

USTA LEAGUE TENNIS Anne Arundel County Unified Local League Rules 2011

The Anne Arundel County Tennis Association (AACTA) is the CTA (Community Tennis Association) serving Anne Arundel County (AACo.) and will perform as the financial conduit for USTA League Tennis in the county. The Local League Coordinators report directly to the Maryland District and administer various USTA League Tennis Programs (Appendix A) so that tennis players have multiple, year-round opportunities to compete against other players of the same playing ability. Although competition is spirited, it is expected that each participant in league play exhibit good sportsmanship at all times. (See Appendix B for Good Sportsmanship Reminders.) Each league participant is expected to know, and is bound by, these Local League Rules, the USTA League Tennis Regulations, the USTA Mid-Atlantic Section League Rules, the USTA Maryland District League Rules, the Rules of Tennis, and *The Code: The Players' Guide for Unofficial Matches* (printed in *Friend at Court*, published annually by USTA). To the extent that the plain meaning of any Local League Rule may be unclear, it will be construed in a manner to foster good sportsmanship and fair play.

Primary Rules/Regulations

Except as otherwise delineated or supplemented below, all questions will be resolved in accordance with the current "USTA League Tennis Regulations" and rules of the Mid-Atlantic Section and the Maryland District. Where no written local, District, or Section rule is authorized, approved and explicitly applied, the national USTA League Regulations control.

Local League Rules

The following shall apply in all AACo. USTA League Tennis Programs:

(A) Local League Coordinators. Local League coordinators are responsible for the organization and execution of local league play. These coordinators are approved by the Section and identified on the Maryland District and AACTA website. Local Leagues coordinators are the local player's first point of contact for questions concerning local league play. The correct protocol for directing questions regarding general information, league rules, problems, and any type of communication, in general is to the local league coordinator and then to Maryland Leagues Administrator, then the Section league coordinator. If a player or captain feels a conflict of interest exists with the local league coordinator, an alternate can be contacted. See Appendix A for the local league coordinator and alternate.

(B) Team Captains. Anyone may request of a League Coordinator to captain a team in a league. However, a person may perform the duties of captain for **one team ONLY** at any given NTRP level league. In addition, within any one NTRP level league, a person may not captain one team while playing on another.

Captains are responsible for ensuring that a complete team is fielded for each match of the league season. It is the captain's responsibility to ensure that his/her players know the rules that govern league tennis matches.

(C) Team Rosters. Official team rosters are maintained on TennisLink. Only those persons who are registered on a team roster are eligible to play in league matches. *See Appendix A* for any roster size limitations that may apply. Players who do not have a computer rating on file in TennisLink shall self-rate themselves when registering for a team using the on-line procedures embedded in TennisLink. Allowing a

captain or other player to register a player on TennisLink does not relieve the affected player of responsibility for truthful, complete and accurate completion of the self-rating protocol.

The Mid Atlantic Section of USTA (MAS) limits the number of players who can play together on the same team in the same Division (Adult, Senior, Super Senior, etc) during the same season. When players play on more than one team, please refer to Rule 11d (formerly Rule 10d) of the Mid-Atlantic USTA League Tennis Rules for All Divisions before registering. It is the captain's responsibility to monitor his/her team roster in order to enforce this rule and avoid penalties.

(D) Roster Additions/Deletions. After the deadline for filing initial rosters with the minimum number of players, captains can add or delete players according to the following:

(1) Players may register for a team at any time up to the start time of a teams next to last round robin flight match by registering on TennisLink before the player competes in a match. If a team exceeds the specified roster size, the last person registered on Tennislink will be deleted and any matches played by this person disqualified.

(2) To delete a player from a roster, a captain must submit a Player Deletion Form to the local league coordinator, who forwards it to the Maryland Leagues Administrator. The deletion must be in accord with District or higher rules. Player Deletion forms are available on www.aacta.com (click on USTA). Partial reimbursement of the deleted player will occur if no matches have been played. The TennisLink administrative fee and the Mid-Atlantic Section fee are **never reimbursable**.

