



USTA SoCal Section Regulation Highlights/ Local League Rules

Beach Cities AREA Version

This document provides the day-to-day rules that apply to the So Cal Section. Where there is a Local League Rule (Area specific), it is listed in the text in [blue font](#). Highlighted are key National and Section regulations (complete National regulations document is available for more detailed reference).

The Code of Tennis 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:

Year end ratings published on December 1, 2022, will be in effect for all 2023 league play.

Players must be USTA members during the league season to be eligible to join a team.

Players celebrating their birthday in the 2023 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:** By the deadline set by the ALC, each team should have the correct number of players to fill a line up for a full match. Teams that do not have a minimum roster may not be included in scheduling. (i.e. 3 lines: 5 or 6 players (depending on format); 4 lines: 7 players; 5 lines: 8 players. Mixed: 3 men and 3 women)
[BC – The date is announced in writing by the ALC and is always prior to League Season Start date.](#)
- **Final Roster Deadline:** The last date to add a player to a roster (up to the maximum number of players for the league).
- Players must be 'on roster' online in TennisLink before the match starts to be eligible to play in a match. If not, they are ineligible and the line will be defaulted. Players may register for the team up until the match default time or by the Local registration deadline, whichever comes first.
 - 50% of the team must be 'at level' by their first match and must be maintained through season. Matches not played in compliance may be disqualified. Plan team rosters accordingly. In a league with only 2 teams, they may be 40% 'at level'. National team opting to 'Move Up' are excluded from the 'at level' requirement.
[BC- 80% of the team must be 'at level' by their first match and must be maintained through season. "National Move Up team excluded from the 'at level' requirement."](#)
- Straight level NTRP teams- players may be .5 NTRP below the level of play (i.e. a 3.5 can play up on a 4.0 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). For Tri-Level Leagues, at least one player must be 'at' the designated level. There are no requirements about playing lines in strength order.
- Captains should make sure new self-rated players have an accurate rating. 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 as identified in the NTRP system). Matches played at promoted level will stand if the league is at the new higher level.
 - Self-rated (S) and appeal players (A) are eligible for dynamic disqualification. Computer rated players (C) and Mixed exclusive players (M) are protected at their rating level until the next year end rating period.
- Players may be registered to two teams at different levels in an area league.

Players may play the same level in two different areas.

In Adult 18+, 40+, Tri-Level and SoCal 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 may not be shared on two rosters at the same level in the same league area or play for two teams in a league where teams are combined for local league play.

BC – A captain may NOT captain more than one team at the same level any League.

- **Refunds/ Credits:** Starting with 2023 Leagues, USTA SoCal will issue a TennisLink credit for players who ask to be removed from their team within the first two weeks after the start of the league. Reasons can be injury/ illness, lack of availability, etc. The player is responsible for filling out the [LEAGUE CREDIT REQUEST FORM](#) to receive a \$28.85 credit (less the non-refundable \$3.15 fee) which will be valid for 364 days after being issued. Once processed, the player will be prompted to apply the credit the next time they register for a team. The player will be removed from the team when processed. No refunds.

Match Schedules/ Courts:

Schedules will be posted online approximately 7-10 days before the first match.

BC – Captain will receive an email when it is available to be viewed. The email will include any additional information for success of the league, including playoff format, if any, 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). Captains should only *enter cell number* in their USTA account. Go to Manage Account on upper right corner, follow steps to edit personal info.

Teams will have roughly half home and away matches.

BC – HOME team provides/reserves/pays courts and NEW balls for each line. Water and snacks are not expected to be provided. Most facilities have water filling stations and ice. Check with the opposing captain in your weekly check-in to ascertain.

Captains must confirm match details 3-4 days in advance including date/ time of match, if/ when warm up courts are available, court numbers (if known), line defaults (if known in advance). For split time matches, confirm how many courts to start and how many to follow and which lines will be played. Provide location and any facility specific information- i.e. parking or traffic events in area.

BC - Play order in a five-line match is: Lines 1 & 2 Singles & Line 1 Doubles at match start time. Followed by Lines 2 & 3 Doubles. This is NOT Negotiable. Play order in 3-line leagues is to play all 3 lines at same start time. There is no order of strength.

The 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). Consider driving time when communicating about delayed start times.

BC – USTA League plays on hardcourts in BC League. Courts may not have contrasting lines or tape for pickleball. However, blended marking for youth tennis is acceptable (lighter tone of same color).

