

Local League Area Regulations

Championship Year 2010

New for 2010:

Rule #11a Eligibility.

The minimum age for Adult, Mixed and Combo leagues has been lowered to 18 years.

Mixed and Senior Doubles, Adult, Super Senior-60, Super Senior-65, FiftyMixed and Combo Doubles. The following Local League Area Regulations apply to all leagues, beginning with the Senior Doubles Leagues, except where indicated. Exceptions and variations occur primarily in two cases:

National USTA has rules specific to our National leagues (Adult, Senior, Mixed and Super Senior-60) that NorCal has not applied to our Section leagues (Combo, FiftyMixed and Super Senior-65)

The differences in league format (number of courts used, age requirements, etc.) affect the specifics of the text.

1. Governing Rules

All USTA Northern California Leagues are governed by the USTA League Tennis Regulations ("ULR") and these Local League Area Regulations (LLAR) for USTA Leagues. The LLAR includes additions to the National rules, formulated by the NorCal Adult League Committee.

The LLAR may be modified at any time, at the discretion of the Adult League Committee. Any changes to the LLAR will not be retroactive.

2. Compliance with the USTA League Regulations (ULR)

ULR Section 1.12 provides that all players, as a condition of their participation in the USTA League Tennis Program, agree to abide and be bound by the ULR, the standards of good conduct, fair play and good sportsmanship. Team captains shall be responsible for knowing the ULR. Team captains shall inform all team members of their obligation to be bound by the ULR. Team members shall indicate to their captains their consent to be bound by the ULR. Failure to comply with the ULR or LLAR shall not be excused on the grounds that one was misinformed by a USTA staff member or volunteer. Team captains or their representatives at matches shall be responsible for their actions and the actions of their players. The ULR is available on the USTA NorCal web site.

NorCal will use its own Team and Player Registration programs and score reporting system.

The Honor Code of Ethics provides useful, general guidelines for behavior at matches, for both players and spectators. Captains are encouraged to print copies for each of their team members, and to have a copy with them at all league matches. In all matches played without officials, the USTA official publication "THE CODE" shall be observed, (ULR section 1.02). A copy of FRIEND AT COURT, which also includes "THE CODE" may be purchased from USTA. Click here for purchasing information.

3. Attire

The site of the home team's courts may determine appropriate tennis attire. It is the responsibility of the home team to contact the visiting team to clarify what is appropriate tennis attire at the home team's site. Home teams are encouraged to post specific site attire regulations.

4. Balls

The home team shall supply new USTA approved tennis balls of extra-duty quality for the match. New balls are not required for a third set. It is the home team's option to use new balls in the third set.

5. Boundaries

If a team wishes to play in a local league in an area other than designated by "local league boundaries," the captain shall make a written request to the Adult Leagues Committee. The Committee shall have sole discretion to consider the request. The only reason for such a change shall be hardship travel, and the written request must contain specific examples of such hardship. This rule shall not prevent the USTA Northern California from assigning teams to other local league areas to balance the number of teams in any particular league or area.

5.5 Cell Phones

Friend at Court specifies that if a cell phone of a player rings during a match, it is a deliberate hindrance and as such the opponent may stop play and claim the point.

Clarification: Using a cell phone in any way (calling, receiving messages, texting) during changeovers gives the appearance of coaching. Cell phones should not be used during a match, except for obvious emergencies.

6. Coaching.

is permitted only during the 10 minute set break between the 2nd set and the full third set. There is no coaching allowed at any other time during a match. Refer to Starting Time, rule #33 and Warm-up, rule #40. This coaching rule applies to local league play through National Championships.

Clarification from NorCal:

If the teams have agreed to a full third set, there is a ten-minute break, and players may leave the court for coaching.

While bathroom breaks may be taken at any time, this is not the time for coaching (except during the ten-minute break mentioned above). A player leaving the court for a bathroom break should be particularly careful not to speak to anyone, since this can be construed as illegal coaching. Captains should advise spectators not to speak to any of the team players during the match.

7. Court Monitor

In the event any player on the court requests a court monitor during a match, any USTA member who is acceptable to the players on the court may act as a court monitor. The responsibilities of a court monitor are outlined in *Friend at Court*. For example, a court monitor may be requested to stand at the net post and verify or overrule calls questioned by a player, to call foot faults, to verify let calls, to keep score or to verify the score. He or she may be asked to time breaks between points, changeovers or set.

Clarification from NorCal: Notice that the rule specifies ONE court monitor. If an independent court monitor is not available, two monitors may be used, with each handling one side of the court. If an independent court monitor is not available, two may be used with identical duties, after they agree that in case they disagree, a let would be called.

If a monitor is requested because of line call problems, it is his role to verify or correct a call, and only if a player on the court asks for this verification after a point. He is not there to call all lines. He should stand at the post and, if asked about a player's call, he confirms or corrects it if he has a clear view of the shot. With two monitors, each is primarily responsible for the calls on his side of the court, where he has the clearer view.

In addition, if a court monitor is on the court for any purpose other than foot faults, it is his obligation to call any obvious foot faults that he observes. Some service actions, especially at the higher skill levels, may look like foot faults, but in actuality the foot is not touching or crossing the line until after the ball is struck. This is not a foot fault. That is hard to call, and monitors should limit their foot fault calls, if any, to any obvious and flagrant steps on or over the line before the ball is struck.

When asked to time breaks, the court monitor may only call "Time". For situations when those notices are not effective, the court monitor should record the offenses and later provide his/her testimony for a potential grievance.

8. Deadline, Local League Season

Every league season has a deadline by which all local league matches must be completed. In determining

final standings, any matches not completed by the flight's deadline will be counted as losses for both teams. The season deadline for each league is posted on the web calendar for that league.

9. Default

When a match is played in one shift, a forfeit by default is taken if a player is not at the court site ready to play (and no substitute is available) within 15 minutes after the scheduled match time.

When a match is played in two shifts, a forfeit by default is taken if a first shift player is not at the court site and ready to play (and no substitute is available) within 15 minutes of the scheduled match time for the first matches. A forfeit by default is taken if a second shift player is not at the court site ready to play (and no substitute is available) within 15 minutes of the scheduled time for the remaining matches. Other than as stated above, there will be no penalties for lateness imposed. The Point Penalty System, defined in Friend at Court, is not used in Local League matches.

