



Los Angeles Area

Local League Rules
2017

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www.laleaguecoordinator.com

GUIDE TO RULES

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General Info

Tennis is a great sport for individuals and for teams, for the young and the not-so-young. In the USTA/SCTA League program, we meet new people and build friendships within our teams, while pitting our skills against others. A good set of rules is a major component in maintaining an environment of healthy competition and good sportsmanship.

In the Los Angeles Area, our matches are governed by the following sets of rules, and every captain (and player) should be familiar with them because questions invariably come up which can usually be answered in one of these documents:

(N) National 2017 USTA League Regulations (ULR)
(S) Sectional 2017 Southern California (SCTA) Section Regulations (SLR)
(F) Friend at Court
(C) The Code: The Players' Guide for Unofficial Matches
(L) Local - 2017 Los Angeles Area Local League Rules (LLR) and Supplement for each season

“Check that players are registered on TennisLink before they play a match.”

SEE SUPPLEMENT for The Los Angeles Area league match format, the minimum number of players required to be registered prior to the Initial Roster Deadline in order to be included in the local league schedule, and important dates for the current season.

SEE www.laleaguecoordinator.com for detailed information on registration, NTRP ratings, grievance procedures, facility addresses, as well as links to rules & reports in TennisLink.

SEE QUICK GUIDE for checklists for captains, players and spectators, plus reference for time limits, handling disputes.

Reminders

Players and captains need to remember:

- 1) As you recruit players, you need to know where their priority is. Are they committed to your team, even if they are playing on two or more other teams? We've seen teams with large rosters defaulting lines because too many of their players are already playing matches somewhere else.
- 2) Check that players are registered on TennisLink *before* they play a match.
- 3) Make sure players go to the correct court, and play the correct opponents.
- 4) The Coman Tiebreak Rotation (change ends after the first point and every 4 points thereafter) will be used for the Set and Match Tiebreak.
- 5) Home teams are to provide courts. Visitors are to provide match balls. (Any USTA approved ball may be used for USTA League matches.)
- 6) Teams found to be using courts outside the LA area will have a line DQ'd for each match so played.
- 7) Home teams are not *required* to provide warm-up courts, but we recommend at least reserving one, especially at public pay facilities, and ask if the visiting team is willing to pay for it. Let opponents know if you are unable to reserve courts at the start of the season.
- 8) Captains are responsible for ensuring the sportsmanlike behavior of their spectators. Please inform them as to when and how to cheer, if they are not aware of the correct tennis etiquette.
- 9) Players need to be aware that there may be noise and interference from outside the courts or from public using adjoining courts which we cannot control, such as loud music, gardening equipment, balls continually coming on match courts and events within the park. Matches shall continue unless all players agree to stop and re-schedule as defined in "unplayable conditions".
- 10) Bathroom breaks are permitted at any point during the match, if absolutely necessary, although it is recommended that breaks be taken between sets, or between games. There is no specific time limit for such breaks, but players shall make every effort to keep the time to a minimum. No coaching is allowed.
- 11) Every match is important, even if you think you are not going to win your league because teams sometimes drop out of Playoffs/Sectionals, or one or more wildcard teams may be added to the draw (there is an "order of rotation" that is used), which may open up a spot for a second-place team.
- 12) As soon as the Coordinator receives wild card information, we will inform teams.
- 13) When recording scores, take extra care to enter the correct names and scores. If you find an error after it has been posted, you must notify the Coordinator (Michelle) who will make corrections.
- 14) As a principle, play should be continuous, from the time the match starts (when the first service of the match is put in play) until the match finishes.
 - a. Between points, a maximum of twenty (20) seconds is allowed.
 - b. When the players change ends at the end of a game, a maximum of ninety (90) seconds are allowed. **However, after the first game of each set and during a tie-break game (including match tie-breaks), play shall be continuous and the players shall change ends without a rest.**
 - c. USTA Comment 29.1: The 20-second time limit does not apply if a player has to chase a stray ball. See Rule 21 and USTA Comments 21.1-7 for more information about when the server and receiver must be ready.
 - d. At the end of each set there shall be a set break of a maximum of two minutes.
- 15) Captains should compare scores with each other before leaving the courts. You may appoint one of your players to do so if you cannot be there.
- 16) Although "The Code" states that "a player shall not enlist the aid of a spectator in making a call. No spectator has a part in the match.", there are times that players do. If that's the case, the following steps may be taken:
 - a. One person representing each team may be asked to aid in line calls
 - b. They stand at the net post.
 - c. They confirm or dispute the call only when asked by one of the players and it is on their end of the court. Baseline calls are given to the best of their ability.
 - d. Their call stands.
- 17) Please turn off cell phones or put them on silent. A ringing cell phone is a deliberate hindrance - if your phone rings during a point, your opponent may immediately stop play and claim the point.
- 18) There are special rules pertaining to Timed Matches. Please refer to the flowchart found in the Sectional Rules.
- 19) No coaching allowed when a match tiebreak is used in lieu of a 3rd set.

