



## USTA 2020 Summer Season Rules/ General Local League Rules

### **Tri-Level Doubles League and Adult 65+ Doubles League:**

**Format of Play:** Best 2 of 3 sets with a match tiebreak (10 point) in lieu of a third set.

Set tiebreaks to be used when score is 6-6. The Coman tiebreak rotation should be followed.

Players may all agree to 'play out' the third set after splitting sets but the 3<sup>rd</sup> set score will still be entered as 1-0.

#### **Season Key Dates:**

Local Season: mid-July through early September

Final Roster Deadline: 8/10 at 9PM PST. You may include up to 16 players per roster.

At this time, these are Local Leagues only. If there are National Invitational events for these leagues, USTA So Cal will hold a Sectional/ Playoff Event to determine advancing team. We will not know until late Fall.

## USTA 2020 Fall Season Rules/ General Local League Rules

### **USTA Adult 18 and Over League (Men and Women):**

#### **Season Key Dates:**

Local Season: 9/1- 12/20 (All levels)

Final Roster Deadline: 10/15 at 9PM PST. You may include up to 18 players per roster. Roster must be min 50% at level.

11/15 at 9PM PST for SDNC WD Holiday League only

#### Sectional Championships:

- Jan/ Feb 2021. Schedules by level/ location to be available approx. 3 weeks before event.
- Sectionals team fee is \$100.

#### **Format of Play:**

**Men and Women's Weekday:** Best 2 of 3 full sets. 1 singles/ 2 doubles

**Women's Weekend League:** Best 2 or 3 sets with a 10 point match tiebreak in lieu of 3<sup>rd</sup> set.

**Women's Girls' Night Out League (SDNC):** Best 2 or 3 sets with a 10 point match tiebreak in lieu of 3<sup>rd</sup> set. Timed match procedure to be followed at clubs with hard stop lights out policy.

### **USTA 18 and Over Mixed Doubles Encore League:**

#### **Season Key Dates:**

Local Season: 9/1-12/20(All levels)

Final Roster Deadline: 10/15 at 9PM PST. You may include up to 16 players per roster.

#### Sectional Championships:

- Jan/ Feb 2021. Schedules by level/ location to be available approx. 3 weeks before event.
- Sectionals team fee is \$100.

**Format of Play:** Best 2 of 3 full sets.

## **ALL LEAGUES:**

- **Both captains are expected to confirm match details with their opponents 3-4 days in advance.**
- **Line ups must be exchanged in writing simultaneously by match start time.**
- **Match time is default time. Please plan to arrive per club protocols (some clubs will not have warm up prior).**  
Please be fair and reasonable with taking defaults- everyone signed up to play league matches. Defaults mean people don't play.
- Captain receiving a late default has the option to change their line-up to utilize players differently.
- Remember to email with any location, date or time changes so TennisLink stays accurate.

**Please read below for all General Rules for the San Diego Area. (Written pre-COVID so please adapt for Club protocols and safety recommendations.)**



## General Local League Rules/ Information- San Diego District 2020

The local rules are intended to describe the day to day rule clarifications for the San Diego Areas. It will only highlight the most essential portions of the National and Section rules so further detail is available by reading those published Regulations. The Code emphasizes acting with courtesy and to always give your opponent the benefit of doubt. The players on the court ultimately will make decisions together and those decisions and the points will stand as played. Our goal in USTA League is to play fun, fair tennis with each match!

### Team/ Player Registration:

On December 2, 2019, year-end ratings were posted for players. These ratings will be in effect for all 2020 league play. Players must be USTA members during the league season to be eligible to join a team. Players celebrating their birthday in the 2020 calendar year may play an age specific season (40, 55, 65 and over) anytime during the year. For the 18 and over Mixed and Adult leagues, players must turn 18 before they can register.

- **Initial Roster Deadline:** A minimum of 8 players in a 5 line league, 7 players in a 4 line league or 6 players in a 3 line league must be registered to the team in order to be included in scheduling.
- **Final Roster Deadline:** The last date to add players to a roster for the season up to the max number for the league. The final deadline will be approximately 4 weeks after the season starts.
- Players must be 'on roster' online at the line-up exchange to be eligible to play in a match.
- 50% of the team must be 'at level' by their first match and must be maintained through season. Matches not played in compliance will be disqualified. Plan team rosters accordingly.
- Players may be .5 NTRP below the level of play on a straight level team. For combined level leagues, the maximum difference of 1.0 NTRP between players is allowed (i.e. 8.0 can be a 3.5 and 4.5 player).
- Captains should confirm accuracy of ratings, especially new self-rated players on their teams. All matches played at the Self Rated/ Appealed down level will be reversed in all "live" leagues if a player strikes out (they have 3 matches played well above their chosen rating level). Matches played at promoted level will stand. Computer rated players are protected at their rating level until the next year end rating period.
- Players may be registered to two teams at different levels in a league (SD or NC). Players may play the same level in two different leagues (both SD and NC areas) however, if both teams advance, shared players will have to commit to one team prior to first Championship match.  
Players may not be shared on two rosters at the same level in the same league area or play for two teams in a combined league.

