

**ST.ALBANS SWIM & TENNIS CLUB**  
**CUP RULES FOR 2023-2024 SEASON**  
**(REVISED 6/1)**

**I.PURPOSE**

Keeping the Ladder competitive and accurate is an important part of the Club's success when competing against other clubs in the area. Challenges are a very important part of the process. Challenges are used as the most objective way to determine the placement of each team on the Ladder. All parties involved in a challenge should remember that we all belong to the same club, and should welcome challenges in a courteous manner to keep the Ladder at its strongest! With the proper system in place, we can continue to improve our teams and be as successful and competitive as possible.

**II. CHALLENGE RULES**

All Ladder Teams (teams that currently have a spot on a Cup team) who plan to challenge must communicate their intent to challenge by emailing Head Pro, Tennis Director and Team Captains no later than December 1<sup>st</sup> following the season . Head Pro/Tennis director will keep an updated list of challenges and results, and notify teams when it is their time period to challenge. Barring any extenuating circumstances, only teams with winning records are eligible to initiate the challenge process. Teams must consist of two players who are currently on the Ladder in order to be eligible to initiate the challenge process.

The Challenged team may pick the court surface if applicable. The Challengers supply the game balls, and make court accommodations. The court fees are split evenly among players.

All Challenged teams must respond to the email request by Challengers within 48 hours, and the challenge must be completed within two weeks. Once a challenge match is completed, the winning team must notify Head Pro, Tennis Director and Team Captains of the match results within 24 hours, and the winning team will have another 24 hours to decide if they wish to initiate an additional challenge. Head Pro, Tennis Director and Team Captains must be copied on all correspondence among players.

Challenges will occur in the following order:

a. Teams With Partners who have Decided to Split Prior To Challenges: This refers to Ladder teams who have decided that they do not wish to continue as partners. If both previous partners want to challenge for the original spot, they must secure a partner and play a match to determine who will keep the spot on the Ladder. You must notify Head Pro, Tennis Director and Team Captains promptly and no later than July 24th. This challenge will occur no later than August 24th, and follow all other challenge rules. The winner of the Challenge keeps the spot, and the losing team becomes an Outside Team ( team that is not currently on the Ladder) and has the option to challenge onto the Ladder during the Open Challenge Season, by challenging one Ladder Team. Head Pro, Tennis Director and Team Captains must be copied on all correspondence among players. If the

previous partners are not able to field new partners immediately after the season, so as not to hold up the challenge process, the previous partners' spot will be frozen, and once they complete their challenge for the spot, the winning team will challenge back onto the Ladder at their previous spot. This challenge will follow rules regarding previously Injured teams (see " III. Notes #3.")

- b. Teams on The Ladder (referred to as "Ladder Teams"): The Ladder Team challenge process will begin January 1st, for those teams who have communicated their intent to challenge by December 1st (exception: see "III. Notes #6 & 7). The order of the challenges will be determined by the number of teams that comprise the entire ladder. If there is an odd number of teams on the total ladder the even numbered teams will have the first right to challenge. If there is an even number of teams, the odd numbered teams will have the right to challenge first. If we consistently have an even number of teams we will alternate odd's and even's on which team has the first rights to challenge each season.
  1. **Odd# Teams** may initiate their challenge by emailing the even numbered team directly above them on the ladder. They must also include the Head Pro, Tennis Director and Team Captains on the email. All initial challenges are restricted to one position above on the ladder, and must be completed within two weeks. If the odd# team wins their challenge match, they may continue to challenge one spot above until they lose but not exceeding 3 challenge matches.
  2. **Even# Teams** may initiate their challenge by emailing the odd numbered team directly above them on the ladder, and copying all those listed in "b.1" above. All initial challenges are restricted to one position above on the Ladder. If the even numbered team wins their challenge match, they may continue to challenge one spot above until they lose but not exceeding 3 challenge matches.
- c. Outside Teams: Outside Teams (Teams that are not currently on the Ladder but wish to join the Ladder) may challenge any one current Ladder team during the "Open Challenge" season, which will take place during the first 2 weeks of March. Allowing Outside Teams the opportunity to challenge prior to the start of the season insures that our Cup teams are most competitive for the upcoming season. If the Outside Team wins, they take the spot of the Challenged team, and the Challenged team moves down one rung on the Ladder. If the Outside team loses, they may request to be a substitute player for the upcoming season, and they may challenge again during the next Open Challenge Season. Head Pro may advise Outside Teams about where they may best challenge onto the Ladder.