Communication

Communication - Coordinators

- a. Each captain must provide at least one e-mail address through which to receive correspondence from the Area League Coordinator. Make sure that your correct email and cell number are also on TennisLink.
- b. A co-captain may be designated for each team by notifying the Coordinator.
- c. Questions may be addressed to Lori Andelson (818-439-7749, text is best) or to Michelle Kramer (818-425-0376) or by email at laleaguecoordinator@yahoo.com. In general, Michelle handles scheduling and TennisLink issues, while Lori handles issues regarding rules and/or disputes.
- d. USTA membership issues may also be addressed or by phone: (800-990-USTA(8782))

Communication - Captains, pre-match

- a. At least 4 days before the match: VISITING captain needs to call or e-mail the hosting captain to confirm the time, day and location of the match.
- b. At least 3 days before the match, HOSTING captain needs to call or e-mail the visiting captain if they have not heard from them.
- c. At least 2 days before the match, EITHER captain needs to call or e-mail the Coordinator if they have not heard from the other captain. The Coordinator has contact information for everyone on all teams, so we can almost always reach someone if you are unable to.
- d. If neither team can show confirmation of any contact with the opponent, and a team shows up to play, the match may still be considered a double-default.
- e. If a team finds they must default a line, they should call the other captain by 5pm the day before, or as soon as possible, when a default seems unavoidable.
- f. If players are available to play after a default is confirmed, the match may still be played **if** the other captain agrees. (NOTE: Captains and/or players may not take a default, and then play the match "for fun". If there is time to play the match, and players and/or captains agree to play, it will count towards the standings.)
- g. If a team defaults a line(s) with no prior notification, the opponents have the option to adjust their line-up, even if they have already been exchanged.
- h. At facilities where courts must be paid in advance, defaults result in an unnecessary expense. Teams are not always able to cancel their courts the day before, which is why it is important to notify captains of defaults as soon as possible. It is simply a matter of common courtesy to let people know as soon as you are certain of a default, so players can adjust their plans. You would expect the same courtesy.
- i. Entire-team defaults for a match are unacceptable and poor sportsmanship. Only 4 players are required to play a valid match (2 lines in a 3-line format; 3 lines in a 5-line format). **If a team is not able to field 4 players for a match, the Captain must notify the Coordinators - failure to do so will result in possible sanctions, including being barred from participation in a future league.**

Communication - Captains, match day

- a. The home team captain should locate the captain of the visiting team, and let them know where to meet for the line-up exchange five minutes before match time.
- b. Captains exchange the team scorecards simultaneously and re-enter their players' names on that scorecard prior to the scheduled start time. (Write legibly, filling in first and last names as listed on the roster, not nicknames.)
- c. If players are present, and courts are *not* available, despite having reservations for courts, the home team will not have to default any games. Both teams will need to wait for courts to become available.
- d. If courts are not available 30 minutes after match time, the match may require a reschedule. (See "Unplayable Conditions.")
- e. The USTA Point Penalty System used at the championship level will **not** be used in local league play. A default will be called after 15 minutes from when the match is scheduled, called, a court is available, and a player has not arrived. No points or games are forfeited prior to the 15 minute deadline.
- f. Captains will record the scores as each match finishes, and sign both scorecards when all matches are completed and confirmed.
- g. Any captain (or player) from either team may enter or confirm scores in TennisLink.

