ball).

In case of a severe act of misconduct, e.g. throwing the racket at another person, the player can be disqualified from the tournament without any warning after confirmation by the Head Referee.

The referees will be the ones who will decide if a penalty will be awarded during or after the played sport/set and shall show the player a yellow card for each incident.

Each penalty will be carried through to the next sport/set. Apart from the score, the referee will clearly mark this on the score sheet at the end of the sport and the penalty will count when starting the next sport.

A disqualification in a match or from the tournament needs to be confirmed by the Head Referee.

#### **3.7.2. Line Calls Stand**

If a call is challenged and no judge or referee is present then the call stands and the challenger has to accept the call. The challenger may, of course, request a referee to preside for the rest of that set, if available.

### **3.8. Injury**

#### **3.8.1. 5 minutes once**

Each player is allowed one injury time-out per Racketlon match of 5 minutes.

#### **3.8.2. Bleeding**

In the event of blood flowing, resulting in the risk of blood being transferred to other players or objects, such as balls/shuttlecocks or playing surfaces, play must be suspended immediately and the bleeding player must leave the playing area as soon as possible. The player may use his/her 5-minute injury timeout for treatment. Play may resume once the bleeding has stopped, the wound has been covered (where possible) and all traces of blood have been removed from the playing area. The referee may, at his/her discretion and after consultation with the Tournament Director, extend the 5-minute injury time-out and allow play to recommence later in the tournament.

If the bleeding cannot be stopped within the time allotted, the bleeding player must concede the match, unless it is the result of a contributed injury, in which case 3.8.3 below applies.

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Any reoccurrence of bleeding during the match shall be treated as an extension of the first occurrence. Play shall be stopped again and time allotted to treat the wound as above.

### **3.8.3. Contributed injury (squash)**

If any injury is the result of a collision with the opponent in Squash, the umpire may allow the player as much time as he needs if the referee thinks the player will recover to play and the tournament schedule can be maintained, and if necessary, penalise either player.

## **4. RULES DOUBLES**

The rules of each sport and the singles rules above regulate most aspects of a doubles match. But some additions are necessary. The following rules are specifically applicable to doubles.

### **4.1. Players on Court**

Both players of each pair must be on court for the table tennis, badminton and tennis. The exception is squash, which is played as singles.

### **4.2. Serving and Ends of Court**

#### **4.2.1. Definitions**

The examples below refer to a match between Pair A (containing players A1 and A2) and Pair B (containing players B1 and B2), where the digit 1 denotes the players serving and receiving first (in the set) respectively.

#### **4.2.2. The toss**

As in singles there is one single toss done before the match deciding which team starts to serve in each set and which team gets to decide what end to start playing at. Specific to doubles it is the team that starts serving that, in each set, decides which of the two players shall start serving. Likewise, it is the receiving side that decides which of the two players starts receiving. The receiving side may make their choice after they know who will serve.

This rule regarding serving, receiving and ends of court apply to all sets except squash (see below).

#### **4.2.3. Two (2) serves each**

As in singles each serve game contains 2 serves, meaning that each server gets to serve twice before the right to serve moves over to the next server, with the exception of the extension after 20-20, where the serve switches hand after every point.

#### **4.2.4. Right then left**

As in singles the first serve in each serve game is always from the right to left and the second from the left to right. Except in table tennis where the serves are always from the right as in standard table tennis doubles.

#### **4.2.5. Table Tennis**

The order of serving/receiving rotation in table tennis starts with A1 to B1, B1 to A2, A2 to B2, B2 to A1 and this cycle repeats itself until 11 is reached. At that stage the two players that are about to receive switch positions with each other and the cycle changes into A1 to B2, B2 to A2, A2 to B1, B1 to A1. Note that the regular position switches only occur after each serve game and only on the side which has just been serving.

#### **4.2.6. Badminton**

The cycle for badminton serving is simply A1 - B1 - A2 - B2 throughout the set. The receiving is guided by the badminton rules that suggest that the receiving players keep their positions when the server moves to serve from the left side after having served from the right. This gives the following cycle: A1 to B1 then A1 to B2, B1 to A2 then B1 to A1, A2 to B2 then A2 to B1, B2 to A1 then B2 to A2. Which repeats itself without change until the end of the set. This should be like in Tennis, that you can choose to make changes of receiver at half-time (normally at 11 points)!

**On reaching deuce (20-20, if not a team event), the order is as follows:  
From the right side: A1 to B1, B1 to A2, A2 to B2, B2 to A1.**

Then, from the left side: A1 to B1, B1 to A2, A2 to B2, B2 to A1.

NB the B1 and B2 order is switched if the receiving pair elected to change receiver at half-time.

This cycle repeats itself until one pair has a two-point lead.

#### 4.2.7. Tennis

As in badminton the cycle for serving in tennis is simply A1 - B1 - A2 - B2 throughout the set. As regards the receiving each team choose, at the beginning of the set, which player returns on the deuce court (i.e. forehand side for right handers) and ad court (i.e. backhand side for right handers) and this shall stay the same until the half time break at 11, at which time each of the teams has the option to switch or leave it unchanged. This shall then stay the same until the end of the set.