Clarification from NorCal: Captains are encouraged to be flexible and accommodating whenever possible. It is the responsibility of all players to be on time for a match, and it is the home captain's responsibility to keep things running on time (particularly true on heavily used courts and at facilities with many teams), but whenever possible, captains are encouraged to demonstrate good sportsmanship by treating their guests as they would like to be treated in return.

10. Disqualified Player

In round robin competition, if a player is disqualified at that particular level of play, all his/her previous matches of that league at that level, shall be considered losses and will be adjusted to reflect 6-0, 6-0 wins for the opposing players or doubles teams.

In the event of such a disqualification in single elimination competition (i.e., local league playoffs), the last individual match played by the player shall be considered a loss and will be adjusted to reflect a 6-0, 6-0 win for the opposing player or doubles teams

The player's match results from the team at the level at which the player was disqualified, as well as the match results from any new team will be used to determine the player's computer rating. The player will need to play the required number of matches on the new team during the local league season to establish eligibility for any post-season match on the new team.

10a. Disqualification through the Three Strikes/DNTRP National Program:

Players who are not subject to Three Strikes Disqualification:

Players with valid year-end computer ratings (C)

Players with valid year-end benchmark ratings (B)

Players who are subject to Three Strikes/DNTRP disqualification:

Players with self ratings (S)

Players with adjusted ratings (A)

Players with Mixed Exclusive ratings (M)

Players with rating lowered through medical appeals (S)

Players with ratings based exclusively on Tournament play (T)

Players with Early Start Ratings (ESR)

A player who receives 3 strikes during the local league season will be disqualified from that level of play.

Any matches played at the disqualified level will be adjusted to reflect a 6-0

6-0 win for the opponent.

The Three Strikes process will be run during post season play. If a player receives a third strike during local league playoffs, District or Section Championships, any matches played at that post season level will be adjusted to reflect a 6-0 6-0 win for the opponent.

11a. Eligibility, Player. Local League Play

Open to USTA members who have reached the minimum age prior to or during the calendar year in which such player plays his/her first local league match.

Adult, Mixed Doubles and Combo Leagues: 18 years*

Senior League and FiftyMixed League: 50 years

Super Senior-60: 60 years

Super Senior-65: 65 years

***WARNING TO HIGH SCHOOL PLAYERS:** According to the rules of the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) that govern high school sports in Northern California, you may lose your eligibility to play for your school if you play any matches for a league team during your high school tennis season. Please check with your Athletic Director and coach if you are going to play on a league team. Make sure you know the beginning and ending dates of your season and whether there are any specific league or school rules about playing in recreational leagues. Note that the CIF rule does not restrict you from playing USTA League Tennis outside of your high school season.

A player's eligibility for a team is established when his updated membership and valid rating are posted on the USTA NorCal web site. All players must be on the roster prior to the start of the Team match in which they play. A player not on the roster is ineligible.

For the convenience of the captains, a list of eligible players is included on the computer generated line-up/scorecard specific to that match.

Clarification: Do not use a player who is not on your roster. Do not accept a line-up from an opponent with an ineligible player listed. Compare your opponents to that list before you start the match. Captains may not agree to set aside the eligibility rule for a player who is not on the roster at the time of the match. Every season there are problems because neither captain noticed until too late that Mary Sue was not on the roster at the time of the match (even though Mary Sue assured her captain that she had taken care of this little detail.)

What happens if a match has not started and it is discovered that a player has not been added to the roster? If this player can be rostered then and there, with no significant delay to the match, there is no problem.

With an iPhone or handy computer, an eligible player can be rostered on the spot. In fact, this is an opportunity for captains to show good sportsmanship above and beyond the usual, by helping the opponent get his player registered, so that the match can be played.

What happens if a match gets played and after the match it is discovered that one player was not eligible? The match will be overturned, becoming a 6-0, 6-0 win for Team B, but Team B cannot claim that it was cheated because this default should have occurred in the #3 spot (where Team B lost!) and the #2 team should have faced the other team's #3 team. It may be true, but it is too late. Captains have equal opportunity to check the printed roster, and have equal responsibility for doing so prior to the match. Once the match is played in good faith, it will not be replayed.

11b. Eligibility, Partnerships of Combined Level leagues:

For Mixed, Super Senior-60, Super Senior-65, FiftyMixed and Combo, teams are composed at combined levels of 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0 and 10.0, or 5.5, 6.5, 7.5, 8.5 and 9.5. These levels reflect the maximum combined skill levels of the doubles partners playing individual matches for the team. Each level team has an upper limit of skill level, and players with ratings above that level may not play on that team.

In Mixed Doubles and Super Senior-60 League, the NTRP difference between members of an individual doubles pair may not exceed 1.0.

Mixed, FiftyMixed, Super Senior-60 and Super Senior-65

6.0: highest rating allowed is 3.5

7.0: highest rating allowed is 4.0

8.0: highest rating allowed is 4.5

9.0: highest rating allowed is 5.0

Combo

5.5: highest rating allowed is 3.0

6.5: highest rating allowed is 3.5

7.5: highest rating allowed is 4.5

8.5: highest rating allowed is 5.0

9.5: highest rating allowed is 5.5

12. Eligibility for post-season play: Local League Playoffs, District and Section Championships. A player may play for more than one team at Local League Playoffs, District and Section Championships only if each team is at a different level and only if event scheduling permits.

12a. Local League Playoffs, District and Section Championships, Match Eligibility Requirements:

A player participating in Local League Playoffs, District and/or Section Championships must have played 2 local league matches for his team. One default may count toward this requirement. A match played prior to being rostered on the team does not count toward eligibility.

12b. National and Regional Championships: Match Eligibility Requirements:

A player advancing to Adult, Senior and/or Mixed National competition must have played 3 matches for his team prior to the National event. No defaults count toward this requirement.

There are no match eligibility requirements for 5.5 and Open level Adult League teams.