"If a team must default a line, they should call the other captain by 5pm the day before."



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New Regulations & Clarifications

- All teams advancing past local league competition will participate at a District/Area Playoff to receive one of four spots at Sectionals. LA will play in North District/Area Playoffs (with Bakersfield, Santa Barbara, Ventura, San Fernando Valley and San Gabriel Valley). The top 2 teams from each District/Area Playoff will advance to Sectionals. See Sectional (SCTA) League Regulations for more details about flights and round robin formats for District/Area Playoffs.
- Captains must be familiar with the League Regulations/Rules and are responsible for providing this information to their players. Captains are responsible for ensuring that players and spectators exhibit sportsmanlike behavior.
- Matches must have at least 2 lines played in a 3-line format or 3 lines for 5-line format. Only 4 players are required for a valid team match. If a team is not able to field 4 players for a match, the Captain must notify the Coordinators - failure to do so will result in possible sanctions, including being barred from participation in a future league.

From Previous Years

- When checking the forecast, the zip code of the hosting site is to be used. The forecast temperature/conditions are to be checked for match time only, not for the time during the match. Only source to be used for heat forecast is (www.accuweather.com).
- The Heat Rule will not apply once a match has started. It must be played to completion. ALC's may confirm "Unplayable Conditions and the Heat Rule" if there are any questions or disputes.
- If Unplayable Conditions exist after the match has started, the Timed Match Procedure may be used to determine a winner, if the match is unable to be rescheduled.
- A re-schedule penalty will apply:
 - After the schedule has been adjusted for home and visiting teams (two weeks after schedules are published, per our local rules), any team wanting to re-schedule a match will default 2 lines (in 5-line format), or one line (3-line format).
 - The team agreeing to the re-schedule decides which lines will be defaulted (only in the 5-line format). Options are:
 - #1 singles & #2 singles
 - #2 singles & #3 doubles
 - #2 & #3 doubles
 - In 3-line format leagues, #3 doubles is defaulted.
- Re-schedule penalty will not apply:
 - When a team has at least 4 players from an LA area team going to USTA Playoffs, Sectionals or Nationals
 - If the home facility has scheduled an unplanned event and no courts are available

"When recording scores, take extra care to enter the correct names and scores."

Scheduling

1. Prior to publishing the schedules, captains must notify the Coordinator of:
 - a. any dates their team may not be able to play (due to a club or facility function)
 - b. preferred match day (Sat. or Sun.) and time
 - c. All reasonable attempts to accommodate these requests will be made.
 2. The schedules will be randomly generated and published on TennisLink, using a suggested day and time for matches, or the requested day and time.
 3. Once the schedules are published, the following time limits apply to make changes:
 - a. Home captains have one week to change the day and time, by notifying the Coordinator.
 - b. Visiting captains then have one week (after home captains' changes) to request a change, by contacting the home team. These requests are not automatic, and the home team is not required to make changes, except as defined in 4b below. If home team allows the re-schedule during this period, there will be no penalty.
 4. After these two weeks, the schedules are set, and **no re-schedules will be allowed**, except for
 - a. "unplayable conditions," (see below)
 - b. when a team becomes eligible for USTA/SCTA League championship (min. of 4 eligible players from LA area team).
 - c. when a facility schedules an event after the allowed period which preempts the USTA match.
 5. Attempts to re-schedule after this period are subject to the re-schedule penalty.
 6. Unavailability of strongest player(s) is not a valid reason for postponing or rescheduling a match.
 - f. improve.
 - f. The Heat Rule will not apply once a match has started. It must be played to completion.
 - g. If both teams agree, they may wait longer, or may move to another location within the LA area to complete the match.
2. Captains must notify Coordinator when a match is postponed and must provide reason for decision.
 3. The deadline to choose another date for postponed matches is 5 days from the originally scheduled date. Home team must give visiting team at least two alternate dates that do not conflict with any scheduled matches.
 4. If team captains cannot agree on a time by that deadline, the Coordinator shall select the date and time. If neither team appears on that established date and time, a double default will be entered in the system.