(3) As long as both captains agree, players may be moved from one team to another within our local league without cost and without forms by notifying the local league coordinator, who will forward the request to the District for action. In no event may a player change rosters within a level league after he/she has played in his/her first league match in that level league.

(E) Scheduling

(1) Local League Coordinators welcome input from captains on the length, number of matches, and structure (e.g. flights, playoffs) of each local level league season.

(2) A copy of the final, binding schedule of match play for each local league shall be maintained on TennisLink. The site of scheduled matches will be distributed to captains by Local League Coordinators prior to the beginning of each season (because TennisLink is not entirely capable of listing the venues, this information will only be available from the Local League Coordinators.). Captains are responsible for ensuring that players know when and where they are to play each match. Re-scheduling of matches is permitted only for (i) unplayable conditions, (ii) conflict with a scheduled USTA championship, (iii) facility maintenance failure/scheduling error, (iv) and in rare cases where a majority of players on one team is required to attend a wedding, funeral or the like. In this last case, the rescheduling must be approved by the Local League Coordinator.

(F) Match Structure

(1) Team Match. A team match in each level league shall consist of the approved number of individual singles and doubles matches as stated in *Appendix A*. The team that wins the majority of individual matches is the winner of the team match. In the case of a double default causing a tie see rule G (5) (c) below.

(2) Individual Match. Each individual match shall be best of 2 sets with regular scoring (except for timed matches - see rule H below) and a *set tiebreak* (first to 7 by a margin of 2) at 6-6 in each set. In the event of split sets, a *match tiebreak* (first to 10, by a margin of 2) shall be played to decide the match. All tiebreaks, whether singles or doubles, shall use the Coman Tiebreak rotation where players switch sides after serve 1, 5, 9, etc. (every 4 serves after the first serve).

(G) Match Administration (Match Play)

(1) The Home Team will provide balls for the match and will make court assignments for individual matches.

(2) Exchange of Lineups. Captains or their designated representatives are required to exchange valid written line-ups at least 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the match. Each Captain should print out a blank scorecard for the match from TennisLink. A valid line-up shall include only those individuals who are listed on the official team roster located on TennisLink. Individuals not listed on the roster in TennisLink are not eligible to play. Each captain is responsible for keeping a complete match scorecard for future reference when entering the match results or validating the results on TennisLink. After the entire match is completed, both captains (or their designees) shall sign the match scorecard. A signed scorecard provides conclusive evidence in case errors are claimed to have occurred in recording the score.

(3) Warm-ups. Once on their assigned courts, players will have a 10 minute warm-up. Bathroom trips should be taken before the start of the warm-up.

(4) Lateness. Any player who is not on his or her assigned court within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time will forfeit his/her match according to the National Rules/Regulations 2.03I. Whenever at least one player (or one member of a doubles team) is late (i.e., not on the assigned court), the players shall be penalized in the following manner:

- (a) Opposing players equally late = No penalty. Double Default if neither player arrives by the end of the 15-minute default period.
- (b) Opposing players late but arrive at different times = The penalty accrues upon the arrival of the first player (or doubles team). (example, if one player arrives 3:00 minutes later than opposing player, but before 15:01 minutes, 0-5:00 penalty applies)
- (c) 0-5:00 minutes late, opponent loses toss + 1 game
- (d) 5:01 – 10:00 minutes late, opponent loses toss + 2 games
- (e) 10:01-15:00 minutes late, opponent loses toss + 3 games
- (f) At 15:01 minutes, opponent defaults the match.
- (g) Players arriving 5-15 minutes late are entitled to a 5-minute warm-up.

(5) Defaults

(a) Advance Notice. If a captain knows in advance that he/she cannot field a player or players for an individual match, he/she must notify the opposing team captain by phone and/ email as soon as he/she has this information. Defaults must be made from the bottom up – e.g., default number 2 singles before number 1, default number 3 doubles before number 2, etc. After a captain has defaulted a court, the opposing team is not required to field that court at the beginning of the match.