In Adult 18+, 40+, Tri-Level and SCTA Doubles, players may be on a Weekday and Weekend team at the same level if there are at least 4 teams in each division or if the league is not advancing (local only). Players can only play for one team at Sectionals at a level.

## Match Schedules/ Courts:

Schedules will be posted online approximately 7-10 days before the first match. You will receive an email when it is available to be viewed. The schedule notes will also include any additional matches, information on playoff format, etc. To see your team's schedule go to the USTA website, click on TennisLink, click on USTA Leagues, click on your team name to take you to your team page. To view the season on one page, click on Match Schedule tab, key details are listed. Also, Captain's Report for contact information (home phone number may be listed not cell). I suggest that captains to *enter only their cell phone number* in their account. In upper right hand corner of page, go to Manage Account, follow steps to edit personal info.

Teams will have roughly half home and away matches. Home team provides courts, new balls for each line and drinking water (bottles or refill station). Light snacks are usually provided but the captains in a league can agree if they all prefer to skip snacks.

USTA plays on hardcourts in SD Local League- if both captains agree to play on clay courts in writing, clay courts may be used for league matches. Courts may not be lined for pickle ball however, painted markings for youth tennis are acceptable. **Home team is responsible for making sure the court conditions are ready for play.** Courts need to be safe for players- free of ball mowers and other equipment. Home Captains should initiate text communication with opposing captain about court conditions if there are any concerns (i.e. wet courts, anticipated heat at match time)

**All matches must be completed by the last day of the season, no exceptions.** Incomplete matches will be entered as a double default, a default against a team requesting a reschedule or left unplayed. (SLR pg. 25) When a league does not complete all matches and team results are uneven in the standings, the Section will determine the winner using the highest games % won metric.

## Formats of Play Used in Various Local Leagues

**(see season rules for your specific league/ also noted in TennisLink in red font):**

- **Adult and Mixed 18, Adult 40, SCTA Doubles, Tri- Mixed Leagues:**  
**Best 2 of 3 regulation sets.** Matches play the full third set. If players/ captains agree to play a match tiebreak due to time, impending weather, it will be entered as 1-0 Timed Match. It will count as a partial match score.
- **Tri-Level Doubles, Seniors (55/ 65's) and WE Women's Leagues:**  
**Best 2 of 3 regulation sets with a match tiebreak played in lieu of a third set.** When teams split sets, matches will be completed by playing a Coman match tiebreak (first to 10 points leading by 2 points). If all players on court agree and there is no one waiting for the court, a full set may be played however, the score will be entered as 1-0 into TennisLink. Decision is made after teams split sets.
- **Evening League (GNO):**  
**Best 2 of 3 regulation sets with a match tiebreak played in lieu of a third set using Timed Match Procedure.**
- All formats use Coman rotation for set tiebreaks when the set score is 6-6. (1<sup>st</sup> to 7 points leading by 2 points).

## Match Play:

- **Written line ups must be exchanged simultaneously by the match start time (varies by league).**
- Print scorecards in TennisLink. Texting or emailing the line up ahead of time is also acceptable (verify you have a cell #). It is not acceptable for a captain to write their line up on their opponent's scorecard 'from memory'. Please notify ALC if a captain requests to do this. It is acceptable for a captain to write their line up at any time prior to the exchange.
- Captain should designate an acting captain if they will not be at the match designating who will handle the line up exchange.

- It is the responsibility of the players to make sure they are on the correct court with the proper opponents. Captains should give their players the names of their opponents when sending them to their court. If there is an error in court positions played, the scorecards will be adjusted accordingly. All matches stand as played.
- Use full names to avoid errors when inputting scores. Captains may verify names/ rating levels on the scorecard.
- Before TriLevel and all combo level matches start, verify that player rating combinations are 'at level' by line. If possible to rearrange the players to make the match valid, correct line ups to play the most lines possible.