On reaching deuce, the order is as follows:

From the right side: A1 to B1, B1 to A1.

Then, from the left side: A2 to B2, B2 to A2.

NB the B1 and B2 order is switched if the receiving pair elected to change receiver at half-time.

This cycle repeats itself until one pair has a two-point lead.

### 4.3. The Squash Set

#### 4.3.1. Switch players at 11

The squash is played as one singles set to 21 in two parts, to 11 in teams. In the first part player A1 (from team A) faces player B1 (from team B). When 11, at 6 in teams, is reached the players are switched so that A2 faces B2 in the second part of the set.

The scoring is kept at the switch so that A2 takes over A1's score while B2 takes over B1's score. The serving is handled in the same continuous way (e.g. A2 starts serving from the left if his partner (A1) served from the right in the previous point).

#### 4.3.2. Player Order in Regular Doubles

Each pair chooses themselves which player plays first. The pair that does not serve first has the advantage to be able to wait with their choice until they know about their opponents' choice.

a) *Definition. Independent and Contextual Doubles Matches*

By "Independent" doubles match below is meant a doubles match that does not take place within the context of a tournament, a tour or any other connected series of matches. By "contextual" doubles match is meant the opposite; i.e. a match that takes place within such a "context".

b) *Player Order in an Independent Doubles Match*

Each pair chooses themselves which player plays first. The pair that does not serve first has the advantage to be able to wait with their choice until they know about their opponents' choice.

c) *Player Order in a Contextual Doubles Match.*

I. Same Order within FIR Tournaments

The order is set by the way the players are entered and must stay the same throughout the whole tournament. First player in a doubles pair plays first, second player second.

II. Wrong order penalised by 0-21

If any of the pairs violates such a contextual ordering rule the offending pair shall automatically lose the squash to zero and the opponents shall register a win by 21-0.

#### 4.3.3. Player Order in Mixed Doubles

In Mixed Doubles the pair can chose which if the male or female starts, no matter if they will play the male or female of the other team. The order has to stay the same throughout the tournament.

### 4.4. Gummiarm Point

As in singles there is a Gummiarm point if the pairs have exactly the same number of points after four sets. Specific to doubles the serving side shall decide who will serve within the pair.

Server is decided by the drawing of lots. The winning pair of the lot may either choose to serve or to receive. If the winning pair decides to serve they may decide who in the team will serve, the loser may decide from which side and which player will receive the serve. The receiving teams positions forehand/backhand stay the same as they were in the second part of the set leading to the gummiarm point.

If the winning pair decides to receive they may chose on which side to receive and who will receive and the losers of the lot may decide who shall serve.

## **5. FINAL PROVISIONS**

### **5.1. Coming into Force**

The Rules of Racketlon were originally passed at the FIR Founding Assembly on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2019 in Vienna and were last approved at the AGM of 12.9.2020. The revised Rules of Racketlon shall be valid immediately.

The clarifications of server-receiver sequence for badminton and table tennis (section 4.2.6 & 4.2.7) were approved by the FIR Council on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2022 and will be presented to the next FIR General Meeting for ratification.

### **5.2. Amendments and Modifications**

The Rules of Racketlon can only be amended and modified by the General Meeting of the FIR.

FIR – Federation of International Racketlon

Duncan Stahl  
President

Graham King  
Rules Officer (ad interim)

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**ANNEX A      RULES OF TABLE TENNIS**

For the Rules of Table Tennis see:

<http://www.ittf.com/Regulations/Regulations.html>.

If the direct link has become outdated, please refer to the website of the corresponding international federation:

<http://www.ittf.com/>.

An extract of the most important rules:

Racket rules:

At all FIR tournaments only official Table Tennis rackets with the ITF brand may be used. Racket controls can take place before every match.

No fresh glueing is allowed.

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**ANNEX B      RULES OF BADMINTON**

For the Rules of Badminton see:

<http://www.internationalbadminton.org/page.aspx?id=10513>.

If the direct link has become outdated, please refer to the website of the corresponding international federation:

<http://www.internationalbadminton.org/>.

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## **ANNEX C      RULES OF SQUASH**

For the Rules of Squash see:

Singles Rules:

<http://www.worldsquash.me.uk/2009docs/090608SinglesRulesV3.pdf>;

Doubles Rules:

<http://www.worldsquash.me.uk/2009docs/DoublesRulesDecember2008.pdf>.

If the direct links have become outdated, please refer to the website of the corresponding international federation:

<http://www.squash.org/>.

## **ANNEX D      RULES OF TENNIS**

For the Rules of Tennis see:

<http://www.itftennis.com/abouttheitf/rulesregs/rules.asp>.

If the direct link has become outdated, please refer to the website of the corresponding international federation:

<http://www.itftennis.com/>.