A player advancing to Super Senior-60 National competition must have played 2 matches for his team prior to the National event. Only one can be a default

Clarification from NorCal: If a player is on more than one same-level team, he may advance beyond the local league season with only one of these teams. As soon as he plays in a post-season event, be it Local League Playoffs, or beyond, that is his team, and his only team at that level. If he has remaining local league matches for another team of the same level, he may play in them, but he may not advance to post season play with another team. This limit to one team per level applies through National Championships.

Players advancing to post season play must have played a required number of local league matches. In some cases, defaults received may count toward this requirement. National USTA has mandated limits on how many default wins may be included for teams advancing to National Championships.

Many captains wisely use a default opportunity to qualify players. If another team notifies you that they are defaulting a spot, it is perfectly legitimate for you to assign that default win to a player (or players) on your team who may be less likely to get the required two chances to play during the local league season, thus qualifying him or her for post season play. However, once the line-ups are exchanged, these names cannot be changed. Please do not come to us at the end of the season and ask that we put different names in a default win spot on a scorecard for an earlier match. Please don't go to your opposing captain and ask them to change the names they enter on a scorecard.

13. Food

Whether food is provided at a match is a decision for the players. Neither the home team nor visiting team is required to provide food at a match.

14. Forfeits

14a. Individual Player Forfeits:

Use of an ineligible player will result in a 6-0, 6-0 defaulted individual match against the team that included the ineligible player in the lineup.

14b. Individual Match Forfeits:

Forfeits must be taken from the bottom up* of the singles or doubles line-up (ULR Section 3.03K). See Order of Play. For example, if the No. 1 and No. 2 doubles teams are scheduled to start at the same time, and the No. 1 doubles team does not show up (and there are no substitutes available), the No. 3 doubles team must be forfeited, the No. 2 doubles team must move to the No.1 doubles position, and the No. 3 doubles team must move to the No. 2 position.

Clarification:

*The "Bottom up" rule applies separately to singles and doubles. If a team must default a line or lines, it is that team's choice of what line to default, but it must be from either the bottom of the singles or the bottom of the doubles or the bottom of both. For example, in a match with five lines, a team that is short on players may default both singles lines, or #2 singles and #3 doubles or #2 and #3 doubles.. They may not default #1 singles unless they are also defaulting #2 singles. They may not default #2 doubles unless they are also defaulting #3 doubles.

In matches with three lines, only the #3 doubles line may be defaulted.

In this circumstance, the written line-up of the forfeiting team must be revised to show the changes necessitated by the requirement to forfeit from the bottom, even though line-ups have been exchanged.) If due to unforeseen circumstances, the captains allow (either by word or failure to prevent) a lower position to start out of sequence and later the higher match ends up a default, all matches stand as played. What happens in a match, scheduled for staggered start times, when a team from the earlier shift defaults and the player or players from the later shift are not yet there to move up in the line-up? This situation, in which the line-up is altered by an unforeseen forfeit, can be very problematic. In this case, if the early round players cannot wait, and/or the later round players cannot get to the match early, captains should treat this particular individual match as a reschedule, and follow the regular rescheduling rules.

Clarification from the USTA: If a player who is present at the match site becomes ill or is injured prior to the start of a match but after the exchange of scorecards and no substitute is available, that particular match shall be forfeited. Only in this case shall a team not forfeit from the bottom up.

If two team players who are members of different doubles teams fail to appear on time for a match, the two doubles players who did appear shall play together and only one position shall be forfeited. For example, if the lineup calls for A and B to play in No.1, C and D in No. 2 and E and F in No.3 and A and E fail to appear for the match, then B and F shall play in No.1, C and D in No. 2 and No. 3 is forfeited.

14c. Double Forfeits:

If both teams simultaneously forfeit the same individual match (i.e. a double forfeit of the same position), the teams must reschedule the individual match and play it.

14d. Total Match Forfeits:

ADULT LEAGUE: A team may forfeit a maximum of two individual positions (one at the 2.5, 5.0, 5.5 and Open levels using a format of one singles and two doubles) without forfeiting the entire match.

(ALL OTHER LEAGUES: A team may forfeit a maximum of one individual position-#3 doubles- without forfeiting the entire match.)

If a forfeit of an entire match is claimed, an administrative grievance shall be filed by USTA NorCal against the forfeiting team. If the Grievance Committee determines, at its discretion, that there was good cause for not playing the match, it may require that the match be rescheduled and played according to the Rescheduling Procedure.

If the Grievance Committee determines, at its discretion, that there was no good cause, the team's season may be declared null and void, and for the purpose of standings, all its matches may be voided. Further sanctions against the captain and team members may include suspension from all USTA league participation for one year. The team shall continue to play its remaining matches, unless both teams agree not to play, and the results, other than for purposes of computer ratings and eligibility for championship play, will not be included in the standings for either team.

Clarification: If you cannot field the minimum 4 players (Adult league-both singles and one doubles team, all other leagues, Numbers 1 and 2 doubles teams-enough to win the team match), you are forfeiting the entire team match. This can lead to your team being dropped from the standings, and all your team members being suspended from USTA League play. If you are facing the situation of not enough players, call your opponent as soon as you know and BEG for a reschedule! Offer to bring refreshments! Offer to paint their clubhouse! Make them an offer they can't refuse! If your opponent can accommodate you, you are saved. If he or she can't, you need to scramble a bit and see if you can add an emergency player to your roster. An automatic grievance is filed against the team forfeiting, and the team has the opportunity to show "good cause" for not fielding a team. Earthquake, team food poisoning, cows on the freeway: these are all examples of good cause. Not enough players is not good cause.

15. Forfeits at Championships

Any team that withdraws from participation in Local League Playoffs must notify the NorCal office of their withdrawal no later than 24 hours or within one business day after being notified of the date and time of the playoff match. Failure to give notice may result in a grievance against the team and subsequent sanctions against the team members.

Any team that withdraws from participation in Districts, Section and/or National Championships) must notify the NorCal office of their withdrawal no later than 48 hours after securing a position in that event. Failure to give notice may result in a grievance against the team and subsequent sanctions against the team members.

Any team that forfeits a team match at District or Section Championships shall be subject to a grievance may be ineligible to participate in any USTA league play for the immediate ensuing year.

16. Format for Adult League 2.5, 5.0, 5.5 and Open level

Prior to the start of the season, in each local league area, the 2.5, 5.0, 5.5 and Open level captains by gender may decide by unanimous vote to expand the team match format to require two individual singles and three individual doubles matches. The ULR applies after the local league is completed.

