

2010

Player's Packet Rules & Regulations

2010 HCTL Revised 05/13/2010
Local League Rules and Regulations

All Senior League Matches will follow these rules.

*USTA Adult Indoor, USTA Adult Outdoor,
Combo League, Adult Mixed Doubles and
Combo Commonwealth League*

These local league rules pertain to the following HCTL leagues at the timeframe indicated:

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Adult Mixed Doubles | USTA Adult Indoor |
| January-April | Late April - July |

| | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Combo League | Combo Mixed League |
| July - September | October - December |

Captains are urged to review the entire set of rules and regulations as changes have been made to several sections of the document. All changes will remain underlined. All captains and players should be aware that these rules and regulations contain several significant changes from previous versions.

In all matches played, the "Rules of Tennis" and the USTA Regulations shall apply (except as changed or clarified herein for local league play).

When a match is played without officials, the most current Edition, Friend at Court, "The USTA Handbook of Tennis Rules & Regulations" shall apply in any situation not covered by the rules. This publication is available from the MAS (703-556-6120), and is recommended reading for all tennis players. Any person who knowingly violates the "Honor Code" will be guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct. At the discretion of the League Coordinator he/she may be defaulted from an individual match, or from participation in the league.

Player's Packet of Rules

You may download the Player's Packet of Rules, which contains a copy of these rules, as well as various supporting documents that may come in handy during a match.

[Player Packet of Rules \(Revised 5/13/2010\) \[PDF\]](#)

[Flow Chart for Matches with Full Third Set \[PDF\]](#) (Revised 5/13/2010)

[Flow Chart for Matches with Third Set Match Tiebreaker \[PDF\]](#) (Revised 5/13/2010)

Membership & Player Eligibility

USTA membership is required in any USTA program operated by Home Court Tennis Leagues, Inc. USTA memberships can be obtained and renewed through usta.com or by calling 1 (800) 990-USTA.

There is a 14-person roster limit in the Women's 2.5 and Men's and Women's 5.0 and Open Levels and a 22-person roster limit in all other levels in the 2010 USTA Indoor & Outdoor Adult League, USTA Mixed Doubles League and the Combo Commonwealth Mixed Doubles and Combo Leagues. It is no longer permitted to use two defaults to qualify for Districts or Sectionals.

Line-Up Sheets

Exchange of Line-ups: Line-up should be simultaneous and should occur as close as possible to 10 minutes before match time. When exchanging lineup sheets, both captains are strongly encouraged to ensure that court assignments are understood and that the correct doubles'/singles'

teams and players are directed to the appropriate courts so as to eliminate players taking the wrong position on the courts. The home team captain is responsible for making the court assignments. Players should be encouraged to arrive 15 minutes prior to match time.

Where a split match occurs captains or their designees are required to exchange all court line-ups ten minutes prior to the start of the match. (See National Rule 3.01H(4))

NOTE: Blank scorecards to be used as line-up sheets may be generated by TennisLink. Follow instructions to pull up scorecard screen under Scoring Via TennisLink/Reporting a match. Click Print Score Card. (Handwritten line-up sheets may be used.) It is HIGHLY recommended that you verify that all players are recorded on official TennisLink team roster prior to each match. If an unregistered player plays in a match, the match will become a 6-0, 6-0 default loss for the team with the unregistered player. No default monies will be applied to either team in the case where a match was played.

Line-up Changes Prior to Match Time: Before line-up sheets are exchanged and when a team has an extra player is onsite, insert him/her into the line-up in place of any absent player before the formal exchange so as to minimize or avoid defaults. No substitution is permitted after the formal exchange of line-ups, except for injury to, illness of, or disqualification of a player, prior to the start of such match. (See National Regulations 3.01H(4)). USTA Q&A Interpretations (2009)

What happens when two players on a team don't show up that are members of two different doubles teams? The National Office has authorized the two players to be able to play together at the higher position in order to avoid an additional forfeit. For example, if the two players came from the #1 and #3 doubles positions, these players would play at #1 doubles, the number two

doubles team would remain the same and the forfeit would occur at the number three doubles position. See Reg. 3.01H (4)

After Match is Played: The Captain or his/her designee must sign each line-up sheet (with the score recorded) after the match. Doing so attests to the accuracy of the player names, positions and scores recorded thereon and establishes the basic facts of the match. Each captain should keep this signed copy for their records.

League Fees

League fees are due at the time indicated in the administrative instructions distributed to each captain before the start of a league unless otherwise directed. One check from the captain must be submitted for the total league fee. All checks submitted for league fees must be made payable to Home Court Tennis Leagues, Inc. A returned check fee of \$20 will apply to all items returned from the bank, in addition to being subject to other remedies available. Individuals having an outstanding past due balance; will be disqualified from any Home Court Tennis Leagues, Inc. program, until such balance is paid in full.

