**CLSA Pickleball Club’s Flexible Skill Level System**

With growing membership numbers and a wide variety of skill level in our players, the CLSA Pickleball Executive has been experimenting with different play systems. At the end of 2013 the following Flexible Skill Level System was selected.

The Flexible Skill Level System is used on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning at 10:00 a.m. and on Friday afternoons if sufficient numbers warrant. Prior to 10:00 a.m. Tuesdays/Thursdays and on Fridays, the system used is the traditional Gold/Silver play system. Players on the court prior to 10:00 a.m. when the switchover begins, may finish the game they are playing.

As 10:00 a.m. approaches, a member of the executive will draw up a list of names for those that are in attendance that day, divided into two groups. Group B will have lower skill level players and the Group A will have higher skill level players. The number count of the two groups will be balanced as evenly as possible. Players in the mid range of skill level may be placed in either group, depending on the number count. The executive will rotate the mid range skill level players so as to give everyone fair opportunity in each group.   
Group A will play on the two courts away from the exit doors (higher skill levels)  
Group B will play on the two courts closest to the exit doors (lower skill levels)  
Players will place their paddles in two rows (sets of four paddles) on returning from the courts; **winner paddles on the west side of the bleachers and loser paddles on the east side of the bleachers**(closest to the exit doors). The orange cone is shifted back and forth from the front of each line as courts become available. The side with the cone plays on the next available court. When returning to the courts the two winners from the previous game must play on opposing teams for the next game. Same goes for the two losers. Games are only played until the first team scores 11 points.   
**Players are not permitted to interchange paddles at their own discretion within the row placement. This is unfair and not courteous to other players. Please respect this rule.**  
*Note: Towards the end of play days there are often diminishing numbers in attendance leaving the groups unbalanced. Some players may fold into the alternate group to achieve maximum court usage and fair access.*

Skill Level Ratings

These descriptions were derived from current rating descriptions used in Florida's Winter Senior Pickleball Leagues. They have been modified in an attempt to better meet the differences in the various age groups that the USAPA represents.

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| 1.0 | These players need to work most on developing their hand/eye coordination. They frequently miss the ball entirely, but can hit some of the slower balls with their forehand. They have a hard time playing games because they can't keep a rally going. |
| 1.5 | --------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------  These players keep some short rallies going with their forehand, but still fail to return easy balls frequently and occasionally still miss the ball entirely. They have played a few games and know the basic rules of the game.  -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------- |
| 2.0 | These players are learning to judge where the ball is going, but can sustain a short rally with players of equal ability. They have obvious weaknesses in most of their strokes.  -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------- |
| 2.5 | These players are able to keep quite a few balls going with their forehands, make most easy volleys, and are beginning to make some backhands but need to work more on developing their strokes. They are thinking more about coming up to the non-volley zone to hit volleys and are making an effort to be more aggressive.  -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------- |
| 3.0 | These players are fairly consistent when hitting medium-paced shots, but are not comfortable with all strokes and lack control when trying for direction, depth, or power on their shots. They are beginning to attempt lobs and dinks but don't fully understand when and why they should use them and don't have a lot of success with them.  -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------- |
| 3.5 | These players have achieved improved stroke dependability with directional control on most medium speed balls and some harder hit balls. They still need to develop more depth and variety with their shots, but are exhibiting more aggressive net play, are anticipating their opponent's shots better, and are developing teamwork in doubles.  -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------- |
| 4.0 | These players have dependable strokes, including directional control and depth on both forehand and backhand sides with most shots. They can use lobs, overheads, approach shots and volleys with some success and occasionally force errors when serving. Rallies may be lost due to impatience. Teamwork in doubles is evident. They know the rules of the game and can play by them.  -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------- |
| 4.5 | These players have developed their use of power and spin, can successfully execute all shots, can control the depth of their shots, and can handle pace. They have sound footwork and they move well enough to get to the non-volley zone whenever required. They understand strategy and can adjust their style of play according to their opponent's strengths and weaknesses and their position on the court. They can hit serves with power and accuracy and can also vary the speed and spin of the serve if desired.  -------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------- |
| 5.0 | These players have all the skills of the 4.5 players, but have either developed these same skills to a higher level or are simply quicker and/or stronger than the 4.5 group of players. |