(b) Lateness Default. Defaults after lineups have been exchanged: if a captain believes that a player or players are available for the match but are late, play may begin after the 10 minute warm up

on the courts where all necessary players are present. If the missing player(s) fails to show, that match is defaulted but no other change in players or positions is required. The National requirement for defaulting from the bottom up applies in all cases except for a lateness default where other individual matches have already begun.

(c) Double Defaults. If both teams fail to field a complete lineup, a double default match will occur. If the defaults are for different positions, the captains must shift positions to ensure that most play occurs. If a team match ends in a tie of individual matches (i.e. 1-1, or 2-2), the team with the most sets won in all completed matches will be declared the winner of the team match. If both teams have exactly the same number of total sets won, then the team with the most games won in all completed matches will be declared the winner of the team match. If both teams have exactly the same number of total sets won and games won, the team that won #1 doubles will be declared the winner of the team match. In this situation, TennisLink standings may show the wrong team as team match winner. If this occurs, TennisLink standings will be overridden in determining which team advances to District play. The Local League Coordinator will advise the Maryland Leagues Administrator.

(6) Medical Time-Outs. A player may take up to 5 minutes for treatment of a treatable injury or medical condition including general player fatigue or loss of condition. A player may take only one medical time-out for each type of medical condition during a match except if first medical time out was during warm up. Exception: A player may take up to 15 minutes to treat a bleeding condition.

(7) Retirements. Retirement occurs when a player/team is unable to continue play after the match has started, usually because of an injury, loss of condition, or an emergency. A player/team is allowed no more than 5 minutes to recover and continue play. Failure to continue play after 5 minutes results in a retirement and the opponents win the match. In recording scores in TennisLink for a retired match, the retiring player(s)' scores go last and you must use the down arrow to click on "retired" rather than "completed" and indicate the winner of the match.

(8) Substitutions. Substitutions are only permitted for a player who is injured or ill during warm-ups with no line-up changes other than substituting for the injured/ill player.

(9) Rest Periods. There will be no rest on the changeover after the first game of any set. On all other changeovers, players are entitled to a 90-second rest. The time is determined from the last ball struck at the end of the game until the first ball is struck to begin the next game. At the end of the set, a set break of no longer than 120 seconds (two minutes) may be taken. In a tiebreak changeover, there is no rest period permitted. For special rules for timed matches, see section (H) below

(10) Changeovers. Players change sides after odd games in a set. In a timed match, players only change sides after completion of a set. Timed matches do not require change of side in a set or match tiebreak.

(11) Cell Phones. All cell phones are to be turned off during matches. If a player's phone should ring during a match, either side may call an immediate "let" and the point will be replayed. If the same player's cell phone rings a second time, the opposing team will then be awarded the point.

(12) Court Decorum. All players must abide by the rules, customs and procedures contained in *The Code* at all times. No spectator, teammate, or team captain may intervene, offer an opinion, or become involved in any way in any match that has not yet been completed except when a clarification of the rules is requested by a player(s). *No coaching is allowed at any time during the match.* Good sportsmanship must be maintained at all times. See Appendix B for definitions and a summary of sportsmanship.

(H) Timed matches: The following rules apply when court time is limited to 90-minutes:

(1) Players will arrive in advance of scheduled match time to enable the captains' exchange of lineups to occur at least five minutes before scheduled match time.

(2) No-ad scoring will be used. When a score of deuce is reached, the receiving team selects which partner will receive. In Mixed Doubles, the gender of the server determines who receives the serve at deuce. Gender serves to the same gender. (e.g. if a woman is serving at deuce, she serves to the court defended by the opposing woman). The receivers remain in their same court position (deuce or ad) for the set.

(a) The twenty second rule between points must be followed.

(b) Side changes only occur after the completion of each set. Thus, a side change occurs only after a set is completed or to begin the 10-point tiebreak after split sets.

(c) Bathroom breaks are not allowed in the final twenty minutes.

(d) Water breaks may be taken after odd numbered games and are limited to one minute (instead of 90 seconds).