Majority of lines must be played for a match to count in the standings. In a 3-line match, 2 lines must be played; in a 4-line match, 3-lines must be played and in a 5-line match, 3-lines must be played (completed / or retired).

All matches must be completed by the season end date. When a league does not complete all matches and team results are uneven in the standings, the Section will determine the winner.

BC – In event of un-played matches due to “unplayable conditions” ... if matches are unable to be complete by Season End Date, the results listed in Tennis Link standings will prevail...or Section may determine the winner.

Formats of Play

- **The 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).
BC – This format is the format suggested by USTA National and is not negotiable. The match break score is entered as 1-0.
- **BC – CAPTAINS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO ENFORCE THE 10 MINUTE warm up at all facilities.**
- **Timed Match Procedure is to be used when there are time restrictions for a hard stop** (i.e. lights out, reservation time up)
BC – Captains are required to reserve enough court time at public facilities for match completion. Timed Match Procedure should only be used on rare occasions, if ever. BC private facilities and many public facilities are structured to allow all matches to be completed. If USTA (or other) matches are scheduled following .. the players WAIT.
TIMED MATCH PROCEDURE
- All tiebreaks use the Coman rotation. Switch ends after the 1st point and every 4 points after. Players continue to serve on the same end of the court. Winner must be ahead by 2 points in either the set or match tiebreak.
COMAN TIEBREAK PROCEDURE
- **Split Time Matches:** Many areas will utilize split times for matches when necessary for court management because all courts are not available at the same time. There will be matches that follow after earlier matches are complete. Default time for later matches will be set as a ‘not before’ time and a court from the earlier match must be available. See local area guidelines on how split times may be communicated.

BC – Courts with split match times... Second round of matches require players to arrive one hour after scheduled match start time. Second round default time would be “not before” the one-hour mark. If it is past the one-hour mark and players have not arrived, they cannot be defaulted if the court is not yet available. CAPTAINS are responsible **to confirm WITH EACH OTHER NO LATER THAN 3 DAYS BEFORE MATCH PLAY, the** number of courts provided at match time and if match times are split. CAPTAINS ARE ALSO REQUIRED TO **RE CONFIRM THEIR COURT RESERVATIONS WITH FACILITY** EARLY IN THE WEEK, OR NO LATER THAN 3 DAYS PRIOR TO MATCH.

Line Ups:

- **Written line ups must be exchanged simultaneously by the match start.**
BC – does not vary by league.
- Print scorecards (BC-with match number) from Tennis Link. 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.
- Captains should designate an acting captain if they will not be at the match. They will be responsible for the lineup exchange (BC- Confirmation by Initialing of scorecard at match end) and any needed match oversight.
- Captains may ask to see a player’s photo ID to verify identity or age.
- If a player is missing at match time, they should be moved to the lowest line according to the default procedure. Opposing captain may change their line up accordingly at that time.
- Players may only be listed in one position in a line up even if the lines are playing at different times.

- 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 should verify player names/ rating levels on the scorecard prior to play starting.
- Before Tri-Level and all combo level matches (I.e. Mixed, 55 and Over, 65 and Over), verify that player rating combinations are 'at level' by line. If possible, rearrange the players to make the match valid, adjust line ups to play the most lines possible.

Defaults:

- **Please avoid Team Defaults (all lines defaulting or majority of lines not played).** Joining a league is a commitment to play matches. League winners should be determined by playing matches not winning by default. Only a few players are needed to play the majority of lines to have a complete match.
- **BC- ANY TEAM THAT DEFAULTS A WHOLE TEAM MATCH BY CHOICE IN THE LEAGUE WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR PROGRESSION (Sectionals) EVEN IF THEY OTHERWISE WON THE LEAGUE.**
- **BC - a team defaulting two (or more) whole team matches during a Local League Season will be denied participation in the (same) next Local League Season, as will ALL PLAYERS ROSTERED ON THAT TEAM.**

League Format	# of lines for valid match	Min # of players	Play lines:
3 lines (1S/ 2D)	2 lines	3	1S/ 1D
3 lines (3D)	2 lines	4	1D/ 2D
4 lines (1S/ 3D)	3 lines	5	1S/ 1D/ 2D
5 lines (2S/ 3D)	3 lines	4	1S/ 2S/ 1D

Teams must make good faith efforts to complete every match.