Team Match Format

| USTA Adult Indoor | Combo League |
|---|---------------|
| Two singles Three doubles ### EXCEPT at 2.5, 5.0 and open levels: One singles | Three Doubles |

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Two doubles. | |
|--------------|--|

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Adult Mixed Doubles | Combo Mixed League |
| Three Doubles | Three Doubles |

Accidental Injury or Loss of Physical Condition

Any match won due to accidental injury, should be recorded on TennisLink as "Retired," with any games that were played included in the score. Medical time-outs are limited to 3 minutes. If a player cannot resume after 3 minutes, the player must retire. A total of 2 medical time-outs are permitted during a match except for heat related conditions and cramping. In this case, only one medical time-out is permitted. The "match clock" does not stop under either circumstance discussed above. All matches are to end at the scheduled time, except for the one point tiebreaker as provided in the "Individual Match Scoring" section.

Warm-up Period

At private facilities DO NOT TAKE TO THE COURTS UNTIL YOUR SCHEDULED MATCH TIME. All players are entitled to a warm-up period, not to exceed five (5) minutes. If a player is late by X minutes, the lateness penalty for X minutes shall apply. (Refer to point penalty system) The full five-minute warm-up period shall still be granted if desired by any player. A player may have a partner or team member, or any other person provide the warm-up if the opponent refuses to do so. It will be the home team captain's (or designee's) responsibility to limit the warm-up period to five minutes.

If a player designated for the match goes to the court for warm-up and is injured or becomes ill during warm-up, a substitution is allowed and should be so noted on the line-up sheet and scorecard. Once the first serve of the match is delivered, no changes of line-up may be made for any reason. Players may purchase court time prior to their scheduled match time prior to their scheduled match time for team warm-ups. In these cases, a receipt must be shown if asked for by the opposed captain.

Time/Clocks

Calling Time:

- **Lateness** – A home team player on each court is responsible for marking the lateness time when a player shows up late and should refer to the Player Packet for rules on lateness. The penalty time continues until the player is on the court in position ready to play. Just being in the club is not sufficient readiness.
- **Warm-up** – A designated home team player on each court is responsible for calling time on the warm-up period.
- **End of Match** – After exchanging line-ups and before players take to the courts, the team captain or their designated team member substitute is required to confirm with all match players how the conclusion of the timed match will be determined. Options available at various clubs include: club buzzers, club clocks, individual watches on the court or cell phone alarms on the court.

Clocks/Buzzers, etc.

- Buzzers – at clubs are to be used first and foremost.
- Clubs where buzzers don't ring on the half-hour, follow procedures below.

Club Clocks:

- When using multiple club clocks, PRIOR TO starting a match, make sure each court knows the time adjustment if a discrepancy exists in the two clocks.

- If clocks are not available, the home team captain together with a representative from the opposing team is permitted to call time for the match on any and all courts where appropriate.
- Use of a cell phone alarm is permitted as long as the phones are set on mute or vibrate not to ring during the match.

Playing Beyond Time of Match Conclusion:

- If players unknowingly play beyond their scheduled match time, all points that were played "in good faith" will stand.

Court Shifts/Continuous Play

A five-minute warm-up period is scheduled in the 2-hour time period allotted for mixed doubles and USTA/NOVA outdoor league or the 1½-hour USTA/NOVA indoor league matches, and should begin promptly at the time the match is scheduled to begin.

Players are to exchange sides after every odd game for USTA/NOVA outdoor league and USTA mixed doubles league.

Exchange should take place AFTER EACH SET is complete for the USTA/NOVA indoor league matches that run 90 minutes.

Brief water breaks etc. are limited to 90 seconds after odd games except after the first game and during a tie-break game in all mixed, outdoor and indoor adult leagues.

Between points, a maximum of 20 seconds is allowed. This timeframe starts from the moment the ball goes out of play at the end of the point until the serve is struck to start the next point. This limit does not apply if a player has to chase a stray ball. Play is continuous; players are not to leave the court except in an emergency or other approved absence, e.g., bathroom).

Bathroom Breaks

In an attempt to minimize stalling towards the end of match, no bathroom breaks will be permitted in an ongoing match during the last 15 minutes of play. If a player chooses to use the bathroom during the last 15 minutes of play, the match will be considered to be RETIRED, resulting in a win to the opposing team. Scores are to be reported in TennisLink as they exist at time of the infraction checking the radio button to identify the winner.

Bathroom breaks are limited to a reasonable amount of time, not to exceed five minutes for all indoor matches. Outdoor matches are not to exceed 10 minutes.

Interruption of Play due to Power Failure

In the case where a match is interrupted due to a power failure, the following rules shall apply:

- If the match is interrupted for 15 minutes or less, play will resume and continue for the full 1.5 hours – i.e., play will continue for the exact amount of time of the interruption past the time when the match would have ended.
- The starting time of any match scheduled to use the courts following an interrupted match shall be delayed by the amount of time of the interruption, not to exceed 15 minutes.
- If the interruption is longer than 15 minutes and both captains agree to an abbreviated match, then match may continue for no longer than 15 minutes past the time the match was originally scheduled to end.
- If both captains do not agree to the abbreviated match then the match will be cancelled and rescheduled by League Coordinator Ingrid Clark (Captains must notify Ingrid of cancellation).
- If a match is cancelled, then the following match should start on time.