17. Grievances.

Except for a complaint filed by the Adult League coordinator, or an NTRP Grievance (formerly called Self Rate Grievance), or a complaint based on eligibility, a grievance against a player or team alleging a violation during local league competition shall be filed by the captain or co-captain in writing within four days of the match involving such player or team, or within twenty-four hours after the end of local league play, or within 24 hours after the end of any tier of post season play (Playoffs, Districts, Sections), whichever occurs first. The Adult League coordinator may file a grievance against a player or a team alleging a violation at any time. An area league coordinator may file a grievance or appeal any grievance decision involving a team or player in his area.

A complaint against a player shall be sent to the player and the player's team captain, and the player, captain and team shall be considered parties to the complaint. A complaint against a team or team captain shall be sent to the team captain, and both shall be considered parties to the complaint. At the time the grievance is filed the complaining party shall send a copy of such grievance to the party(ies) against whom the grievance has been made

A grievance must be filed with the USTA NorCal office, 1920 North Loop Rd., Ste.100, Alameda, CA 94502. It is preferred but not required that grievances be filed by e-mail. (robinson@norcal.usta.com) A grievance or an appeal is considered filed when it is received by the USTA Northern California office. Should the deadline for filing fall on a weekend or holiday, the deadline shall be the end of the next business day. In the case of a grievance or an appeal to be filed within twenty-four hours after the end of local league play or any tier of post season play, the filing must be emailed, hand-delivered or faxed to the USTA NorCal office. No fee is required for filing a grievance.

Grounds for a grievance include alleged violations of the ULR or these Local League Area Regulations for USTA Leagues or violations of the standards of good conduct, fair play or good sportsmanship (see ULR Section 2.02A). Failure to comply with any procedural rule for filing a grievance or appeal may result in such grievance or appeal being dismissed.

An individual may continue to play during a grievance investigation and hearing, but must understand that if the complaint is upheld, all matches played during that time may be defaulted. (ULR 2.02A(6) If a grievance is upheld, the individual may not play during his/her appeal process. (ULR2.03A(2)a). If the grievance is denied and appealed by the filer, the individual may play during his/her appeal process, but must understand that if the decision of the Grievance Committee is reversed, all matches played during that time may be defaulted (ULR2.03A(2)b).

Any player playing on more than one concurrent league team, who is subject to grievance action, is responsible for notifying all his captains of the grievance issue, the possible sanctions and the final grievance/appeal decision.

Clarification: Grievances deal with issues of sportsmanship, rules violations, etc. There is no fee to file a grievance. The Grievance Committee is made up of volunteers, not staff. They do not have a surveillance satellite hovering over your court. That means that they cannot settle issues of bad line calls, or foot faults. They cannot change the behavior of a captain who is ill mannered or rude. They can help captains settle rule question, and they can impose sanctions against teams or captains or players who demonstrate poor sportsmanship.

17a. NTRP Grievance (Formerly called Self Rate Grievance)

An NTRP Grievance may be filed in any league by a captain or co-captain against any self rated player (S) who inappropriately self rates. NTRP grievances may also be filed against players with Early Start Ratings (ESR), ratings based on Tournament results (T), Mixed Doubles results (M) and ratings lowered through medical appeals (S).

The date of the decision controls the application of any sanctions and match result reversals. A decision made prior to 24 hours after the local league season deadline or prior to 24 hours after a playoff weekend or prior to 24 hours after a District or Section Championship will be applied to all matches played in that period. A decision made after that 24 hour deadline will not be retroactive and match results will not be reversed.

The captain of the player will be included in the complaint.

From the ULR: "Self rated players who enter the USA League Tennis by inappropriately self-rating are considered to have violated the standards of good conduct, fair play and good sportsmanship and may be subject to a grievance complaint and possible disqualification."

Directions for filing an NTRP Grievance are linked on each Team's web page. Failure to comply with these instructions may result in this complaint being dismissed.

1. An NTRP grievance may be filed by a captain or co-captain, a coordinator, a member of a championship committee or the NorCal League Administration.
2. An NTRP grievance may be filed at anytime. The captain will be included in the grievance. A complaint against a player and his captain shall be sent to the player and the player's team captain, and the player and captain shall be considered parties to the complaint. At the time the grievance is filed, the complaining party shall send a copy of such grievance to the party(ies) against whom the grievance has been made. There is a \$25.00 fee for filing. This fee will be returned if the grievance is upheld and is not reversed through any appeal process.
3. An NTRP grievance or grievance appeal must be filed with the USTA NorCal office, 1920 North Loop Rd, Alameda, CA 94502. It is preferred but not required that grievances or grievance appeals be filed by email. (robinson@norcal.usta.com)
4. Sanctions may include disqualification, suspension from league play or other league sanctions.
5. The decision of the Grievance Committee may be appealed in accordance with Regulation 2.03 of USA League Tennis Regulations.

17b. NTRP COMPLAINT

An NTRP complaint may be filed in the FiftyMixed or Combo leagues by a captain or co-captain against any computer rated player, challenging the accuracy of that player's rating.

Directions for filing an NTRP complaint are linked in the Captain Tools on each Team Page. Failure to comply with these instructions may result in this complaint being dismissed.

1. An NTRP complaint may be filed by a captain or co-captain, a coordinator, a member of a championship committee or the NorCal League Administration.
2. An NTRP complaint shall be filed within four days of the match involving such player or within 24 hours after the end of local league play, or within 24 hours after the end of each post season tier (playoffs, Districts, Sections) whichever occurs first. The Adult League coordinator may file an NTRP complaint at any time prior to the commencement of championship play.

At the time the grievance is filed, the complaining party shall send a copy of such grievance to the party(ies) against whom the complaint has been made and the player's team captain. Both the player and captain shall be considered parties to the complaint. There is a \$25.00 fee for filing. This fee will be returned if the complaint is upheld and is not reversed through any appeal process.

3. An NTRP complaint must be filed with the USTA NorCal office, 1920 North Loop Rd, Alameda, CA 94502. It is preferred but not required that complaints or complaint appeals be filed by email.