A team in contention may be ineligible to advance to post season if they give or receive a team default (or incomplete match) without a demonstrated effort to play (i.e. texts, emails). If a team in contention receives a full team default, matches played by the defaulting team in the same round will be removed from the league and can impact the overall standings. When there are incomplete matches in unflighted play, USTA SoCal will determine league winner. Repeat offending captains/ players may face disciplinary actions including suspension of players in future leagues.

- **Default time:** Default time is after 15 minutes from the time the match is called/scheduled. Late arriving players (within default time) may still have a 5 min warm up. Local areas may impose the point penalty system. The Point Penalty System (PPS) may be enforced when a court is available, and the match is called: 5 minutes or less: Loss of toss plus 1 game 5:01 - 10 minutes: Loss of toss plus 2 games 10:01 - 15 minutes: Loss of toss plus 3 games
BC – READ AND APPLY MATCH START TIME PROCEDURES (BC document). **DEFAULT time is match time at public facilities.** For **PRIVATE Facilities (PPS)**, above is utilized. Point Penalty system applies for tardiness of players at all facilities. Home Captain may choose to enforce or not. Captain to consider court situation at the facility.
- **Line Defaults (prior to line up exchange):** 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. The defaulting team may not rearrange their line-up once line up is exchanged. At this time, the captain receiving the default may change players receiving the default.

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

After line ups have been exchanged,

Example: If the #1 doubles line is a default,

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

Example: If there is a default on line 1 singles, line 2 singles moves up to play the line 1 position.

Example: In Tri-level Leagues, the default is taken on the same line and no shifting of lines applies.

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 (1st point played). If it occurs during warm up, the new player is entitled to a 5 min warm up. Other players in the line-up may not be changed.

Rescheduling matches: BC - NO RESCHEDULES! A match not played as scheduled will be a DOUBLE DEFAULT. Please make every effort to play on your scheduled date.

Unplayable conditions: BC - RAINING AT THE TIME OF THE MATCH (NOT THE MORNING OF THE MATCH).

Because we are a coastal community, it can be raining at a facility and another facility ten minutes away has sunny conditions. It is for this reason, and also with sun and wind, courts can dry in ten minutes. However, it is most important that people are safe on the courts. For liability reasons, a facility director may make that decision or more commonly, it will be determined by the players in the match. BC- NOT BEFORE MATCH TIME AND DETERMINED AT THE MATCH LOCATION. PLEASE GO TO THE COURTS.

Teams should wait 30 min after the scheduled start time to see if conditions change. Captains/ players may agree to wait longer.

HEAT RULE: The heat rule states if the air temperature at match time and at court location is 95° or higher (unless otherwise determined by area), matches may be rescheduled. Please use www.Accuweather.com.gov.

BC – FIRE/ASH can be considered for reschedule if air quality is UNHEALTHY (not moderate).
CONTACT ALC for approval.

If the captains agree, you may move a match to the visitor's club or neutral site if the conditions are playable. Captains may also play later start lines at their scheduled time if courts are wet for the early start time in split time matches. Early lines may be treated as make up matches. Work together to make decisions on conditions and reschedules.

Matches may be mutually rescheduled ahead of time if the forecast is **ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN** that conditions will be unplayable. (I.e. heavy rain for days or hours up to the match time and no sun/ wind to dry out courts). Use your best judgement. Captains should still communicate any line defaults due to player availability in advance. If a whole team match is **cancelled due to UNPLAYABLE CONDITIONS**, ANY default is waived and the full match will be played (with different lineups if desired). It's a new match.

Interrupted play: If a match needs to be continued **DUE TO UNPLAYABLE CONDITIONS** 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. **If a full team reschedule date looks to be impossible, captains can agree to apply the Timed Match Procedure to see if a winner can be determined.**

BC – **Interrupted play** – the captains will agree on a match date/time ... secure courts with the facility, and notify ALC immediately of the new date (to be set in Tennis Link). This process should begin

immediately and the match should be rescheduled within two weeks of the original date. Lines may be played individually if it helps to coordinate the same players in the match by setting .. date ..match times and secure own courts, with captain oversight and approval. Captain to notify ALC of final match completion date. Once a re-schedule date is set and courts booked, it CANNOT BE CHANGED, THE RE-SCHEDULED MATCH DATE/TIME STANDS.

Requested rescheduled matches: BC – DOES NOT ALLOW RESCHEDULES, SO THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE DOES NOT APPLY. Rescheduled matches will fall under the 'No Penalty Policy' or under the 'Penalty Policy'. If a team requests a reschedule due to lack of available players, the Penalty Policy will apply. 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.