- Note: There may be times, due to other court time obligations, that a match cannot go beyond the scheduled end time. This decision will be up to the discretion of the Management.

Lateness

Lateness is calculated from the time the match is scheduled to begin as posted in the printed league schedule. Example: A match is scheduled to be played from 7:00pm - 9:00pm - "lateness" is calculated from 7:00pm; the warm-up period is part of the overall match time. All players are to be present and ready to play by the time posted in the schedule.

Penalty System For Lateness:

In case of lateness, the following penalties shall apply:

- > 5 minutes or less: Loss of toss plus 1 game
- > 5:01 - 10:00 Loss of toss plus 2 games
- > 10:01 - 15:00 Loss of toss plus 3 games
- > More than 15 minutes: DEFAULT

Regarding each individual match in both singles and doubles, if neither team has the appropriate number of players to start the match, default time for that individual match starts when the team has obtained the correct number of players to start the match.

Alcohol

Alcoholic beverages are strictly prohibited at public parks and at private country clubs. If you consume alcoholic beverages during a league match you are in violation of a league rule. Players consuming alcoholic beverages at public parks or private country clubs before, during, or after a league match may be automatically disqualified from the league. If you choose to celebrate with your

team - find somewhere else other than the public park or private country club. Please don't drink and drive!

Specifically at the private clubs, it should be remembered that as guests, USTA players and their guests/spectators attending every match are required to follow the rules of each of these facilities. Whether you are playing or cheering on your team, remember to follow these rules.

Spectators/Fans/Supporters

There is no communication allowed between spectators and players and absolutely no coaching of any kind!! There will be no glass hitting/pounding/ or tapping or any type of interference between spectators and players.

The following applies only if a match is scheduled in a location that does not have spectator viewing areas.

- Only one spectator from each team will be allowed on the court to watch the match in progress unless a prior agreement between the opposing captains allow for more spectators.
- These spectators must enter the court at the beginning of the match and will not be able to leave the court until the match has been completed (in the case of an emergency).
- If the spectators choose to sit on the benches, remind these spectators that these benches are for the players use.
- Please allow the players to use these benches on the 90 seconds allowed on odd games.
- Remember...**there is no communication allowed between spectators and players and absolutely no coaching of any kind!!**

Weather Related Cancellations

Any cancellation in matches due to severe weather will be recorded on the HCTL phone message at 540-882-4688. Any USTA matches cancelled due to severe weather, will be rescheduled by HCTL.

Forfeit Fees and Team Deposits

In all leagues, a pre-determined amount or "deposit" will be collected pre-season from each team. This deposit may be applied to any defaults/forfeits that this team may have or it may be applied to the entire league fee. Any unused portion of this deposit will be refunded to the team captain at the end of the season along with any additional funds due for defaults/forfeits. If a team "pulls out" of the league after the registration deadline for the league he or she registers for, this deposit will become non-refundable.

In any USTA match, a non-team member substitute player is not an option to avoid paying the fee, unless the captains agree. All forfeits and defaults are automatically assessed the fee. Captains should exhaust all possibilities to ensure forfeits or defaults are a last resort. Please keep in mind that when you default or forfeit a match not only do you lose that match, but you are assessed an individual match fee and you have inconvenienced the other team members who were scheduled to play.

Default

A default can occur in any position if the player designated on the line-up sheet is expected to play but fails to show. The line-up sheet should be marked accordingly and "Default" entered in TennisLink. Changes in the line-up may be made only in accordance with these rules. If a player(s) fails to show or is later than 15 minutes after the scheduled start of the match, the match is considered

a default. Both sets are awarded to the team receiving the default 6-0, 6-0. The "forfeit and default penalty" will be applied to a player who is later than 15 minutes even if both teams agree to play at this point.

National Rule 3.03M

A team must have enough players present to have a mathematical chance of winning a match, or the entire match must be defaulted. Further, if a team defaults an entire team match for any reason during round robin play, then all matches of that team played, or to be played, shall be null and void. If all teams in contention for the championships have already played the defaulting team in good faith, the matches stand as played. The Section may impose further sanctions or penalties on said team.

(However, at the League Coordinator's discretion
due to unusual circumstances, the match may be rescheduled.)

Local League Grievance & Appeal Procedure

All local league grievances and appeals will follow the procedures outlined the 2010 Regulations Booklet (2.00 Grievance Procedures).

The local league grievance form can be found at the end of these rules. Reminder, only a team captain is permitted to file grievances.

Individual Match Scoring

[Flow Chart for Matches with Full Third Set](#) [PDF]

[Flow Chart for Matches with Third Set Match Tiebreaker](#) [PDF]

For all advancing 2010 Leagues to Districts, Sectionals, Regionals and Nationals, it should be noted that the Coman Tiebreaker will be used (both set and match). Our local league voted not to enforce this rule during our regular local league seasons.