(e) A time piece (cell phone, wall clock, alarm) shall be agreed upon for use by the captain and one person from the home team should be designated to call time at the end of timed match play.

(f) If the second set has not started 50 minutes after the scheduled match time, then the second set will be a short set – first team to win four games and is up by 2 is the set winner. Should that set reach 4 all, a set tiebreak will be played. A third set tiebreak will be played if sets are split. When time is called, the player/team ahead will be the winner. In the event all is tied (one set a piece and tiebreak not started or tied) when time is called, a one point tiebreak will be played. Home team spins the racquet to determine who chooses serve, receive or gender (no side choice) and plays one point to determine the winner

(3) Play may continue if more time is available beyond 90 minutes but the results of additional play will not be used to calculate a match win unless agreed by the captains. For all mixed doubles matches, the winner of the match will be calculated at the end of timed match play period (i.e. when time is called). Play may continue if more time is available but the results of additional play will not be used to calculate a match win.

(I) Unplayable Conditions and Scheduling Conflicts Which Cause Postponement, Delay or Interruption of Match

(1) Unplayable Conditions: Conditions will be considered “unplayable” and cause postponement, delay or interruption of the match in the following circumstances:

(a) **Rain.** If it is raining or rain is in the forecast, the home team captain should contact the opposing team captain to decide whether or not the match should be postponed. If the home captain deems the weather permissible, both teams and their entire line-ups must show up, dressed and ready to play. Failure to show up will result in a default, if the courts are playable.

(b) **Wet court conditions.** A match must stop when (1) footing is demonstrated as insecure, (2) at least one player declares court surface conditions unsafe (3) moisture causes standing water, glistening, or reflection of light, or (4) visible moisture spins off the ball in flight.

(c) **Visibility.** At least one player declares court environment conditions unsafe due to lack of visibility. Examples: darkness and fog. Players must make a reasonable attempt to finish the match

before calling for environmental condition postponement.. In general, visibility is greatly reduced on unlighted outdoor courts within 15 minutes of sunset. Players may use this information to make their decision.

(d) Extreme Weather. At times, matches may be deemed unplayable due to extreme conditions such as extreme cold (below 50 degree F), extreme wind (over 20 mph), visible lightning or a heat index of 95 or greater. Any player may ask for a postponement or rescheduling based on any one of these conditions.

(e) Facility related conditions. A match cannot be played if a facility is closed or a facility is not playable for some reason (e.g. power outages, scheduling conflicts), or if court time is no longer available. Upon mutual agreement by both captains, matches may be rescheduled.

(2) Scheduling Conflicts. A scheduling conflict is defined as a holiday, other USTA sanctioned event (Districts, Sectionals, Nationals), or a mathematical inability to win the match. Only teams affected by the reason for the conflict may invoke the use of makeup matches for scheduling conflicts using the guidelines below:

- (a) Captains should have a team management process in place to identify conflicts early (at least one week in advance)
- (b) Upon mutual agreement by both captains, matches may be rescheduled, or by approval of the Local League Coordinator.
- (c) Rescheduled matches follow the makeup match procedure in section I (6) below.

(3) Postponement. If the match is postponed because of unplayable conditions **BEFORE the first service attempt**, see I (6) below for make-up procedures.

(4) Interruption of a match

(a) If unplayable conditions interrupt play AFTER the first service attempt, then players record the score of the match as it stands, set score, game score, who is serving (e.g. 6-2, 2-1, 30-15, Green serving). Players must make arrangements with their opponents to finish the match within 7 days. See I (6) below for rules regarding “make up” matches.

(b) If both captains agree prior to the match, incomplete matches may be counted and not require completing, if one team has won the first set and leads in the second set. The match will be entered on the scorecard as a Timed Match (e.g., 7-6, 3-2, Timed Match).

(5) Delay. If conditions become unplayable, captains, by mutual agreement, may delay a match no more than 30 minutes. Players record the score of the match as it stands: set score, game score, who is serving. If conditions become playable, play resumes. If not, see I (6) below.

(6) Make up matches.

