SPADES TOURNAMENT RULES

Format: Open partner tournament. Two individuals register as a team. Single elimination play. Eliminated teams may stay and play informally, but are considered “out” of the tournament. There will be a 45 minute time limit per match. If neither team has won the match in the time limit, the team ahead at the "stop" time will be declared the winner. If a hand is in progress at "stop" time, it will be played out and the results added to the score to determine a winner. Should there be a tie score at the end of 45 minutes, a one hand overtime will be played. The team with the highest score after the hand is played will be declared the winner.

1. Teams will be composed of 2 players who will sit directly across from each other when playing.

2. Games will be to 400 points. A match will consist of 1 game. Scorekeeper will be agreed upon by the table prior to start of game.

3. The Dealer will deal all cards - 13 to each player. Spades are trump, ranking from A, K, Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2.

4. Definitions and Terminology:
   - Trick – refers to taking or winning one hand
   - Bid – A player chooses the number of tricks that he/she will take.
   - Bags – Number of extra tricks a team takes over their total bid. (example: a team bids 5 tricks total, but wins 7: result is 2 bags)
   - Set - When a team fails to win enough tricks to reach its total bid
   - Nil – If one player says “nil”, that player has looked at his/her cards and has decided that he/she will not take any tricks.
   - Blind Nil – If one player says “blind”, that player must declare this prior to looking his/her cards. A player that says “blind nil” is stating that he will not take any tricks.
   - Reneging – when a player fails to play the suit of the led card and later throws that same suit. (Example: Hearts are led, player A throws a spade to win the trick. Later, player A throws a heart. Player A has Reneged.)

5. Scoring
   - 1 trick = 10 pts.
   - 1 bag = 1 pt.
   - Successful Blind bid = 100 pts. Failed Blind Nil bid = -100 pts.
   - Successful Nil bid = 50 pts. Failed Nil bid = -50 pts.
   - Reaching 10 bags = -100 pts. Reneging = -50 pts.
   - Bidding and taking all 13 tricks = 200 pts.
   - Not reaching a team bid = Minus (-) the # of tricks bid X 10 pts.
6. No “table talk” or giving hints to a partner will be allowed.

7. Dealer must offer the player to his/her right, the opportunity to cut the cards after they are shuffled.

8. A misdeal can be called for the following:
   - Player was not dealt exactly 13 cards
   - Player does not have any face cards of any suit (Ace, King, Queen, Jack)
   AND no spades

9. The Bid: Player to the left of the dealer bids first. Each player has the opportunity to bid once each hand, with the dealer having the last bid. Minimum bid for each team is 4 tricks, even if a player goes nil. The player going “nil” must not catch any tricks during the hand. If the player catches any tricks, the team is penalized 50 points. However, if bid is made by the team they still receive points for the tricks. (Example: Player A1 declares nil. Player A2 bids 4. During the hand, player A1 wins 1 trick and player A2 wins 3. Since minimum bid is made, Team A receives 40 points. However, they are deducted 50 points for player A1 catching a trick. Team A is deducted 10 points from their total score.)

10. Players must bid in order, starting with the player directly to the left of the dealer.

11. Lead Card: The first hand is led by the player holding the 2 of Clubs. Each player following must play his/her lowest club. The winner of the trick will lead the following.

12. Players must follow the suit of the led card, if they have a card of that suit. If a player does not have a card of that suit, they can choose to throw a spade or another suit.

13. A spade will “trump” or beat all other suits.

14. A player can not lead with a spade until a spade has been played or that is all he/she has left in hand.

15. “A card laid is a card played!” and can not be picked up unless the original move is illegal.

16. Match winners are responsible for turning in the score sheet.

17. Any protest or rule clarification must be decided by the designated Judge before the next trick is played.