COMAN TIE-BREAK PROCEDURES:

(enforced at Districts, Sectionals, Regionals and Nationals)

- exchange ends after first point
- & every four points thereafter

This will allow doubles teams to serve from the same side of the court as they had been throughout the set or match.

For Mixed Doubles, each match will be the best two out of three sets using regular USTA scoring (not No-Ad). For the USTA NOVA Indoor and Outdoor Adult League, each match will be the best two out of three sets, with a MATCH tiebreaker to be played in lieu of the 3rd set. (First team to 10 points, win by two).

At 6 games each in any set, a 12-point tiebreaker will be used (first team to 7 points, win by 2.) At the end of the timed playing period, IF THE BALL IS IN PLAY, finish the point you are playing but do not start a new point. If a player is serving and a fault is caused during buzzer sounding, the player is entitled to finish the point and take the second serve. If all players in a match fail to note that match time has expired and they continue to play until they realize it, all points that have been played will count. **The match is over once all players on the court shake hands.**

In any situation described below, incomplete games are to be totally disregarded in scoring irrespective of what the score may be in that incomplete game. The exception to this is tiebreaker games: see "Tiebreaker Incomplete."

If at the end of the timed playing period the match is incomplete, the match status shall be reported on TennisLink as "Retired" and the following rules shall apply:

3rd Set Tiebreaker Incomplete: If a side is ahead by one or more points, it shall be considered to have won the 'match tie-break' and the match. If there is a tie in the number of points won, one point will be played to determine the winner of the match tiebreaker. A spin of the racquet shall be used to determine which player will serve the point (the non-serving team has the option of which side to receive serve, deuce or ad court), but in no event will players change courtsides.

3rd Set Incomplete: If a minimum of 6 games have been completed and one team is ahead by two games or more, or if one side is ahead by a minimum of 4 games, regardless of a number of games completed, the set shall be "valid" and the match win will go to the team winning this 3rd set. Scores of 3-3, 3-4, 4-3, 4-4, 5-4, 4-5, 5-5, 6-5, 5-6 and 6-6 are all invalid sets. If there is not "valid" third set, the match win would go to the side that has won the most games during the match. The game count should include the games played in the incomplete third set. If there is a tie in the number of games won, a single tiebreak point will be played to determine the winner of the match. Again, a spin of the racquet shall be used to determine which player will serve the point (the non-serving team has the option of which side to receive serve, deuce or ad court) is to be reported on TennisLink as the winner of the match with the actual game score (Point break excluded). All unfinished match tiebreakers will be recorded as 1-0 in TennisLink with a drop-down of "Completed" used.

2nd Set Split: (Where match tie-break has not begun)-The match shall go to the side that has won the most games during the match. If there is a tie in the number of games won, one point will be played to determine the winner of the match. A spin of the racquet shall be used to determine which player will serve the point (the non-serving team has the option of which side to receive serve, deuce

or ad court), but in no event will players change courtsides. The match winner (by game count or point-break) is to be reported on TennisLink as the winner of the match with the actual game score (point break excluded).

2nd Set Incomplete: If a minimum of 6 games has been completed or one side is ahead by a minimum of 4 games, the set shall be "valid." If there is no "valid" second set, the match goes to the winner of the first set. If a side is either a) ahead by two games or more where a minimum of 6 games has been completed of a "valid" set, or b) ahead by a minimum of 4 games, it shall be considered to have won the set. (3-3, 3-4, 4-3, 4-4, 5-4, 4-5, 5-5, 6-5, 5-6, 6-6 are all 'invalid' sets and the match win would go to the winner of the first set.)

If the sets are now split at one set each, procedure follows 2nd Set Split (Where match tie-break has not begun) and the match shall go to the side that has won the most games during the match. If there is a tie in the number of games won, a single tiebreak point will be played to determine the winner of the match. Again, a spin of the racquet shall be used to determine which player will serve the point (the non-serving team has the option of which side to receive serve, deuce or ad court), but in no event will players change courtsides. The match winner (by game count or point-break) is to be reported on TennisLink as the winner of the match with the actual game score (point break excluded).

2nd Set Tiebreaker Incomplete: If a side is ahead by one point or more, it shall be considered to have won the set tiebreaker. If there is a tie in the number of points won, one point will be played to determine the winner of the set tiebreaker. A spin of the racquet shall be used to determine which player will serve the point (the non-serving team has the option of which side to receive serve, deuce or ad court), but in no event will players change courtsides.

If the sets are now split at one set each, procedure follows for 2nd Set Split (Where match tiebreaker has not begun).

1st Set Incomplete: If a side is ahead by one game or more, it shall be considered to have won the match. If there is a tie in the number of games won, one point will be played to determine the winner of the match. A spin of the racquet shall be used to determine which player will serve the point (the non-serving team has the option of which side to receive serve, deuce or ad court), but in no event will players change court sides.