(a) A team match or individual matches must be completed within 7 days of the originally scheduled match unless further postponements are required. If the match cannot be completed within 7 days,

the league coordinator must be notified of a new date and time so that the change can be recorded in the TennisLink schedule.

(b) If the captains decide to schedule individual matches, the captains will exchange line-ups with phone numbers for each player on the day the original match was scheduled. Home team captain names #1 doubles team first, visiting captain then names #1doubles team and #2 doubles team, alternating until line-ups are complete. Once line-ups have been exchanged, no substitutions can be made, except to substitute for injury or illness of a player unless substitutions are by mutual agreement of the captains.

(c) If the captains decide to play a team match, the line up will be exchanged five minutes before the match is scheduled to start.

(d) Once the make-up date for a team or individual match has been agreed upon, it cannot be changed.

(e) If captains and/or players can't agree on a date for a team or individual match within 7 days of the original play date, the match is automatically scheduled to be played on the next Friday evening

(f) If the make-up match is postponed again due to unplayable conditions, rules a) through e) apply. The make-up match must be *scheduled* within 7 days. However, all matches must be completed by the date for the end of the season.

(g) If teams agree to play the make-up match indoors, indoor timed match procedures noted in Section **(H)** will apply, unless captains mutually agree to play by regular match scoring rules.

(J) Reporting Scores:

(1) For each team match played, either Team Captain (or their designees) may enter the scores on TennisLink, and must do so within 72 hours after the match is completed. The team that does not enter the scores must confirm/dispute the scores as entered within 48 hours thereafter.

(2) After that time, all reported results are final and complete with no further right of challenge regarding score accuracy.

(3) In reporting matches on TennisLink, the winner's score is always reported first. Additionally, as a courtesy, the captain or designee after entering the scores should send an e-mail to the opposing captain and the league coordinator indicating that the scores have been entered.

(4) Failure to input the scores in TennisLink as just indicated shall result in the match being scored as a Double Default.

(5) Where match results as entered in TennisLink are disputed, the Local League Coordinator shall rule on any challenge within 7 days after the disputed match has been completed, relying primarily upon the signed scorecard retained by the two captains, and promptly thereafter will make any necessary adjustments to the scores reported on TennisLink. As stated in paragraph **(G) (2)** above, failure to retain a signed match scorecard may result in a waiver of the right to dispute the results of the match.

(6) For timed matches with a short second set, scores should be recorded as played – 6-4, 2-4, 1-0 and notated as a timed match.

(K) Local League Champion.

(1) The team with the most team wins is declared the local league champion. League tiebreak rules will follow TennisLink and National USTA League Regulations. The same rules are used to determine team rankings.

(2) If a *flight format* is used in any NTRP level league, the following playoff procedures will be used to determine team rankings:

If there are two flights (flights A and B), the first round of playoffs will be: the first place team from flight A will play second place from flight B, and the first place team from flight B will play the second place team from flight A. The winners of each first round playoff will play a deciding match which will determine the first and second place teams in that NTRP level league. Similarly, the losers of the first round of playoffs will play each other to determine the third and fourth teams in that NTRP level league. Normal match rules for that NTRP level league will apply.

(3) Championship Play – The local league champion advances to the District or Sectional Championships. If more than one team advances, then the next available team in the standings will advance. If for any reason the championship team cannot field a full team for all matches in the tournament, the captain must notify the local league coordinator and the next available team in the standings will advance to the tournament.

(L) Sanctions.

For purposes of Anne Arundel local league play, USTA League Regulation 2.03L (regarding consequences of a team match default) does not apply with respect to determining a defaulting team's eligibility to advance to championship play, but the National Regulation does apply in so far as a team match default affects any other team's eligibility to advance.

(M) Grievance/Appeal Procedures

(1) Local League Grievance Committee (LLGC)

Grievances will be filed according to the USTA League Tennis Regulations 3.00 All complaints alleging violations must be filed with the Local League Coordinator prior to the commencement of the next team match involving such player or team, or within 24 hours after the end of local league play, whichever occurs first. Complainants must also send copies to the party against whom the complaint has been made. The LLGC acts as prescribed in Rule 3.00 of the 2011 USTA League Regulations. A league coordinator does not act upon a grievance until the Grievance Form has been submitted.