Penalty will be a 1 line default in a 3 or 4 line match and 2 lines defaulted in a 5 line match.

No penalties apply if the home facility has an unplanned event and no courts are available at match time.

Penalties are carried over when matches need to be rescheduled again. (I.e. a rescheduled match with a penalty gets rained out)

Allowed rescheduled matches due to Championships: If 4 or more players on a team are competing for the same area at Sectional/National Championships on their scheduled local league match day...

BC- the Sectional Captain may request a RESCHEDULE from the ALC. No penalties will apply to the rescheduled match. **Please request reschedule as soon as team advances, and preferably before publication of any local league schedule. FOR TRI LEVEL LEAGUES... ONLY THE LINE LEVELS AFFECTED WILL BE RESCHEDULED UNLESS ALC and CAPTAIN'S AGREE TO A TEAM MATCH RESCHEDULE; and if time allows prior to Season End Date.**

BC – for any RESCHEDULES DUE TO UNPLAYABLE CONDITIONS WHERE A WHOLE TEAM MATCH WAS UNPLAYED ... NOTIFY THE ALC IMMEDIATELY. THE ALC WILL RESCHEDULE ALL MATCHES AND CONFIRM COURTS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE FACILITY OF RESCHEDULE. CAPTAINS DO NOT NEED TO DO ANYTHING, UNTIL NOTIFIED BY ALC OF THE RESCHEDULE DATE/TIME, WHICH WILL ALSO BE RE-SET IN TENNIS LINK.

Completing and scoring matches:

Confirm the match score between all players before leaving the court. Confirm completed scorecard with opposing captain so correct scores/ names are entered. BC- captains initial opponent's scorecard to confirm.

Report/ write the score down from the point of view of the winning team (not home/ visitor). (I.e. we won the match and won the first set 6-4, lost the 2nd set 3-6 and won the 3rd set 1-0). The order is important and games will make a difference in rating calculations.

Please enter scores the same day of the match. Scores not entered within 48 hours BC- 12 HOURS may be entered by the League Coordinator as a Double Default.

BC – BOTH captains ARE responsible for entering scores in TennisLink. However, either captain may input or confirm. Please review final scores and full player names to be input, do not guess. BC - ANY captain can dispute input within 48 hours of input. Correctly entered scores and player names are important because they affect NTRP ratings.

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 home 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) Only enter games played.

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 limited time court reservations or evening league matches when lights turn off. Follow the Timed Match Procedure to complete match.

Corrections: If there is a mistake on an entered scorecard (incorrect score or player), click to dispute the match in Tennis Link. and email ALC. **BC – FOR CORRECTION a photocopy of the CORRECT scorecard is required.**

Include the match ID#, date and both team names in the subject line of your email. 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!

BC EMAIL: beachcitiesleagues@scta.usta.com

Tennis Link: Information available from your personal page. (Shows 'Welcome, your name...')

"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, and phone numbers.

Grievances:

Online submission forms, rules/ guidelines and FAQ's about filing a Grievance may be found at

<https://www.ustasocal.com/forms-information/>

Sportsmanship- If any captain wishes to lodge a grievance against a player or another captain for rule violations, it must be submitted prior to the next scheduled match for the player/ team involved in that league (typically 7 days) or within 24 hours of the end of the League Season End Date, whichever comes first.

- Submit via online form. It is recommended to discuss situation with ALC first.

NTRP/ Ratings:

Dynamic Disqualification- Players with a C (Computer) or B (Benchmark) rating are not subject to dynamic disqualification based on results. These rating types may not be challenged with an NTRP Grievance.

NTRP Grievances- If credible written or online documentation can be presented that the player answered falsely or omitted information from their player history that resulted in a rating too low, it can be submitted to the NTRP Committee for further investigation. Submit via online So Cal form.

See USTA Guidelines: <https://www.ustasocal.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2022-NTRP-Grievances.pdf>

National Suspension Point System- USTA So Cal implements sanctions utilizing the USTA National Suspension Point system.