Staggered start times:

1. If a team's facility does not have enough courts to play all matches at the same time, the captain must notify the Coordinator and all of their visiting teams before the season begins.
2. They must declare the start time for each line within the match. For example, "Doubles at 1:00pm and Singles no sooner than 3:00pm".
3. When possible, doubles play first, then singles.
4. The time indicated on TennisLink will be the earliest time only, so captains must confirm everything prior to the match.
5. Line-ups for ALL lines must be exchanged prior to the start of the first match. A no-show constitutes a default for the lowest line.
6. Generally TWO (2) hours should be allotted for each match.

Unplayable conditions:

- a. The day before the match time, captains may check for the following forecast conditions at the match site by accuweather.com.
- b. 95+ degree temperature at the match start time (Heat Rule)
- c. unhealthful air (smoke, ash, etc.)
- d. Rain: If the day before the match, forecast is at least 65% chance of rain 3 hours prior to match time or during match time, the match may be rescheduled. Home Captain is responsible for verifying that the courts are playable at least one hour before match time. If courts are dry one hour before, teams must be ready to play.
- e. If unplayable conditions exist prior to or after the match started, teams should not wait more than 30 minutes to see if conditions

Flights:

1. The Coordinators may divide a flight into sub-flights, depending on the number of teams, and the number of playing weeks in the season, to maximize each team's number of matches.
2. Teams will be placed into flights by random draw. Public draw to be held one day after initial roster deadline; location and time to be announced.
3. When Flight Playoffs are held, order of play will be as follows (for three-flight round-robin):
 1. Flight A vs. Flight B
 2. Flight B vs. Flight C
 3. Flight C vs. Flight A
4. Location of flight playoff will be at Cheviot, and teams will split costs of courts, unless another facility offers to host, and is agreed upon by a majority of teams in all flights.

Quick Guide

Pre-Match checklist:

- Players signed up and on roster
- Courts reserved, if necessary
- Confirm details with opposing captain
- Confirm details with your match players
- Line-up sheet printed
- Confirm all players present before match time

Match day checklist:

- Players warm up, bring balls or team fee
- Fill out & exchange line-up w/opponent
- Confirm opponents' names, inform players
- Send players to correct courts
- Monitor players' and spectators' behavior
- Record scores & review w/ opponent

Post match checklist:

- Review matches w/players, if possible
- Record scores, or review and confirm scores
- If score errors are found, notify coordinator
- Prepare for next match!

When your team wins your division:

- Obtain details on District/Area Playoffs and/or Sectionals
- Verify players' availability
- Fill out Captains' Registration Form

Handling disputes in unofficiated matches:

- Line calls-players ask for line judges who stand at net posts and call their side, but only when asked
- Foot faults-opponent should inform server of flagrant foot faulting, and may call a fault if continued, only if foot goes past the line before ball is hit, and must be clearly seen by receiver.
- Verbal assaults, physical/racket abuse-player may call for captain to assist, then may declare a re-schedule if necessary, and report to coordinator.

Time rules for unofficiated matches:

- 15 min. default (once courts are available)
- 10 min. warm-up
- 20 sec. between points
- 90 sec. to change ends, except after 1st game of set
- Continuous play during tie-breaks, including match tie-breaks
- 2 min. after each set
- 3 min. non-bleeding injury (for each non-cramping occurrence)
- 15 min. bleeding injury
- 15 min. Maximum total injury time (bleeding incl.)

Spectators:

- may not interfere with match, such as giving the score, calling foot faults, reminding them to switch ends, or making line calls.
- are expected to behave in a sportsmanlike manner by not cheering opponent's errors, making extremely loud comments for or against players, and not coaching during match.
- may not sit on court.

Reporting scores in TennisLink:

- Enter date match was played
- Carefully enter players from both teams (note correct first and last names from score sheets)
- Winner's score is entered first, regardless of home or visitor status
- Match tie-break (in lieu of third set) is 1-0
- Review your entries before accepting