(robinson@norcal.usta.com)

4. Sanctions may include disqualification, suspension from league play or other league sanctions.
5. The decision of the Grievance Committee may be appealed in accordance with Regulation 2.03 of USA League Tennis Regulations.

If the NTRP complaint is dismissed, a second complaint may not be filed in the same season unless additional data warrant a second complaint. If the complaint is upheld, that match and all previous matches played by that player for that league season shall be considered losses and that match and all previous matches shall be considered wins for the opposing players or doubles teams. Scores will be adjusted to reflect a 6-0 6-0 win for the opponent.

18. Identification

All League players are required to have government issued photo I.D. available for presentation at all league matches.

Clarification: A player who cannot, when asked, confirm his identification with photo I.D. is considered ineligible for the match. If there is no substitute available, (see Substitute rule #34, below), then the Forfeit rule (#14) applies.

19. Lineups

Teams are not required to field players in order of strength.

The team captains for each team shall exchange their team match cards simultaneously. Once exchanged, a line-up may not be altered except in the case of a substitution. See Rule 34.

The exchange of completed line-up cards shall be done prior to the scheduled start time of the Team match. The line-ups must be completely filled out, even if the match is being played that day in two shifts.

20. Medical Time outs (guidelines)

Clarification: The information in Friend At Court for medical time outs applies to officiated matches. For unofficiated league matches the following guidelines apply:

A medical time out may not exceed 3 minutes.

One time out per injury is allowed. (Twisted ankle = one time out, sprained shoulder = one time out, etc)

One time out for cramping is allowed per match.(leg cramp=one time out, any other cramp in the same match = no time outs left.)

21. Membership.

To be placed on a team roster, a player must be a paid USTA member through the end of the league season and through the month of the designated local league playoff weekends. This extended membership must be posted on the USTA NorCal website. Players should allow a full business day for this membership information to be sent from the National USTA Membership office to the NorCal office.

22. Move Up/Split Up Rule (Adult 5.5 and Open teams are exempt from this rule)

All players whose team wins at Section Championships must move up one level as a team or disperse to form new League teams with no more than three (3) players who were on the final roster at the conclusion of local league play of any team or combination of teams that won at Section Championships. (For Adult 2.5, and 5.0, the maximum number of players is two (2).

Any player who did not play or receive a default win in any match for this team is excluded from this regulation.

This rule applies to ALL team members, regardless of their ratings. For example, if there are 4.0 players on a 4.5 Section Champion team, those 4.0 players must apply the same Move Up/Split Up rule to both a 4.5 team and a 4.0 team the following season.

If a Section league has a limited number of upper level teams participating, the highest level teams registered may be exempted from this rule.

Exempt for 2010 are Super Senior-65 M4.0 and W4.0, Super Senior-60 W9.0, and FiftyMixed 9.0.

Clarification: This rule applies separately to each league. For example, players on an Adult league team who win at Section Championships must comply with this rule for the following Adult league season. If they happen to play together on a Senior League team, this rule does not apply to their Senior League team.

23. Number of Rounds

Small flights will be offered multiple rounds of play. The captains may decide by majority vote, to decrease the number of rounds to no fewer than two rounds. (National regulations mandate that flights of three or fewer teams must play a minimum of three rounds.

24. Order of Play

The order of play shall be in the following sequence:

ADULT: No.1 singles, No.1 doubles, No.2 doubles, No.2 singles, No.3 doubles.

ALL OTHER LEAGUES: No.1 doubles, No.2 doubles, No.3 doubles.

Clarification: Captains may agree to a different order, but should be aware of the problems that might arise if a lower line has played, and a higher line defaults. For example, two captains agree to play #2 doubles earlier than #1, and then #1 doubles unexpectedly defaults. Please refer to rule #14a, above, for an explanation of forfeiting from the bottom.

25. Player Participation-Local league

A player may join a league team at any time. A player whose name is listed on a roster, but who has not played a match for that team, may leave that team and move to another team's roster.

A player who has not played for a team and is removed from the roster prior to the season deadline for that league will receive a partial credit, automatically applied when he joins any future league team. The credit will be the total player registration fee less a \$3.00 processing fee. There are no refunds.

Joining Additional Adult League Teams

In a given area, a player may play on only one team per level, but may play on more than one team at different levels. E.g., in the East Bay, 3.5 John may play on one 3.5 team, and may also play on higher level teams.

A player may play on more than one team of the same level if those teams are in different areas. E.g., John

may play on a 3.5 team in the East Bay, and a 3.5 team in Fresno.

Clarification: Players who choose to play on multiple teams and/or in overlapping league seasons should be aware that some conflicts with scheduled league events, (local league matches, local league playoffs, or other levels of post season play, including National Championships), as well as with religious and cultural holidays, are unavoidable. NorCal makes every effort to schedule the different seasons in a way to minimize these conflicts, but with a growing number of leagues and league participation, it is not possible to avoid all conflicts. Captains and players who participate on multiple teams should be prepared to make these difficult choices, and understand that NorCal has done its best to minimize these situations.

A player shall not play a league match under another player's name. A player who does so, and the team captain, and any team member who plays in the same match with knowledge of the impersonation, may be suspended from all USTA sanctioned activities for up to five years.

26. Playoffs

There will be a two or four team playoff as defined by the Local League Rules below unless there is a unanimous vote by the captains in the flight to reduce (from a four team playoff to a two team playoff) or eliminate playoffs. This vote should be taken and reported to the NorCal staff.

For Super Senior-65, playoffs are designated for a weekdays. References to "week" below, refer only to the Super Senior-65 League.

26a. Format, Playoffs:

Flights of five or fewer teams will conclude their local league season with a two-team, one-weekend/week playoff. This match is played on the earlier of the two designated playoff weekends/weeks. Team #1 hosts team #2.

Flights of six or more teams will conclude their local league season with a four team, two-weekend (week for S-65) playoff. The format is single elimination. *

If a level of play has more than one division (e.g., men's 3.5-1 and 3.5-2), local league playoffs may require additional weekends, either earlier or later, than the designated playoff weekends. These additional weekends will be designated by the NorCal League Department. For purposes of a final round between division winners, home court advantage will be determined by flip of a coin.