Advancement/ Championships:

2023 Key Dates:

So Cal Sectionals Championships page (calendar, registration):

<https://www.ustasocal.com/adult/leagues/championships/>

[Link to USTA National Calendar page](#) (Info will be posted as ready)

USTA So Cal Key Dates/ Advancement				
League	Sect Season End Date	Sectionals Date(s)	Sectionals Location	Nationals
USTA Mixed 18 and Over	4/2/2023	April 21-23	Orange County	USTA Oct/ Nov
USTA Adult 40 and Over	4/16/2023	May 19-21 and June 2-4	San Diego	USTA Oct/ Nov
USTA Adult 18 and Over	7/9/2023	Aug 4-6 and Aug 11-13	Orange County	USTA Oct/ Nov
USTA Adult 55 and Over	8/13/2023	Aug 25-27	San Diego	USTA Oct/ Nov
USTA Mixed 40 and Over	9/10/2023	Sept 22-24	Orange County	USTA Oct/ Nov
SoCal Adult 65 and Over	10/15/2023	Nov 3-5	SGV- Claremont Club	Invitational 1/2024
SoCal Tri-Level Doubles	11/12/2023	Dec 1-3	Orange County	High Tri Invitational 3/2024
SoCal Mixed 55 and Over	11/12/2023	Dec 15-17	Orange County	Invitational 4/2024
SoCal Mixed Tri-Level	11/12/2023	Dec 15-17	Orange County	None
SoCal Fall Doubles	12/17/2023	Jan 19-21 and Jan 26-28, 2024	Coachella Valley	None
Elite level play (Open and 5.0+) leagues will advance from Sectionals to Las Vegas Open Invitational 9/24				

League winners will be determined using these tiebreakers in order for individual matches and League standings.

- Match Wins, Individual Wins, Head to Head, Least Sets Lost, Least Games Lost and Games Won %
- In Adult 40 and Over 4-line league, if all metrics are tied within a match down to the GW% (excluding default), the winner of line 1 doubles will determine which team wins the match.
- In the event the league season cannot be completed, the local league winner will be determined by actual matches played by all teams or another method determined by the ALC and SLC.
- **BC- ANY TEAM THAT DEFAULTED A WHOLE TEAM MATCH BY CHOICE IN THE LEAGUE WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR PROGRESSION EVEN IF THEY OTHERWISE WON THE LEAGUE.**

Player eligibility for Sectionals or Local League Playoff:

All players need to have played a minimum of 2 Local League matches to be eligible.

- Computer rated players: 2 matches needed but may include 1 default win.
- Self-rated or Appeal players: 2 matches are needed. (no default wins)
- Players can only play for one team per level at Sectionals. If both teams advance, shared players will have to commit to playing for one team. The first match played will determine the team they will compete on during the entire Sectional Championship.

Sectional Championships:

- **Local League winners (LLW)** will advance directly to Sectionals. once confirmed by the ALC
- **Local league playoffs** may take place when there are two flights of play or an unflighted schedule. Typically, this occurs in a league/ level with a large number of teams.
BC- this rarely happens and would be announced.
- **Weekday/ Weekend Leagues:** In Adult 18 and over, 40 and over, Tri-Level Doubles and So Cal Fall Doubles, if there are a minimum of 4 teams in both weekday and weekend flights, each winner will advance to Sectionals. If fewer than 4 teams, a playoff may be needed between the two local leagues. Players may only be registered to one team if the league format results in a potential playoff.
- **Wildcard Opportunities:** When a team is needed (for scheduling purposes only), the top 2nd place team in SoCal based on the highest games won % may be invited.

Player eligibility for USTA 2023 Nationals

- Computer (C) rated players: must complete 3 matches (may include 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. Any player who was eligible to participate, even if they chose not to, is considered part of the team. For those who stayed at the same level, only 3 players may be on a team returning in the same league/ level as their Nationals. Players who played fewer matches and were not eligible do not have restrictions. The whole team may also opt to 'move up' with the '% at level' being waived.

Links to National Regulations/ The Code: 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](#)
- [2023 Friend At Court](#)
- [2023 USTA League Rules & Regulations](#)

BC – CAPTAINS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO FAMILIARIZE THEMSELVES WITH THE LOCAL LEAGUE RULE (here in Blue) AS WELL AS SECTIONAL (here) AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS, THE CODE, AND FRIEND AT COURT.

YOUR AREA LEAGUE COORDINATOR beachcitiesleagues@scta.usta.com, is your first point of contact for questions or concerns.

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

See next 2 pages (printable) for common issues on court and general match rules.

Common Rules Questions During Match Play:

General Rules for the match:

NO coaching is allowed at ANY time during the match. So Cal leagues are specified to be Match Tiebreak format.

Spectator behavior (including pros, coaches, players and captains):

Captains and players may be held responsible for the behavior of their spectators.