1st Set Tie-break Incomplete: If a side is ahead by one point or more, it shall be considered to have won the match. If there is a tie in the number of points won, one point will be played to determine the winner of the match. A spin of the racquet shall be used to determine which player will serve the point (the non-serving team has the option of which side to receive serve, deuce or ad court), but in no event will players change court sides.

Team Match Scoring

Team results and ranking will be calculated by TennisLink and are available online at usta.com.

Scoring via TennisLink

An official scorecard in TennisLink must be completed for each match played. Instructions for reporting and confirming/disputing match results are as follows:

TennisLink allows team captains (or the players they designate) to enter match results, and to confirm or dispute the results recorded by their opponents after scheduled matches. It also allows District Administrators to resolve "disputed" results and to modify the scorecard in question in order to

finalize the results. Once a scorecard has been finalized, it can be viewed using either the 'Stats and Standings' Reports option.

To enter scores (either winning or losing team captains or their designees)

1. Go to <http://national.usta.com>. Enter your USTA number indicated by the red header "Captains & Coordinators" and click "Go." Under the red header "League Play," click on "Record A Scored." A new browser window will open.

2. Type the match number for which you wish to enter scores, then press "NEXT." (Match numbers are assigned when the league coordinator generates the match schedule and can be found on your schedule next to the match date.) When you enter the match number, the system determines whether or not you may enter scores for the match. To enter scores, both of these conditions must be present:

The scorecard must be blank. If scores have already been entered, you cannot modify the scores. However, if a member of the opposing team has already entered scores, you can review the scores and either confirm or dispute them. If a member of your own team has entered the scores, you cannot continue. Only a member of the opposing team will be allowed to continue.

3. If the conditions stated above are present, you'll see a confirmation page listing the teams associated with the match number you entered. If this is the correct match, click "Next." The system will then check to determine if another member is currently entering scores for this match, and display the appropriate screen:

If the scorecard is currently in use, the system will display a message to inform you of this. If you receive this message you cannot continue.

If the scorecard is not currently in use, the system will display the scorecard screen.

4. On the scorecard screen, do the following:

First enter the match date and year using default format on screen. From the player drop-down lists, select the players from the home and visiting teams for each match.

Click the "Winner" button to identify the winning team for each match.

Type the scores for each match, reporting the winning team first. If you're reporting scores for a 3rd set, the third set score should be entered as 1-0. For example, a valid score would be 6-4, 4-6, 1-0. All unfinished match tiebreakers will be recorded as 1-0 in TennisLink with a drop-down of "Completed" used.

Select the final outcome for each match from the Completed drop-down list. You have the following options:

- a. Completed - The players finished the match and played to a winning score.
- b. Retired - One player (or doubles team) withdrew from the match while it was in progress.

The player(s) who withdrew lose the match, even if they were leading at the time of the retirement. The score is reported as it stood when play concluded.

c. Timed Match - Local league plays time-limited match format, and time expires before the individual match has concluded.

d. Default - One player (or doubles team) failed to arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled match. The opposing player(s) automatically win the match.

e. Double Default - Both players (or both doubles teams) failed to arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled match. The match has no winner.

5. When you've finished entering the match results, click "Next." The system will check your entries to make sure they comply with the USTA scoring rules, and then it will display the appropriate screen. If one or more of your entries is not considered valid, you'll see a screen that

describes the missing or inconsistent information. Click the "Back" button to modify and submit match results. If all of your entries are considered valid, then the information is redisplayed in a confirmation page.

6. When you see the confirmation page, review the information carefully. Based on your review, do one of the following:

If you've entered incorrect match results, click "Back" to return to the scorecard screen. Correct your errors, and then click "Next" to see your new confirmation page.

If the information is correct, click "Finish" to save your information in the TennisLink database. The system will display a message telling you that the scores were entered successfully.

NOTE: You must click FINISH before exiting the scorecard screen. If you exit the screen without clicking FINISH, you'll need administrative assistance to access the screen again.

To "confirm" or "dispute" a scorecard: (Matches not disputed within 48 hours are automatically confirmed. No corrections to the scores or players can be made after this time!!)

1. On the number menu on the left of your screen, click "Scorecard."
2. Type the match number for which you wish to confirm scores, then press "Enter." When you enter the match number, the system determines whether or not you may confirm scores for the match. To confirm/dispute scores, both of these conditions must be present:

You must be registered as a captain of one of the teams involved in the match.

A member of the opposing team must have already entered the match results. If scores have not yet been entered, you can enter the scores. However, if a member of your own team has already entered the scores, you cannot continue. Only a member of the opposing team will be allowed to continue.

3. If the conditions stated above are present, you'll see a confirmation page listing the teams associated with the match number you entered. If this is the correct match, click "Next" to go to the scorecard screen.