*If the number of weeks in the league season does not permit additional weekends, then the two weekends will be used for the division's own playoff (#1 vs #2) and the playoff between two division winners.)

Clarification: If an area has a wildcard and two teams are advancing to the next level, the two playoff captains may agree not to play the final playoff match. In a single flight, the team higher in the local league standings will be considered the #1 team for scheduling at the event. If this is a playoff between two different flights, their places in the post season schedule will be determined by staff.

26b. Player Eligibility, Playoffs:

Please refer to rules 12 and 12a: Eligibility for post-season play: Local League Playoffs, District and Section Championships, and

26c. Scheduling, Playoff:

Captains may agree to play a playoff match earlier, but not later than the designated weekend/week.

First Round:

Within seven days of the matches that determine playoff opponents, or no less than 72 hours prior to the first playoff match dates, whichever is sooner, playoff captains must contact each other. If a hosting captain has secured a spot but does not know which team he will be playing, he must contact all possible opponents. The visiting captain must alert the home captain of his own participation in the playoffs, and the home captain must notify the visiting captain of the date, time and location of the first playoff match. If the visiting captain has made no attempt to contact the home captain, he loses the opportunity to take home court.

If the home captain fails to provide his opponent with this information-either by email or personal contact

or by web posting- by the deadline given here, the visiting team may take home court for the playoff match. The visiting captain then has 24 hours to notify his opponent of the date and time of the playoff match.

Cooperation between playoff captains in setting up their final matches sets a tone of good sportsmanship between the two teams for those very important season ending matches.

Additional rounds:

By 9 p.m. on Monday, the day after completion of the first and/or second and/or third round playoff weekend, the home captain must notify the visiting captain of the date, time and location of the coming playoff match-either by email or personal contact or by web posting

If the home captain fails to contact his opponent by the deadline given here, the visiting team may take home court for the playoff match. If the visiting captain fails to contact the home team by 9:00 p.m. Tuesday following the Monday deadline, he loses the opportunity to take home court.

Clarification: If, during the season, a home team is unable to provide courts for a match at the site under which it registered its team, it may move the match to another site within the same area. The only reasons for changing sites are 1) their home courts are unavailable or 2) their home courts are unplayable. The home team is responsible for notifying the opponents and when necessary, providing directions. This rule applies to local league matches and to playoff matches. This rule does not permit a home team to change the time of the Team match or any of the individual matches without agreement from the opponent.

Clarification: The rule allowing the visiting team to take home court protects the away team from any deliberate or lengthy delay in notification. The home captain loses home court for the playoff match only if the visiting captain chooses to take it. If the home team misses the deadline, we encourage the visiting team to contact him and actively solicit the match arrangement information. Taking home court from the home team should occur only in situations in which the visiting team feels the delay is a deliberate action by the home captain for some competitive advantage.

If a pending grievance or grievance appeal could affect team standings, the League Coordinator may delay playoffs for the teams involved until the grievance or grievance appeal decision is rendered. The home captain who is notified of the decision must notify the visiting captain of the date, time and location of the playoff match within 24 hours of receipt of notice of the appeal or grievance decision.

27. Ratings

For players age 59 or younger, a computer rating is valid for three years.

For players age 60 or older, a computer rating is valid for two years.

Players who participate in an Adult or Senior District or Section Championship event may not appeal their Year End ratings during the following championship year.

27a. Rosters for Adult and Senior league teams are limited to players whose ratings are at team level or 0.5 below team level. (For example, a 4.0 team may have 4.0 and 3.5 players, but no 3.0 players.)

28. Referee

A captain may request a referee for a match from the Sectional League Coordinator pursuant to the following procedure:

a. The request must be made at least three weeks prior to the match date to guarantee that a referee will be present. If the request is made less than three weeks prior to the match date, a reasonable effort will be made to accommodate the request.

b. The captain making the request must send a check in the amount of \$85, payable to USTA NorCal, attention: Sectional League Coordinator, to cover the cost of the referee. USTA NorCal will hire and pay the referee.

c. The referee shall not be a member of or have relatives or close friends on either team.

d. The referee shall notify the home team captain that he/she has been hired to officiate the match.

Clarification: The general role of the referee is to see that the rules of tennis, as described in Friend At Court, are observed. These include all the well known rules about line calls, distractions, foot faults, etc. He also would be a valuable witness in any situation involving unpleasantness between players, should a

grievance be filed.

Clarification: A referee is not ordinarily familiar with NorCal league rules, so he would not be involved in enforcing the 15 minute default time, nor would he necessarily understand our rules about who decides about the third set, or whether tie breaks will be the Coman format or the traditional format. Captains are advised to have a copy of the LLAR with them, should questions arise about these league rules.

In some cases, the captain who requests the referee has a particular problem in mind, and will ask the referee to be particularly vigilant about that. The away captain also may ask for his/her attention to a specific tennis issue.

29. Rescheduling Procedure

Cooperative Rescheduling

If the two opposing team captains agree, they may reschedule their match for any reason and for any date, any time, provided that the match is completed by the end of the local league season. Once a match has been scheduled, the home captain may not unilaterally re-schedule it without agreement from the away captain.

Unanticipated Rescheduling

In the case of rain delay, rain out, delay due to lighting failure, time constraints or any similar reason, if the two opposing team captains do not agree, or if the captains have agreed before a match to reschedule it but have not agreed to a new date, time and place, the match must be rescheduled as follows: within seven days of the original match date, the home team must offer the visiting team at least two different dates (the two dates must be offered at the same time) for the makeup match at the home team's courts; within three days of receiving those options, the visiting team must choose one date.

If the visiting team is already scheduled to play in a USTA match in the same league on either or both of the two dates offered for the rescheduled match, the home team must offer an alternative date. Choices must conform to the times permitted by the Scheduling rule described below. [This qualification is league-specific. A captain may not decline an offer because some or all of his players are scheduled to play a match in another concurrently running league.](#)

If the home team fails to comply with the Rescheduling Procedures by the seventh day, the home team will lose home court advantage and scheduling rights. The visiting team will then have seven days (starting immediately) to set up the match, in accordance with the procedures stated above. Failure to comply will result in the match being cancelled, and for the purposes of standings a loss will be awarded to both teams.