## Defaults:

- **Match time is default time.** Players should be ready to play at the scheduled time if a court is available (a 5 minute warm-up with opponent is allowed). For San Diego leagues, there is NO 15 minute default time, therefore Point Penalty System not in effect. Players should arrive a minimum of 15 minutes prior to warm up with their team.  
For 4 and 5 line leagues, later doubles line(s) should arrive by 10:15AM. Matches are considered to be 'not before 10:15AM' start. Default can only occur when a player or team is not on site and when one of the original allocated courts are available for play. Later lines are entitled to a warm up once they take the court up to 10 min or as players agree.
- **Line Defaults (prior to match start):** If you have a known default, please let the opposing captain know prior to the match out of consideration. (Do onto others...) The least amount of lines should be defaulted and as many players as possible should be utilized.
- **Line Defaults (after line up exchange):**  
Captains receiving a late default (without prior notification) will be able to change their line-up as needed. The defaulting team may not rearrange their line-up once line up is exchanged.

### **Matches must start in line order due to defaults rule in USTA. Defaults are taken at the lowest line.**

For example, if the #1 doubles line is a default after line-ups have been exchanged,

- Line #2 moves up to play the #1 line.
- Line #3 line moves up to play the #2 line.
- Line #3 is defaulted.

Since the SD Leagues have split lines with follow on matches, if an early line receives a default but doesn't want to wait for the later line team to arrive, their captain can rearrange their line up and put their names in line 3 for the default win. The other two lines will play each other but will be in the line 1 and 2 positions on the scorecard.

- **Player substitutions:** An eligible player may be substituted into the line-up in case of injury, illness or disqualification of line-up player prior to the match starting (1<sup>st</sup> point played). If it occurs during warm up, the player is entitled to a 5 min warm up. Other players in the line-up may not be changed.
- **Assigning players to Defaults:** Players assigned to a default win may be changed by the captain only prior to score input in TennisLink. This can be important for qualifying players for advancing teams.
- **Changeovers and Medical Time Out Breaks-** When changing ends, 90 second break is allowed. A 2 minute break may be taken between the first and second set. If your format of play is 3<sup>rd</sup> set tiebreak, there is a 2 min break. In the full 3<sup>rd</sup> set format, a 10 min break is allowed after teams split sets. Medical time outs are 3 minutes. The maximum time allowed for a treatable medical condition where blood is present is 15 minutes for evaluation/ treatment. *See Friend at Court p 99 for details.*

## Misc. match topics:

- **Warm up**- Every player is entitled to a 5 minute warm up. Players should warm up with teammates prior to match time. There is a 5 minute warm up between players/ teams for assessment purposes. If a player declines to warm up the opponent, the player forfeits the right to a warmup, and the opponent may warm up with another person or the match may start. Players should try to hit shots directly to their opponent cooperatively.
- **Tracking the score**- Score should be called out after each point of play by the server or serving team. Change the score tender consistently- changing after each game is recommended.
- **Coaching** is only allowed in the full 3 set format during the 10 min break after teams split sets. NO coaching is allowed at ANY time during the match for the 3<sup>rd</sup> set tiebreak format.  
**Cell phones and smart watches must be turned off during a league match.** Consider leaving phones with a non-playing team mate if a call/ text is expected. It is assumed that if you are checking your phone that you are receiving coaching.
- **Spectators (including pros, coaches, players and captains):** ♣ May not talk to or distract players on the court. ♣ May not coach, either verbally or visually. ♣ May not comment or make visual signals on line calls. ♣ May not sit on the court. ♣ May not get involved with any dispute between the players on the court. A captain may clarify a rule only if asked by a player. **Captains and players are both responsible for the behavior of their spectators.**

### Common Issues during play- how to resolve:

- **Lost track of the score**- try to reconstruct points played in the game and replay disputed points. If no agreement on the points, go back to the last score everyone agrees on, even if it means starting the game over.
- **Did not switch ends** at the right time- as soon as the mistake is realized, correct ends and continue play. Service rotation continues as started.
- **Players received on wrong side of court**- Complete game as started, switch back to correct positions during next receiving game.
- **Starting a new set**- Switch ends if the game total is odd, stay if even. If a set tiebreak was played, switch ends from where you finished. Team that received the first point of the tiebreak serves the first game of the new set.
- **Ball on Court**- Safety on the court is extremely important. Any player on a court can stop play if a ball comes from a neighboring court and is a visual distraction or a hazard for an injury. Players on the neighboring court who hit the ball should not immediately call 'ball on' especially if it interrupts the point in play. (I.e. if the ball rolls to the back of the court.)
- **Hindrance**- Player must stop point immediately if truly 'hindered' in making a shot. (Code pg 33 for specifics)
- **Court Monitor:** Court monitor(s) may be called in to assist with the management of a match by any player and at any time. It can be requested if there is tension between players or in anticipation of potential problems. They should be positioned at each net post and each one is responsible for the court divided in half lengthwise. The players are still responsible for their calls but if they are challenged the court monitor on the near side (where the ball lands) on the court will be asked for a ruling. The court monitor from the opposite side will not have the best perspective on seeing the ball. They should not make calls across lines. The court monitor can overrule clear mistakes only. Monitors are to remain impartial and not have conversations during the match or at changeovers. If no one is available, a match with conflict may wait for someone to assist or reschedule as a last resort.