4. On the scorecard screen, you'll see the match results entered by a member of the opposing team. Review the information and then do one of the following: If you agree with the recorded results, select the "Confirm" button, and then click the "Next" button. The system will display a message telling you that your selection was entered successfully. If you disagree with the recorded results, select the "Dispute" button, then click the "Next" button. The system will display a message telling you that your selection was entered successfully.

NOTE: If you confirm the match results, no further action needs to be taken with the scorecard. However, if you dispute the match results, the dispute must be e-mailed to your local league coordinator, which will then be resolved by the Virginia District Administrator.

When asking for a change to a particular match, please include:

- 1) match code,
- 2) playing level,
- 3) date match was played,
- 4) position to be corrected (i.e. #2 doubles, #1 singles) and
- 5) clearly indicate what changes should take place.

Contact HCTL League Coordinator, Ingrid Clark, for instructions

Honor Code of Ethics

This Honor Code of Ethics has been adopted in order that all followers of tennis will know what is expected of them as players and as spectators and, thereby, enhance the enjoyment of the game for

everyone. Any person who knowingly violates this Honor Code will be guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct. At the discretion of the official USTA umpire or League Coordinator he may be defaulted.

PRINCIPLES

1. *Courtesy.* Tennis is a game that requires cooperation and Courtesy from all participants.

Make tennis a fun game by praising your opponents' good shots and by not:

- conducting loud postmortems after points;
- complaining about shots like lobs and drop shots;
- embarrassing a weak opponent by being overly gracious or condescending;
- losing your temper, using vile language, throwing your racket, or slamming a ball in anger; or
- sulking when you are losing.

2. *Counting points played in good faith.* All points played in good faith stand. For example, if after losing a point, a player discovers that the net was four inches too high, the point stands. If a point is played from the wrong Court, there is no replay. If during a point, a player realizes that a mistake was made at the beginning (for example, service from the wrong Court), the player shall continue playing the point. Corrective action may be taken only after a point has been completed. Shaking hands at end of the match is an acknowledgment by the players that the match is over.

THE WARM-UP

3. *Warm-up is not practice.* A player should provide the opponent a 5-minute warm-up. If a player refuses to warm up the opponent, the player forfeits the right to a warm-up. Some players confuse warm-up and practice. Each player should make a special effort to hit shots directly to the opponent. (If partners want to warm each other up while their opponents are warming up, they may do so.)

4. *Warm-up serves and returns.* A player should take all warm-up serves before the first serve of the match. A player who returns serves should return them at a moderate pace in a manner that does not disrupt the server.

MAKING CALLS

5. *Player makes calls on own side of the net.* A player calls all shots landing on, or aimed at, the player's side of the net.

6. *Opponent gets benefit of doubt.* When a match is played without officials, the players are responsible for making decisions, particularly for line calls. There is a subtle difference between player decisions and those of an on-Court official. An official impartially resolves a problem involving a call, whereas a player is guided by the unwritten law that any doubt must be resolved in favor of the opponent. A player in attempting to be scrupulously honest on line calls frequently will find himself keeping a ball in play that might have been out or that the player discovers too late was out. Even so, the game is much better played this way.

7. *Ball touching any part of line is good.* If any part of the ball touches the line, the ball is good. A ball 99% out is still 100% good.

8. *Ball that cannot be called out is good.* Any ball that cannot be called out is considered to have been good. A player may not claim a let on the basis of not seeing a ball. One of tennis' most infuriating moments occurs after a long hard rally when a player makes a clean placement and the opponent says: "I'm not sure if it was good or out. Let's play a let." Remember, it is each player's responsibility to call all balls landing on, or aimed at, the player's side of the net. If a ball can't be called out with certainty, it is good. When you say your opponent's shot was really out but you offer to replay

the point to give your opponent a break, you are deluding yourself because you must have had some doubt.

9. *Calls when looking across a line or when far away.* The call of a player looking down a line is much more likely to be accurate than that of a player looking across a line. When you are looking across a line, don't call a ball out unless you can clearly see part of the Court between where the ball hit and the line. It is difficult for a player who stands on one baseline to question a call on a ball that landed near the other baseline.

10. *Treat all points the same regardless of their importance.* All points in a match should be treated the same. There is no justification for considering a match point differently than the first point.

11. *Requesting opponent's help.* When an opponent's opinion is requested and the opponent gives a positive opinion, it must be accepted. If neither player has an opinion, the ball is considered good. Aid from an opponent is available only on a call that ends a point.

12. *Out calls corrected.* If a player mistakenly calls a ball "out" and then realizes it was good, the point shall be replayed if the player returned the ball within the proper Court. Nonetheless, if the player's return of the ball results in a "weak sitter," the player should give the opponent the point. If the player failed to make the return, the opponent wins the point. If the mistake was made on the second serve, the server is entitled to two serves.

13. *Player calls own shots out.* With the exception of the first serve, a player should call against himself or herself any ball the player clearly sees out regardless of whether requested to do so by the opponent. The prime objective in making calls is accuracy. All players should cooperate to attain this objective.