Unanticipated Loss of Home Courts

If, during the season, a home team is unable to provide courts for a match at the site under which it registered its team, it may move the match to another site within the same area. The only reasons for changing sites are 1) their home courts are unavailable or 2) their home courts are unplayable. The home team is responsible for notifying the opponents and when necessary, providing directions. This rule applies to local league matches and to playoff matches. This rule does not permit a home team to change the time of the Team match or any of the individual matches without agreement from the opponent.

Interrupted Match in Progress

Clarification: The most difficult situation for all teams is the partly played, interrupted match and this is what we suggest: The two captains set up a new date for completing the match, following the rescheduling rules. Then the captains tell their players that they can try to work with their opponents to set up a time that is good for all of them, and play the match on their own. Any match not scheduled to be played prior to the new match date must be played on that new match date. A match not completed by that new date is a retirement. A retirement is entered as a win for the team able to play, and the scores should be entered exactly as they were when the match was interrupted.

Note: Each individual match is considered to have started when the first ball is put in play on that court (not warm-up).

The Team Match is considered to have started when the first ball is put in play in any individual match.

If an individual match has not started, any players on the roster at the time of the reschedule (who have not played in any other line of this match) may be used.

If an individual match has started, players in that line are locked into that match. When it is rescheduled, the same players take up exactly where they left off.

If a Team Match did not start, any default goes away. If even one individual match did start, the default stands.

30. Rest Period

Any player on the court may request a two-minute set break after the first and/or second set. If the players have agreed to play a full third set, there is an optional ten-minute break, and players may leave the court at this time. There is no rest period after the first game of any set. There is a maximum 20 seconds allowed between points and a maximum 90 seconds allowed when players change ends of court.

31. Scheduling .

If two opposing team captains agree, they may play on any date, at any time and at any place within their area boundaries, provided that the match is completed by the end of their flight's local league season.

If two opposing team captains do not agree, the home team shall set the date and time of a match during the time period specified on the master schedule and within the following time parameters:

Weekday Team matches must be scheduled to start between 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Weekend Team matches must be scheduled to start between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Exception: Super Senior-65: Team matches must be scheduled Monday through Friday. No match may be scheduled to start before 10:00 a.m. or after 1:00 p.m. unless captains agree to a different start time.

All matches must be scheduled and emailed to opposing captains or posted on the web by the deadline set by the NorCal League Department.

If a home team does not meet this deadline, and has not informed his opponent of their match time by e-mail, web posting or personal contact, the team forfeits its home court advantage and becomes the away team. The opposing team becomes the home team and shall have three days from the initial deadline to notify the opponent, by e-mail or personal contact, of the date and time of the match.

Clarification: A team match may start at the latest time noted here, 8 p.m. on weekdays or 6 p.m. on weekends, even if that means that for a match played in two shifts, the later shift does not get on the court until after the time deadline.

The opposing team cannot refuse a date and time that fall within the above parameters.

In areas where distance or heavy commute problems make a 6 p.m. week night start time a serious difficulty for the away team, host captains are encouraged to be flexible. Options include avoiding a strict 6:00 p.m. start time, offering a choice of start times between 6 and 7 p.m., offering ahead of time to extend or suspend the 15 minute default time, avoiding weekday evening matches for those faraway teams, playing a Match tie break in place of a full third set. This consideration and flexibility on the part of the host team sets a cordial tone for the match and demonstrates good sportsmanship to all the players involved.

Clarification: If, during the season, a home team is unable to provide courts for a match at the site under which it registered its team, it may move the match to another site within the same area. The only reasons for changing sites are 1) their home courts are unavailable or 2) their home courts are unplayable. The home team is responsible for notifying the opponents and when necessary, providing directions. This rule applies to local league matches and to playoff matches. This rule does not permit a home team to change the time of the Team match or any of the individual matches without agreement from the opponent, only the site.

We cannot prohibit teams from scheduling matches on religious or government holidays. We know that some facilities may have so many teams, or limited court time and they cannot be as flexible as they might like, but we ask that captains make every effort to avoid such dates, out of respect for their opponents and in the spirit of good sportsmanship.

32. Scorecards

Blank scorecards are available on the web for each scheduled match. Each scorecard includes a current list of eligible players. Within 24 hours of the match, each captain must enter the match results on the NorCal website. Either captain may do the initial entry. The second captain confirms the data entered by the first captain.

Clarification from NorCal. Once a card has been confirmed, it cannot be changed. If a correction is needed, both captains should contact the office. Corrections will not be made by the office without the knowledge of both captains.

33. Starting Time

An individual match is started at the moment at which a ball is delivered in service. A team match is started at the moment the first ball of any individual match is delivered in service. For matches played in two shifts, the second scheduled match time for the match shall be one hour and 15 minutes after the first scheduled match time. See also the **Order of Play** rule.

Clarification from NorCal: Many of our facilities host multiple teams, running back to back matches on busy weekends. Inevitably some matches will run longer than planned, and the result is that teams following these delayed matches have had to wait for the courts. Any team whose match runs over their scheduled time allotment should vacate the courts for the next team, even if they have not finished their match. Here is the scenario:

Team A has the courts at 1:00. Team B has the same courts at 3:00. Team A starts late (guys), or warms up longer than five minutes, or takes multiple very long, very chatty bathroom breaks (gals), and when Team B arrives at 3:00, Team A is still playing.

Team B should be entitled to start its match at its scheduled time. Team B might be willing and able to give Team A ten or fifteen minutes, if they are close to finishing. That is up to Team B.

If Team A has not finished its match when Team B claims the courts, Team A will need to reschedule the balance of their incomplete match. Team A then knows the importance of starting on time, not extending warm ups, and keeping bathroom breaks to a minimum. And Team C will appreciate getting their courts at 5:00, as scheduled!

34. Substitutions

No substitution may be made in an individual match after the lineup has been presented, except for injury to, illness of, disqualification of or failure to appear on time by a player, prior to the start of such match (see ULR Section 3.01H(4)). In the event a substitution is allowed, the substitute shall play in the position that is open due to the injury, illness, disqualification or failure to appear on time. No substitute may be taken from the original lineup after the lineup has been presented, except that if a player's partner does not show up due to injury, illness, disqualification or otherwise fails to appear on time, the player may be treated as a substitute.