Spectators **may not:** talk to or distract players on the court; coach, either verbally or visually; comment or make visual signals on line calls; sit on the court; get involved with any dispute between the players on the court. A captain may clarify a rule only if asked by a player. Spectators may not sit on the court. Pets should not be on the court during a league match even if the facility allows.

Cell phones and smart watches must be placed in airplane mode or turned off during a league match. It is assumed that if you are checking your phone that you are receiving coaching.

Recording matches: Taking photos or filming during league play must have permission from all players on the court.

Tracking the score- Score should be called out after each point of play by the server or serving team. If your courts have score tenders, change consistently either at change of ends or after each game.

Start/ Stop of play

Warm up- Players should try to hit shots directly to their opponent cooperatively to ensure a good warm up.

BC- CAPTAINS are responsible to enforce a ten-minute warm up at all matches.

Friendly transfer of balls- Return the balls gently to the serving team or by leaving in a convenient location on the court at a changeover. Do not practice hard returns on out serves during the match. If a delay in service is the fault of the receiving team (i.e. returned out serve), the server is entitled to two serves. If it is caused by the serve (i.e. out serve rolled into playing area of receiving team), the server continues with a 2nd serve.

- **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 2nd set or match tiebreak. Teams may change serving order at this time.
- **Breaks**- Changeovers during a set are 90 seconds. After a set finishes, players may take a 2 minute break. Continuous play after the first game of any set or during a tiebreaker. Players may sip water or towel off but may not sit down.
- **Bathroom breaks**- Try to time during a changeover or end of a set but may be taken as needed.
- **Water bottle refills**- Must take place during a changeover not during a game or tiebreak in play.
- **Medical Time Out**- *3 minutes per treatable condition (injury, illness or heat related condition): one during warm up and one during match. Maximum time allowed where blood is present is 15 minutes for evaluation/ treatment.* All visible bleeding must be completely stopped. An eligible player may be substituted in the lineup if the MTO takes place during warmup and the player cannot continue.

Be reasonable on time especially when restrooms are needed and not located nearby or if supplies are needed to treat a condition.

Calls/ Confusion:

- **Calling Balls In or Out:** A ball that cannot be seen clearly landing with space outside the line, is in. Players who are looking down the line instead of across the lines should make the call for best visibility. Opponent should get the benefit of the doubt if players are unsure.
- **Partners disagree on call**- The point is awarded to the opposing team. Do not replay the point. If it happens on a first serve, play a second serve.
- **Lost track of the score**- Try to reconstruct points played in the game and use as your starting score. If you can't agree on the points, go back to the last score everyone agrees on, even if it means starting the game over. BC – OR CHOOSE TO SPIN A RACQUET FOR DECISION. Stop the point immediately if the server calls a 'wrong' score, resolve the scoring issue and then play a first serve.
- **Teams 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 half of court**- Complete game as started, switch back to correct positions during next receiving game.
- **Wrong player on a team serves out of order**- If during a game, switch to correct server and play from current score. Points played stand. If the game is complete, it counts and the order of service remains as altered for set.

Interruptions/ Self- calls/ Hindrance

- **Ball on Court**- Safety is extremely important. Any player on the court can stop play if a ball comes from a neighboring court and is a visual distraction or a hazard for an injury. The court should play a let. 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.) When the affected court stops the point due to a ball on court, play a let.

- **Self-calls**- Double bounce, tipped ball, crossing over the net plane to make contact, touching the net with racquet or body or ball making contact with their body are self-calls by the player only. Do not stop play unless the player makes a self-call even if you disagree.
- **Hindrance**- Player must stop point immediately if truly 'hindered' in making a shot. You may not hit or make a play on the ball and then call hindrance. Loud noises that affect the outcome of a point may be a hindrance. (i.e. shouting right before the other team is about to make contact). Only an official can rule if grunting while hitting is a hindrance.
- **Warning your partner**: You have the right to warn your partner to get out of the way as soon as the ball comes off of your racquet and the ball is still on your half of the court. It cannot be disruptive to your opponent's play on the ball.
- **Service Let Calls**- May be called by any player on the court.
- **Foot Faults**- An **obvious** foot fault may be called by the receiver or the receiver's partner and **at least one warning must be given**. Foot fault point penalties may be called in officiated matches such as Sectionals events.

Assistance on Court/ Court Monitors (when and how)

- **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 they may ask the court monitor on the near side (where the ball lands) 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 and only when asked. The decision of the Court Monitor is final.
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.

BC – A match is NOT to be rescheduled. The players should find an available person to monitor or proceed with the match.