14. Partners' disagreement on calls. If one partner calls the ball out and the other partner sees the ball good, they shall call it good. It is more important to give your opponents the benefit of the doubt than to avoid possibly hurting your partner's feelings. The tactful way to achieve the desired result is to tell your partner quietly of the mistake and then let your partner concede the point. If a call is changed from out to good, the principles of Code §12 apply.

15. Audible or visible calls. No matter how obvious it is to a player that the opponent's ball is out, the opponent is entitled to a prompt audible or visible out call.

16. Opponent's calls questioned. When a player genuinely doubts an opponent's call, the player may ask: "Are you sure of your call?" If the opponent reaffirms that the ball was out, the call shall be accepted. If the opponent acknowledges uncertainty, the opponent loses the point. There shall be no further delay or discussion.

17. Spectators never to make calls. A player shall not enlist the aid of a spectator in making a call. No spectator has a part in the match.

18. Prompt calls eliminate two chance option. A player shall make all calls promptly after the ball has hit the Court. A call shall be made either before the player's return shot has gone out of play or before the opponent has had the opportunity to play the return shot. Prompt calls will quickly eliminate the "two chances to win the point" option that some players practice. To illustrate, a player is advancing to the net for an easy put away and sees a ball from an adjoining Court rolling toward the Court. The player continues to advance and hits the shot, only to have the supposed easy put away fly over the baseline. The player then claims a let. The claim is not valid because the player forfeited the

right to call a let by choosing instead to play the ball. The player took a chance to win or lose and is not entitled to a second chance.

19. Lets called when balls roll on the Court. When a ball from an adjacent Court enters the Playing Area, any player on the Court affected may call a let as soon as the player becomes aware of the ball. The player loses the right to call a let if the player unreasonably delays in making the call.

20. Touches, hitting ball before it crosses net, invasion of opponent's Court, double hits, and double bounces. A player shall promptly acknowledge when:

- a ball in play touches the player;
 - the player touches the net or opponent's Court while the ball is in play;
 - the player hits a ball before it crosses the net;
 - the player deliberately carries or double hits the ball; or
 - the ball bounces more than once in the player's Court.
- The opponent is not entitled to make these calls.

21. Balls hit through the net or into the ground. A player makes the ruling on a ball that the player's opponent hits:

- through the net; or
- into the ground before it goes over the net.

22. Calling balls on clay Courts. If any part of the ball mark touches the line on a clay Court, the ball shall be called good. If you can see only part of the mark on the Court, this means that the missing part is on the line or tape. A player should take a careful second look at any point-ending placement that is close to a line on a clay Court. Occasionally a ball will strike the tape, jump, and then leave a full mark behind the line. This does not mean that a player is required to show the opponent the mark. The opponent shall not cross the net to inspect a mark. See USTA Regulation IV.C.8. If the player

hears the sound of the ball striking the tape and sees a clean spot on the tape near the mark, the player should give the point to the opponent.

SERVING

23. *Server's request for third ball.* When a server requests three balls, the receiver shall comply when the third ball is readily available. Distant balls shall be retrieved at the end of a game.

24. *Foot Faults.* A player may warn an opponent that the opponent has committed a flagrant foot fault. If the foot faulting continues, the player may attempt to locate an official. If no official is available, the player may call flagrant foot faults. Compliance with the foot fault rule is very much a function of a player's personal honor system. The plea that a Server should not be penalized because the server only just touched the line and did not rush the net is not acceptable. Habitual foot faulting, whether intentional or careless, is just as surely cheating as is making a deliberate bad line call.

25. *Service calls in doubles.* In doubles the receiver's partner should call the service line, and the receiver should call the sideline and the center service line. Nonetheless, either partner may call a ball that either clearly sees.

26. *Service calls by serving team.* Neither the server nor server's partner shall make a fault call on the first service even if they think it is out because the receiver may be giving the server the benefit of the doubt. There is one exception. If the receiver plays a first service that is a fault and does not put the return in play, the server or server's partner may make the fault call. The server and the server's partner shall call out any second serve that either clearly sees out.

27. *Service let calls.* Any player may call a service let. The call shall be made before the return of serve goes out of play or is hit by the server or the server's partner. If the serve is an apparent or near ace, any let shall be called promptly.

28. *Obvious faults.* A player shall not put into play or hit over the net an obvious fault. To do so constitutes rudeness and may even be a form of gamesmanship. On the other hand, if a player does not call a serve a fault and gives the opponent the benefit of a close call, the server is not entitled to replay the point.

29. *Receiver readiness.* The receiver shall play to the reasonable pace of the server. The receiver should make no effort to return a serve when the receiver is not ready. If a player attempts to return a serve (even if it is a "quick" serve), then the receiver (or Receiving team) is presumed to be ready.

30. *Delays during service.* When the server's second service motion is interrupted by a ball coming onto the Court, the server is entitled to two serves. When there is a delay between the first and second serves:

- the server gets one serve if the server was the cause of the delay;
- the server gets two serves if the delay was caused by the Receiver or if there was outside interference.