Clarification:

In this circumstance, the written line-up will be altered to show the substitute, even though line-ups have been exchanged.

In a match played in two shifts, this rule applies to each shift. For example, if a match is being played at 3:00 and 4:15, and at 4:15 one of the players is not available, an eligible substitute may be used in that player's position.

35. Team Registration

If a team is withdrawn after the publicized deadline date, a grievance may be filed against the captain involved. The grievance committee shall allow the grievance unless the committee finds the captain or person who registered the team had "good cause" for withdrawing the team after the deadline. Merely not being able to register a sufficient number of players is not good cause.

36. Three/Two Court Requirement

Teams are required to have home courts for the season, with the ability to reserve these courts for league matches. Unless the captains agree otherwise, the home team shall provide the following:

Adult League: a minimum of three reserved courts for a match, (a minimum of two courts for 2.5, 5.0, 5.5 and Open).

All other leagues: a minimum of two reserved courts for a match.

The home team may provide the minimum number of courts either at the first or second scheduled match time for the match.

Unless the captains agree otherwise, the home team may host a match, with confirmed reservations, for the following court arrangements:

ADULT LEAGUE 3.0-4.5:

1. Five courts at one time.
2. Three courts for the first shift, followed by two courts for the second shift.
3. Two courts for the first shift, followed by three courts for the second shift.

4. Four courts for the first shift, followed by one court for the second shift.

5. One court for the first shift, followed by four courts for the second shift.

ADULT LEAGUE 2.5, 5.0, 5.5 and Open level, and ALL OTHER LEAGUES:

1. Three courts at one time.

2. Two courts for the first shift, followed by one court for the second shift.

3. One court for the first shift, followed by two courts for the second shift.

The second scheduled match time for the match shall be one hour and 15 minutes after the first scheduled match time. See also the Order of Play rule.

37. Tie, procedures in the event of a tie in flight standings

In the event of a tie in matches won/lost in final standings, the tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures that does so:

(1) Individual Matches: winner of the most individual matches.

(2) Sets: loser of the fewest number of sets.

(3) Games: loser of the fewest number of games.

The statistics for these three procedures are reflected in the table on the web Standings Page for each team.

(4) Head-to-Head: winner of head-to-head match.

(5) Coin toss

In the event of a tie of individual matches within a team match, the tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures that does so:

(1) Sets: loser of the fewer number of sets.

(2) Games: loser of the fewer number of games.

(3) Coin toss.

[Clarification. There may be a situation of double ineligibility issues that result in a double default in a team match. When a decision is required for the purpose of finalizing league standings, the match winner will be determined by the procedure described above.](#)

38. Tiebreak, Set or Match

Coman Tie Break:

The Coman Tiebreak procedure is the same as the present tiebreak (set or match), except that players change ends after the first point, and after every four points thereafter. (i.e., change ends after the 5th, 9th, 13th, 17th point, etc), and at the conclusion of the tie break.

38a. Tie Break in Local League Play and Local League Playoffs:

The Coman Tie Break is optional for local league play. Because it has advantages for all players on the court, and because it will be used by all teams in District, Section and National Championships, captains are encouraged to use it during this league season. If teams cannot agree on using the Coman tiebreak, the home team makes the decision. The decision should be made, on each court, prior to the start of the match. If the players forget to make this decision prior to the start of the match, it should be made as soon as this oversight is discovered. The decision, once made, can be changed only by unanimous agreement by all players on the court.

The decision to play either a full third set or a match Tie Break is made by the home team on each court. The decision should be made, on each court, prior to the start of the match. If the players forget to make this decision prior to the start of the match, it should be made as soon as this oversight is discovered. The decision, once made, can be changed only by unanimous agreement by all players on the court.

38b. Tie Break at District and Section Championship Play:

A Coman Match Tiebreak, as described above will be used in lieu of a third set. It shall be scored as follows:

1) It will be counted as a set played for purposes of Section 3.03I (2) and

2) It will be counted as one game for purposes of Section 3.03I (3).

39. Up and Out-Senior League only

Players who receive Year End computer ratings that are clearly above level will be notified and moved to the next level immediately. Matches played prior to this adjustment are valid. The higher ratings will go into effect seven days after the publication of the Year End ratings on the NorCal website.

40. Warm-Up

Warm-up precedes the match and is not considered part of the match. Warm-up is five minutes for all

matches. Warm-up shall include serves. A player arriving late, but within the 15-minute default time may not be denied a five-minute warm-up.

41 Water and Bathrooms

Bathrooms and water must be available at the site of the match.

42. Wheelchair Play

When a wheelchair tennis player is playing with or against an able-bodied person in singles or doubles, the Rules of Wheelchair Tennis shall apply for the wheelchair player and the Rules of Tennis for able-bodied players shall apply for the able-bodied player.

Rules of Wheelchair Tennis:

Two Bounces: If the ball is taken on the first bounce, it must bounce within the bounds of the court. If the ball is taken on the second bounce, the second bounce can hit the ground either within the boundaries of the court or outside the court boundaries before being returned.

The Service: The server shall throughout the delivery of the service

-- Not change position by rolling or spinning. The server shall not by slight movements of the wheels which do not materially affect the location originally taken up by him, be deemed "to change his position by rolling or spinning."

-- Not touch, with any wheel, any area other than that behind the baseline within the imaginary extension of the center-mark and sideline.

Player Loses Point.

The wheelchair is part of the body. All applicable rules apply. A player loses the point if:

(a) The ball in play touches him or his wheelchair or anything he wears or carries, except his racket in his hand(s). This loss of a point occurs regardless of whether the player is inside or outside the bounds of his court when the ball touches him.

(b) A served ball hits him or his wheelchair or anything he wears or carries, except his racket in his hand(s).

It is legal for a player to hit a return, fall out of his chair and then get back into his chair to make the next return.

43. Wildcards

The areas in NorCal are divided into groups of four to compete against each other at Championships.

Because the less populated areas may not have any teams at a certain level, wildcards may be used to round out the number of teams that advance to post season play. Wildcards are chosen by random draw from the areas with the greatest number of teams. This may result in a team traveling outside its district to compete.