



General Local League Rules/ Information- San Diego District 2022

The local rules are intended to describe the day to day rule clarifications for the San Diego Areas. It highlights some of the key National and Section rules (more details are available by reading those published Regulations).

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!

USTA endorses that players follow the COVID requirements of each individual facility.

Team/ Player Registration:

On December 1, 2021, year-end ratings were posted for players. These ratings will be in effect for all 2022 league play. Players must be USTA members during the league season to be eligible to join a team. Players celebrating their birthday in the 2022 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 5 or 6 players in a 3 line league, 7 players in a 4 line league or 8 players in a 5 line league must be registered to the team in order to be included in scheduling.
- **Final Roster Deadline:** The last date to add a player to a roster (up to the maximum number of players for the league). The date 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 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. 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. Players may play the same level in two different leagues (in both SD and NC areas).
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 from SD and SDNC are combined for local league play.
- 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 per level at Sectionals. If both teams advance, shared players will have to commit to one team prior to first Championship match.

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). 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. Home team provides courts, new balls for each line and drinking water (bottles or refill station). Snacks for matches are optional. Individual items are preferred over communal food.

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.

USTA League plays on hardcourts in SD Local League- If both captains agree to play on clay courts in writing, clay courts may be used. Courts may not be lined for pickle ball however, shaded markings for youth tennis are acceptable.

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 (SLR pg 23).

Formats of Play

- **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 the court time is available, a full set may be played however, the score will be entered as 1-0 into TennisLink. Decision is made after teams split sets.
- **Timed Match Procedure is to be used if there are time restrictions for a hard stop** (i.e. lights out, reservation time up)
- All tiebreaks use Coman rotation. Winner must be ahead by 2 points in either the set or match tiebreak.

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 for handling 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:

- **Please avoid Team Defaults (all lines defaulting).** 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.
- **Default time:** Default time will be 10 min after the scheduled match time. Late arriving players (within default time) may still have a 5 min warm up.
- **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. This is the only time that 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.

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.
- **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 player is entitled to a 5 min warm up. Other players in the line-up may not be changed.
- **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 3rd set tiebreak, there is a 2 min break. A tiebreak is considered a 'game' so no rest when switching ends. A sip of water when passing through is fine. Medical time outs are 3 minutes per treatable condition one during warm up and one during match. Maximum time allowed for a condition where blood is present is 15 minutes for evaluation/ treatment. (SLR pg 24)

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). Please consider travel time.
- If captains agree, you may move a match to the visitors 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. Early lines may be treated as make up matches. Work together to make decisions on conditions and reschedules.

-Matches may be rescheduled ahead of match time if the forecast will make the match unplayable. (i.e. heavy rain for hours up to the match time and no sun/ wind to dry out courts). Use your best judgement knowing you will need to reschedule.

-Please still communicate any line defaults due to player availability 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 25). If, for example, a team requests a reschedule due to lack of 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. 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.**

Misc. topics during matches:

- **Warm up**- 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. If your courts have score tenders, change consistently either at change of ends or after each game.
- **NO coaching** is allowed at ANY time during the match.
Cell phones and smart watches must be turned off during a league match. 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.
- **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.
- **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 the 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)
- **Calling Balls In or Out**: A ball that cannot be seen clearly landing with space between the spot and the line is in. Players who are looking down the line instead of across the lines should make the call. Opponent should get the benefit of the doubt if players are unsure.
- **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.

Completing and scoring matches:

- **Confirm** the match score between all players 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 2nd set 3-6 and won the 3rd set 1-0).
- **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 SanDiegoLeagueAdmin@scta.usta.com 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!

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. Starting in 2022, So Cal will be following the new National Suspension Point system. *(See 2022 Section Regulations)*

Championships/ Post season play:

2022 Key Dates:

So Cal Sectionals Championships page (calendar, registration):

<https://www.ustasocal.com/adult/leagues#championship>

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

- 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.

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 team is needed to complete a flight at Sectionals, a 2nd place team may be selected using the highest % of games won across all So Cal areas.

- **Player eligibility for Sectionals:** All players need to have played a minimum of 2 Local League matches to be eligible to advance. For Computer rated players, 1 may be a default win. For Self-rated or Appeal players, 2 matches (no default wins) are needed.
- **Player eligibility for USTA 2022 Nationals**
 - 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. (*SLR pg. 39*)

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](#)
- [2022 Southern California Section League Regulations \(SLR\)](#) :
<https://www.ustasocal.com/adult/leagues#forms>
- San Diego District Tennis Association Website: <http://www.sandiegotennis.com>

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

Randie Lettington ALC San Diego sandiegoleagues@scta.usta.com

12/29/2021