### III. NOTES

1. Teams may choose not to play an offensive challenge (challenging a team above you), but all teams must play a defensive challenge (a challenge initiated by the team below you or by an Outside team during Open Challenge season).
2. Head Pro may move a team one position only on the Ladder during the Cup season after the third Cup match of the season, in conjunction with the team captain(s)

and based on the team record and analysis of skill level, in order to make teams more competitive. If a Ladder team spot becomes vacant last-minute with limited time before the Cup roster is due, Head Pro may insert a team into the spot based on their level of play and analysis of their skill level. This team becomes a New Team on the Ladder, and the team below has the option to challenge. If a competitive team is not available, then the current Ladder teams will move up a rung, and an Outside team will be placed at the bottom of the Ladder.

3. Pregnancy or Injury Option (Referred to as “Injured Team”): This must be declared prior to the Challenge Season by emailing Head Pro, Tennis Director and current Team Captain(s). The Injured Team’s spot will be frozen for the duration of challenges. To ensure fairness to both the injured team and existing lineup, the frozen position will be determined after teams are shuffled due to challenges. The goal of this process is to prevent the injured pair from being penalized or benefiting from an injury.

- a. An Injured team may not be challenged by any team during the challenge period.
- b. The Injured team must challenge back in at their frozen position. If the previously Injured team wins, they resume their original position, and the defeated team moves down one rung on the Ladder.
- c. If the previously Injured team loses, they drop one position and must accept a challenge from the team that currently holds that position, if requested.
- d. If the previously Injured team loses the requested challenge, they will continue to challenge until they win and a spot is secured.

4. No Team may go through challenges knowing that they will not be playing together during the upcoming season. Please notify Head Pro, Tennis Director and Team Captains promptly via email if you are no longer able to retain your spot on the Ladder.

5. If a Team Decides to Split Up for any Reason After Challenges: If both former team members are interested in keeping their spot, they will secure partners and challenge for the spot. The winning team secures the spot, and the losing team becomes an Outside Team and may challenge during the Open Challenge period. If there is one remaining player, that player may choose a new partner. In either case, this team is now considered a “New Team” on the Ladder and they must accept a challenge from the team directly below them on the Ladder if requested. If the New team loses, they must continue to accept challenges from below until they have secured a win.

a. The remaining partner may alternatively choose to play with subs during the upcoming season. If this option is chosen, a new permanent partner must be secured for the following season, at which time this “New” Team on the Ladder must accept a challenge from the team directly below them on the Ladder, if requested.

6. Extensions To Challenges: While it is preferred that challenges are played on time or early (see #7 below), extensions may be acceptable if: courts are not available; players reside outside the area during the challenge season; or, other extenuating circumstances approved by the Head Pro/Tennis Director. The goal is to have matches completed quickly as to not hold up the challenge process, as this may negatively impact other

**teams on the ladder** . Respectful communication among members is paramount to making the Ladder system and Club run well for all of our members. Consequences for not responding or otherwise refusing to accept challenges may include up to a default of your Ladder position.

7. Should all parties on any of the Cup teams agree to have their challenges early (prior to the Challenge Season), you may do so by notifying the Head Pro, Tennis Director and Team Captains via email no later than September 15th. These challenges would begin after any challenges noted in "II.a,". All other rules regarding challenges apply. Head Pro/Tennis Director will notify teams when their challenges can begin.

8. If a team(s) has any issues needing clarification or third party intervention, please email the Ladies' Tennis Director ([Tennis@stalbansswim.com](mailto:Tennis@stalbansswim.com)), Men's Tennis Director ([Tennis2@stalbansswim.com](mailto:Tennis2@stalbansswim.com)) and Head Pro([philhahn21@gmail.com](mailto:philhahn21@gmail.com)). In the case where the situation impacts the positioning of the Ladies' Tennis Director, she will recuse herself, and the President ([President@StAlbansswim.com](mailto:President@StAlbansswim.com)), will act as the third arbitrator.

9. Our lowest level Cup will be determined by a round robin and analysis by our Head pro. Since this team consists of our least experienced members the head pros input will insure a better playing experience for everyone.

**Good Luck to All!  
Go Saint Albans!**