**Rescheduling matches:** Please make every effort to play on your scheduled date. Captains are encouraged to honor reschedule requests when the opposing captain provides reasonable notice prior to the scheduled match. That said, teams should NOT automatically expect to receive the opportunity to reschedule a match.

- **Unplayable conditions:** The heat rule states if the air temperature at the court location is 95° or higher, matches may be rescheduled. Please use Accuweather.com. In case of rain, it is based on wet court conditions at match time. It is most important that people are safe on the courts. Home Captains should initiate text/ phone communication with opposing captain about court conditions if there are any concerns (i.e. wet courts, anticipated heat at match time).
    - If captains and clubs agree, you may move a match to the visitors club or a neutral site if the conditions are playable there. Captains may also play later start lines at their scheduled time if courts are wet for the early start time. Early lines may be treated as make up matches. Work together to make decisions on conditions and reschedules.
    - The section is allowing for reschedule up to 2 hours before match time if there is a forecast that would make the match unplayable. (i.e. heavy rain for hours up to the match time and no sun/ wind to dry out courts).
    - Please still communicate any line defaults in advance. If a match is rescheduled due to weather, the default is waived and the full match will be played.
  - **Interrupted play:** If a match needs to be rescheduled after play has started, Captains need to note scores, side/position of players so the lines can resume with the same players and exact score from when play was halted. Lines that have not started play may opt to change players in the line-up.
  - **Requested rescheduled matches:** Rescheduled matches will fall under the 'No Penalty Policy' or under the 'Penalty Policy'. (SLR, pg. 24-25). If, for example, a team requests a reschedule due to lack of players, the Penalty Policy will apply (Line 3 will be defaulted in the 3 line format; line 2 Singles and line 3 Doubles will be defaulted in the 5 line format). If a captain intends to enforce the penalty, it must be confirmed with the opposing captain (text or email). They may opt to not penalize the other team and play all lines. Penalties are carried over when matches need to be rescheduled again. (I.e. a rescheduled match with a penalty gets rained out)  
Captains accommodating a reschedule should offer potential new dates first.
  - **Allowed rescheduled matches due to Championships:** If 4 players on a team are competing for the SD District in Sectional Championships on match day, no penalties will apply to the rescheduled match. Captains may verify the roster players in question. Please request reschedule as soon as team advances. If part of the match can be played, please play those lines as scheduled and reschedule the balance. For Tri-Level leagues, only reschedule line levels affected unless both captains agree to a team match reschedule.
  - **Make up matches:** Weekend leagues will reschedule matches on a Saturday or Sunday. Weekday leagues will reschedule on a Weekday. Captains accommodating a reschedule should provide new dates first. If it is a requested reschedule and after reasonable number of dates have been offered there is no agreed to date, the team requesting the reschedule will default the match.
- **All rescheduled matches need to be emailed to ALC with old and new date, team names and match ID# within 7 days of the original match date.**

- **Please avoid Team Defaults (all lines defaulting).** Matches can be played with as few as 4 players. All matches played by the defaulting team in the same round as a team default will be removed from the league and can impact the overall standings. Repeat offending captains/ players may face disciplinary actions including suspension of players in future leagues.

