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www.laleaguecoordinator.com

General Info

GUIDE TO RULES

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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* 2019 USTA League Regulations (ULR)
- (S) Sectional* 2019 Southern California (SCTA) Section Regulations (SLR)
- (F) Friend at Court*
- (C) The Code: The Players' Guide for Unofficial Matches*
- (L) Local* - 2019 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 those match results taken out of the standings.
- 7) Home teams are *not required* to provide warm-up courts. If warm-up courts are not available, the first 15 minutes of match time will be used for warm up.
- 8) Captains are responsible for ensuring the sportsmanlike behavior of their spectators. Please inform them how and when to cheer, if they are not aware of the correct tennis etiquette.
- 9) Players need to be aware that there may be noise and/or interference from outside the courts or from public using adjoining courts which we cannot control.
- 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, it is always possible for a team to advance to post season due to a wild card being available or winning teams unable to play. As soon as the Coordinator receives wild card information, we will inform teams in that flight.
- 12) 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 Coordinators who will make corrections.
- 13) 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.
- 14) Captains/Acting Captains must compare scores with each other before leaving the courts. You may appoint one of your players to do so if you cannot be there at the end of the match.
- 15) "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." However, if there are line disputes, the players may request the captains or other volunteers to stand at each net post. The below process must be followed:
 - 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 side of the court. Baseline calls are given to the best of their ability.
 - d. Their call stands.
- 16) 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.
- 17) All LA Area matches are considered to be Timed Matches - if a match can't be completed in the allotted time, the Timed Match Procedure must be used. Please refer to the flowchart found in the Sectional Rules.
- 18) **No coaching allowed in any LA Area USTA/SCTA match.**
- 19) Captains are encouraged to play each player on their roster at least 2 times per league.

Communication

Communication - Coordinators

- a. Each captain must provide at least one e-mail address through which to receive correspondence from the Area League Coordinator. **Captains must make sure that their email and cell number are also correct on TennisLink.**
- b. A co-captain may be designated for each team by notifying the Coordinator. Questions may be addressed to Debbie Halim (310-880-7260) or to Michelle Kramer (818-425-0376) or by email at laleaguecoordinator@yahoo.com.

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 a team finds they must default a line, they should call or text the other captain by 5pm the day before, or as soon as possible, when a default seems unavoidable. If you need to reach the opposing captains within 24 hours of the match, please call or text them - not everybody checks emails, especially on weekends.
- e. If neither team can show confirmation of any contact with the opponent, and only one team shows up to play the scheduled match, a team default will be awarded to the team that was there.
- f. If a captain or co-captain will not be present at match, an Acting Captain should be designated and his/her contact info provided to opposing captain. The Acting Captain should have the lineup, court fees, etc.
- g. 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.
- h. 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) or 3 players in the 40 & Over regular season format using a 1 Singles/2 Doubles format. **If a team is not able to field the minimum number of players needed 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 Page 5 for more details)
- e. A default may be called after 15 minutes from when the match is scheduled, called, a court is available, and a player has not arrived.
- f. 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.
- g. If players are available to play after a default is confirmed, the match may still be played **if** both captains (or acting captains) agree. (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 captains agree to play, it will count towards the standings.)
- h. Captains will record the scores as each match finishes and compare scores with the other team before leaving the facility.
- i. 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

- The flight winner of all eligible leagues will advance to Sectionals.
- There will be a **team** charge to participate in Sectionals -- \$100 for 3-line format and \$150 for 5-line format.
- No refunds will be issued unless a player is injured or is ill and has documentation to show that he/she will not be able to play during the calendar year. The request must be made during the league in which player is registered. Refunds will not be issued if player has played a match or received a default.
- Home teams are *not required* to provide warm-up courts.
- All LA Area matches are considered Timed Matches - if they can't be completed in allotted time period, the Timed Match Procedure must be followed.
- The minimum number of lines for a valid team match is 2 lines for a 3-line format or 3 lines for 5-line format. Only 4 players are required (or 3 players in the Adult 40+ regular season format using a 1 Singles/2 Doubles format). If a team is not able to field the minimum number of lines for a valid team 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.
- Re-schedule penalty may apply if a team requests that a match be re-scheduled after the final schedule has been published:
 - If a team wants to re-schedule a match after the final schedule is published, two lines will be defaulted (in a 5-line format), or one line (in a 3-line format).
 - The team agreeing to the re-schedule decides which lines will be defaulted 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 the only line that may be defaulted.
- Re-schedule penalty will not apply:
 - When a team has at least 4 players representing LA Area at USTA Playoffs, Sectionals or Nationals
 - Unplayable Conditions - heat, rain, smoke, unhealthful air, etc.
 - When match falls on National Holiday
 - ⊖ If the home facility has scheduled an unplanned event and no courts are available. **Note:** if visiting facility has courts available on that day, the match will be played at the visiting team's courts.
- When checking the forecast, the zip code of the hosting site is to be used. The only source to be used for heat and rain forecast is (www.accuweather.com). See Scheduling Section for more details.

“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., Sun., etc.) and time
 - c. All reasonable attempts to accommodate these requests will be made.
2. The schedules will be randomly generated by TennisLink and published on TennisLink.
3. Once the Preliminary Schedule is published, captains will have 5 days to review and advise Coordinators of conflicts or errors -- match scheduled on bye dates, incorrect home courts, booked for 2 matches on same day, etc. The coordinators will work with both captains to reschedule such matches.
4. Once the Final Schedule is published, **no re-schedules will be allowed**, except for
 - a. "unplayable conditions," (see below)
 - b. when a team has at least 4 members representing LA Area at USTA/SCTA League championships.
 - c. when a facility schedules an event after the allowed period which preempts the USTA match. NOTE: If the visiting team's facility is available, the match can be moved to that facility
 - d. when teams arrive at facility for the match and courts are not available even though the home team had reserved them properly
 - e. when a match falls on a National Holiday.
5. Attempts to re-schedule after Final Schedule is published are subject to the re-schedule penalty.
6. Unavailability of strongest player(s) is not a valid reason for postponing or rescheduling a match.

Unplayable Conditions, Heat Rule & Rain:

Unplayable Conditions are those that make it impossible to play or continue playing which may include, but are not limited to: Rain, Fire, Ash, Unhealthy Air and if State of Emergency prevents teams from getting to match locations in a timely manner.

Heat Rule: Air temperature of 95 degrees and higher.

Rain (LLR): 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. If match was not postponed the day before, on the day of the match, the 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.

Captains should check the forecast on accuweather.com the day before the match to determine if unplayable conditions are forecast

- a. If unplayable conditions exist prior to or after the match started, teams should not wait more than 30 minutes to see if conditions improve.
 - b. The Heat Rule will not apply once a match has started. It should be played to completion.
 - c. If both teams agree, they may wait longer, or may move to another location within the LA area to complete the match.
7. Captains must notify Coordinator when a match is postponed and must provide reason for decision.
 8. The deadline to choose another date for postponed matches is 7 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.
 9. If team captains cannot agree on a new date within 7 days, 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 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 line of the match.

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. The coordinators may also randomly select additional matches for each team in a flight.
2. Additional matches or teams to be placed into flights will be by random draw. Public draw date, time and location will be announced within 7 days of initial roster deadline.
3. 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.

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 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. Only warnings can be given.
- In the event of disputes that cannot be resolved by the players, both captains/acting captains should be called to assist in resolution of the dispute.

Time rules for unofficiated matches:

- 15 min. default (once courts are available)
- 10 min. warm-up; 15 min. if warm up courts were not available
- 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 (including cramping)
- 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 recorded as 1-0
- Review your entries before accepting