The time it takes to clear a ball that comes onto the Court between the first and second serves is not considered sufficient time to warrant the server receiving two serves unless this time is so prolonged as to constitute an interruption. The receiver is the judge of whether the delay is sufficiently prolonged to justify giving the server two serves.

SCORING

31. *Server announces score.* The server shall announce the game score before the first point of the game and the point score before each subsequent point of the game.

32. *Disputes.* Disputes over the score shall be resolved by using one of the following methods, which are listed in the order of preference:

- count all points and games agreed upon by the players and replay only the disputed points or games;
- play from a score mutually agreeable to all players;
- spin a racket or toss a coin.

HINDRANCE ISSUES

33. *Talking during a point.* A player shall not talk while the ball is moving toward the opponent's side of the Court. If the player's talking interferes with an opponent's ability to play the ball, the player loses the point. Consider the situation where a player hits a weak lob and loudly yells at his or her partner to get back. If the shout is loud enough to distract an opponent, then the opponent may claim the point based on a deliberate hindrance. If the opponent chooses to hit the lob and misses it, the opponent loses the point because the opponent did not make a timely claim of hindrance.

34. *Body movement.* A player may feint with the body while the ball is in play. A player may change position at any time, including while the server is tossing the ball. Any other movement or any sound that is made solely to distract an opponent, including, but not limited to, waving the arms or racket or stamping the feet, is not allowed.

35. *Lets due to hindrance.* A let is not automatically granted because of hindrance. A let is authorized only if the player could have made the shot had the player not been hindered. A let is also

not authorized for a hindrance caused by something within a player's control. For example, a request for a let because the player tripped over the player's own hat should be denied.

36. *Grunting.* A player should avoid grunting and making other loud noises. Grunting and other loud noises may bother not only opponents but also players on adjacent Courts. In an extreme case, an opponent or a player on an adjacent Court may seek the assistance of the Referee or a Roving Umpire. The Referee or official may treat grunting and the making of loud noises as a hindrance. Depending upon the circumstance, this could result in a let or loss of point.

37. *Injury caused by a player.* When a player accidentally injures an opponent, the opponent suffers the consequences. Consider the situation where the server's racket accidentally strikes the receiver and incapacitates the receiver. The receiver is unable to resume play within the time limit. Even though the server caused the injury, the server wins the match by retirement. On the other hand, when a player deliberately injures an opponent and affects the opponent's ability to play, then the opponent wins the match by default. Hitting a ball or throwing a racket in anger is considered a deliberate act.

WHEN TO CONTACT AN OFFICIAL

38. *Withdrawing from a match or tournament.* A player shall not enter a tournament and then withdraw when the player discovers that tough opponents have also entered. A player may withdraw from a match or tournament only because of injury, illness, or personal emergency. A player who cannot play a match shall notify the Referee at once so that the opponent may be saved a trip. A player who withdraws from a tournament is not entitled to the return of the entry fee unless the player withdrew more than six days before the start of the tournament.

39. *Stalling.* The following actions constitute stalling :

- warming up longer than the allotted time;
- playing at about one-third a player's normal pace;
- taking more than 90 seconds on the odd-game changeover; or more than 120 seconds on the Set Break.
- starting a discussion or argument in order for a player to catch his or her breath;
- clearing a missed first service that doesn't need to be cleared; and
- excessive bouncing of the ball before any serve.

A player who encounters a problem with stalling should contact an official. Stalling is subject to penalty under the Point Penalty System.

40. Requesting an official. While normally a player may not leave the Playing Area, the player may contact the Referee or a Roving Umpire to request assistance. Some reasons for visiting the Referee include:

- stalling;
 - chronic flagrant foot faults;
 - a Medical Timeout
 - a scoring dispute; and
 - a pattern of bad calls.
- A player may refuse to play until an official responds.

BALL ISSUES

41. Retrieving stray balls. Each player is responsible for removing stray balls and other objects from the player's end of the Court. A player's request to remove a ball from the opponent's Court must be honored. A player shall not go behind an adjacent Court to retrieve a ball, nor ask a player for return of a ball from players on an adjacent Court until their point is over. When a player returns a ball

that comes from an adjacent Court, the player shall wait until their point is over and then return it directly to one of the players, preferably the server.

42. Catching a ball. If a player catches a ball before it bounces, the player loses the point regardless of where the player is standing.

43. New balls for a third set. When a tournament specifies new balls for a third set, new balls shall be used unless all players agree otherwise.

MISCELLANEOUS

44. Clothing and equipment malfunction. If clothing or equipment, other than a racket, becomes unusable through circumstances outside the control of the player, play may be suspended for a reasonable period. The player may leave the Court after the point is over to correct the problem. If a racket or string is broken, the player may leave the Court to get a replacement, but the player is subject to code violations under the Point Penalty System.

45. Placement of towels. Place towels on the ground outside the net post or at the back fence. Clothing and towels should never be placed on the net.