(2) Local League Grievance Appeal Committee (LLGAC)

The LLGAC shall operate according to the procedures and authorities detailed in USTA League Regulation 3.01B and shall have the power to affirm, modify or reject a decision of the LLGC. If the LLGC has imposed a penalty, the LLGAC may not impose a harsher penalty. The decision of the LLGAC is final and binding on all parties. The LLGAC shall send a copy of its written decision to the grievant and other interested parties and to the Maryland District League Administrator.

(3) Grievance Committee Members

Members of the LLGC and LLGAC will be posted on the AACTA website.

(N) NTRP Grievance

To protect against potential abuses of the NTRP self-rating system, the National USTA League Tennis Committee has issued an “NTRP Grievance Protocol” which provides a remedy for flagrant cases of mis-rating. Any league captain, coordinator or member of a championship committee has the right to file a NTRP Grievance against a player and/or captain. The grievance will claim that the player and/or captain committed or condoned obtaining a Self Rate or possess a rating which is at a lower NTRP level but has demonstrated the ability to compete at a higher NTRP level.

Conditions Which Must Be Present:

1. The Grievance must be against a player of the following rating types: This list includes S, A,M, & T. A player with a valid NTRP Computer (C) or Benchmark (B) rating or granted Automatic Appeal rating of a “C” is not subject to a NTRP Grievance.
2. The complaint must state that the player has self-rated or possesses a rating which is too low and may also include information that a team captain or other person conspired to obtain that incorrect rating.
3. Factual information including the player’s history that can be validated.

Conditions Which Would Give Credibility to a NTRP Grievance:

- The player participated on a college team at a significant NCAA level (note: age of player, injuries, position on team, and strength of tennis team at particular school could affect a significant change in rating over time).
- The player participated at the professional level (including tennis or other sports).
- The player has earned international, national, sectional or state/district rankings that would reflect a strong probability that the player should have a higher rating.
- The player has ratings equivalent to national or sectional in some other country.
- The player has a history in league tennis and/or sanctioned tournaments that would substantiate a claim that the player has misrepresented their current skill level.
- The player may have produced one or more strikes in her/his current player record. (An administrator should review match results within TennisLink for determination.)
- There is credible written or online documentation that the player answered falsely or omitted information while obtaining a Self Rate.

Consistent with the National directive, NTRP grievances will be heard exclusively by a designated subcommittee of the USTA/Mid-Atlantic Section Leagues Committee.

Guidelines for filing an NTRP grievance, and the appropriate forms for doing so, are on the Section website www.midatlantic.usta.com).

(O) Annual Rules Review These local league rules will be reviewed and amended as necessary, but at least annually in the Fall, by the AACo League Rules Committee. Captains or players with suggested amendments (whether additions or deletions) are invited to submit them in writing at any time during the year, by e-mailing the Local League Coordinator.

(P) References

You can find all the information you need to clarify any of these Local League Rules by accessing the following websites:

- USTA League Regulations http://www.usta.com/USTA/Global/Active/Custom%20Pages/Leagues/1213_2009_Regulations.aspx
- *The Code: The Players' Guide for Unofficial Matches* http://www.usta.com/USTA/Global/Active/Custom%20Pages/The%20Rules%20of%20Tennis/2518_The_Code_The_Players_Guide_for_Unofficial_Matches.aspx
- Mid-Atlantic Section <http://www.midatlantic.usta.com/USTA-Leagues/Regulations/Mid-Atlantic/>
- Maryland District <http://www.network.usta.com/publish.sps?syndicatorguid={1B9755C3-E402-4B09-8ADA-6E551384228A}&rmasiteinstanceguid={71156565-B501-4989-847B-03195798574F}&rmapageid=27§ionID=2287&customPageID=1379&parent=6817>
- Anne Arundel County www.aacta.com

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