## Completing and scoring matches:

- As each line completes their match, players should confirm the match score before leaving the court.
- Report/ write the score down from the point of view of the winning team (not home/ visitor). (I.e. we won the first set 6-4, lost the 2<sup>nd</sup> set 3-6 and won the 3<sup>rd</sup> set 7-5).
- **Please enter scores the same day of the match.** Scores not entered within 48 hours may be entered by the League Coordinator as a Double Default.
- Home captain is responsible for entering scores in TennisLink however, either captain may input. Please review final scores and full player names to be input, do not guess. The opposing captain can dispute input within 48 hours of input.
- **To enter scores,** click on the date next to your match on your TennisLink team page or enter the match ID# under Enter Scores on your league page.
- **Match type dropdown options:**
  - Completed- Most matches should fall into this category.
  - Retirement- One match has begun and a player needs to stop playing (usually injury or time issue)
  - Default- For a late arrival, no show or ineligible player. Enter the names of players winning the default line only. Score will be 6-0, 6-0.
  - Timed Match- This option is mainly for evening league matches following the Timed Match Procedure.
- **Corrections:** If there is a mistake on an entered scorecard (incorrect score or player), click to dispute the match in Tennis Link and email Randie (ALC) and always **include the match ID#, date and both team names**. Please cc the other captain since both captains must confirm the change before it can be updated. If you are a captain that is cc'd, please reply quickly if you agree or if you do not agree, state what you believe to be accurate. Please take a minute to double check your input before you finalize to save extra rework. Thanks in advance!

## Championships/ Post season play:

### 2020 Key Dates:

### So Cal Sectionals Championships page (calendar, registration):

<https://socaladulttennis.com/adult-senior-tennis-in-socal/championships-dates/>

[Link to USTA National Calendar page](#) All 2020 events have been cancelled.

- Local League winners will be determined by Match Wins, Individual Wins, Head to Head, Least Sets Lost, Least Games Lost and Games Won % as the tie breaking criteria.
- Local League winners will advance directly to Sectional Championships. (Winners for Mixed Doubles 55 and over and Tri-Level Mixed Doubles may be offered a post season event/ Invitational in December.)

**Local league playoffs** may take place when there are two flights of play in a league/ level due to a large number of teams or as needed. Two matches (1 may be a default win) must be completed during the Local League to compete in Local League Playoff.



**WD/ WE Leagues:** In Adult 18 and over, 40 and over, Tri-Level Doubles and Fall SCTA Doubles leagues, when there are a minimum of 4 teams in both weekday and weekend flights, each will advance to Sectionals.

**Wildcard to Sectionals:** When a 2<sup>nd</sup> place team is needed to complete a flight at Sectionals, team will be selected using the highest % of games won and will be asked to fill that spot.

- **Player eligibility for Sectionals:** All players need to have played a minimum of 2 Local League matches to be eligible to advance. (1 may be a default win).
- **Player eligibility for USTA Nationals:** (matches may be Local League or Sectionals)
  - Computer (C ) rated players: must complete 3 matches (including 1 default win)
  - Self-rated (S) and appeal (A) rated players: must play 4 matches (no default wins included) in the specific league and level to be eligible to compete at Nationals.
- **National Teams:** Move up/ split up rule (2.06A) applies to teams who have won the So Cal Sectionals and are eligible to participate at a National level in the USTA leagues. (*Details in SLR pg. 39*)

### **Tennis Link: Information available from your personal page. (Shows ‘Welcome, Randie...’)**

- “Team Summary” tab is your most used page. It shows your schedule, standings, match results, list of players. You can print your scorecards and enter scores by clicking on the date next to your match.
- “Match Schedule” tab shows all matches for a season listing the home/ visitor teams, date, location and match ID #. Captain/ co-captain phone number also shows here.
- “Captain’s Report” tab has contact information (emails and phone numbers) for all captains in the league.
- “Player Roster” tab shows your registered players, their ratings, phone number.

**Grievances:** If any captain wishes to lodge a grievance against a player or another captain for rule violations, sportsmanship violations, ineligible player or NTRP rating challenges, there is a formal grievance procedure to follow. (*Details in SLR pg. 40-46*)

**Rules/ links:** Please make sure that your team is a positive example of goodwill on the court. It’s a quick read but a good reminder for all of us when situations get tough. It is the responsibility of the captain to understand the rules and ensure that their players are familiar with the most common situations and play using the principles of The Code (of Conduct). If there is a reason to research the correct rule in a match, stop play and look it up in a rule book or online.

- [The Code](#)
- [USTA National League Regulations and Friend at Court Link](#)
- [2020 Southern California Section League Regulations \(SLR\)](#) :  
<https://socaladulttennis.com/adult-senior-tennis-in-socal/usta-league-tennis-forms-regulations/>
- Southern California Tennis Association Website <https://socaladulttennis.com/>
- San Diego District Tennis Association Website <http://www.sandiegotennis.com/leagues>

Wishing everyone good luck, great sportsmanship and a winning experience during the USTA Season!  
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1/9/2020