

2010 USTA Richmond Local League Rules & Procedures for All Divisions*

1) General Rules

- a) All Richmond USTA Leagues must abide by and enforce the Rules listed in the 2010 USTA League Tennis National Regulations, the 2010 Mid-Atlantic Rules, and the 2010 Virginia Tennis Rules for all USTA League play.
- b) TennisLink is the USTA official system for registering teams and players, obtaining captain contact information (Captain's Report), printing match scorecards, reporting match scores and posting standings for the league. <http://tennislink.usta.com/leagues/>
- c) The local league website is administered by the local league coordinators and is updated on a regular basis. League registration, team number assignments, match schedules, local rules, league forms, rating information, list of players looking for teams and other helpful information for captains and players can be found by visiting <http://www.richmondtennisleagues.com/>.
- d) Home teams to provide USTA approved tennis balls.
- e) Since USTA league matches are not officiated, the most current edition, Friend at Court, "The USTA Handbook of Tennis Rules & Regulations" shall apply in any situation not covered by the rules. The Friend at Court contains the rules of tennis, and it can be downloaded from the local league website or ordered from the USTA national website.
- f) League Registration: Local league registration dates are posted on the local league website approximately 2 months before the league season starts. Late registration is subject to the discretion of the local league coordinator. Late entries will not be accepted after the scheduling process has begun.

2) Team Captain Responsibilities

- a) Team captains handle all team administrative matters and represent their team in USTA League Tennis matters. All communication with the league coordinators must go through the team captain.
- b) Team captains must register in TennisLink (designating themselves as the team captain) as soon as Tennislink team numbers are assigned. Tennislink team number assignments will be posted on the local league website approximately two weeks before the league season begins. If captains do not check the "Team Captain" box upon registration in Tennis Link, they will not show up on the Captains Report and other captains will have no way of communicating with them.
- c) Team Captain Contact Lists are available in TennisLink as "Team Captains Report". Instructions on how to print a Captains Report are available on the local league website.
- d) Team captains are responsible for making sure that their USTA membership information is current. The Tennis Link Captains Report uses the team captain phone number and email address listed in the USTA Membership records. If the membership information needs to be changed, captains should click on the "Renew Your Membership" link on the Tennis Link home page and follow instructions for updating membership information.
- e) The local league coordinator will register non-playing captains in TennisLink. Non-playing captains should notify the local league coordinator of their non-playing status by sending an email request. The email request must include the captain's USTA member number, the team name, level and number. Non-playing team captains are not required to pay league fees.

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- f) Team captains must be familiar with USTA League Regulations, TennisLink, and the local league website. TennisLink instructions are available on the Captain's Information page on the local league website. Click on the link to the document called "How to Use TennisLink" for instructions on how to add your team to "My Teams", register players, print match scorecards, print Captains Report, enter match scores, and confirm match scores.
- g) Team captains are responsible for familiarizing their players with current USTA League Tennis National, Mid Atlantic, Virginia District, and Richmond Local League Regulations.
- h) All team captains are required to have a valid email address, and are expected to check email frequently during the league season. Email must be used for league updates (from the coordinator) and communication with other captains.
- i) Team captains are responsible for fielding a complete team for each match of the league season. Team defaults may affect the final league standings, therefore teams should play all matches regardless of whether they are in contention for post-season play.
- j) Team captains should print a TennisLink match scorecard before each match to use for the line-up exchange.
- k) Team captains (or his/her designee) should confirm scores with opposing captains immediately after each match. Each captain should sign both line-up sheets with the all scores recorded. Doing so attests to the accuracy of the player names, positions and scores recorded, and establishes the basic facts of the match.
- l) Team captains are responsible for making sure that scores are entered within 72 hours after the match is completed. See Score Entry section for score entry procedures.
- m) If the team captain is unable to perform duties, he/she should appoint an acting captain to fulfill duties.

3) Team Rosters

- a) All players must have a valid NTRP rating. Players without a computer rating are required to declare a self-rating in TennisLink when first entering the Leagues program.
- b) All players must be registered in TennisLink before they play in a match. If a player participates in a match without registering on Tennis Link, that individual match will be defaulted. (See VA Tennis Rule 6.)
- c) At the time of player registration, USTA Memberships must be valid through the end of all applicable local league seasons. In any case, the local league is defined as "concluded" by the date specified as end of season in TennisLink.
- d) Players may play on one team per level, per league.
- e) Players may play on more than one team in the same league if the teams are at different levels. However, players must follow Mid-Atlantic Sectional (MAS) rule 12, commonly called "The 2 Player Rule". For more information, see MAS Rule 12.
- f) Players may play at or above the level of their current computer rating or self-rating. There is no limit on the number of players per team who "play up".
- g) Player Deletions: Players may be deleted from a team roster if they have not participated in a match. Team captains should follow the procedure below for player deletions:
 - i) Download the Player Deletion form from the local league website League Rules & Forms page. This is a MS Word document and can be completed electronically.

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- ii) Complete the Player Deletion form and email it to the league coordinator. Captains may type their name in the signature block. This along with the email request will serve as an electronic signature.
 - iii) The Local League Coordinator will sign the form and forward it by email to the Virginia District office for processing.
 - iv) District and Local League fee refunds will be issued within 30 days.
 - v) The Mid Atlantic fee and TennisLink fee are non-refundable.
 - vi) Player Deletions will not be processed and local league fee refunds will not be issued for any reason after the local league season ends.
- h) Player Transfers: Players may be transferred from one roster to another within the same league if the player has not played in a match. Team captains should follow the procedure below for player transfers:
- i) Send an email to the league coordinator including the player name, player USTA #, and current team's level, name and number. The player and both captains should be copied on the email to avoid confusion. List the team level, name and number for the team the player should be transferred to.
 - ii) The league coordinator will verify the information and forward to the District office for processing.

4) Match Schedules and Match Times

- a) Matches are scheduled according to court availability at each team's club or facility. Teams are not guaranteed an even number of home and away matches. Larger clubs with multiple teams will have fewer home matches than smaller clubs with fewer teams.
- b) Home team captains are responsible for verifying that courts are reserved for each home match. (Exception: Belmont teams go through the league coordinator to reserve courts.)
- c) Home team captains work with their clubs and facilities to set home match times. Weekend matches should start no earlier than 8AM and no later than 6PM. Weeknight matches should start no earlier than 6PM and no later than 8PM. (Note: Matches may start before or after the times listed above if BOTH captains agree.)
- d) Matches should be scheduled in 2-hour time slots whenever possible. The minimum allowable match time is 1.5 hours. If a team match is assigned a 1.5-hour time slot, the home captain must have a contingency plan in case the match goes over the time allotted. Note: Captains should discuss any time issues before the match begins to avoid disputes.
- e) The home team captain must email their home match times to all visiting team captains at least 7 days in advance. Voicemails or phone messages are not acceptable. Captains who do not abide by this rule may be given a warning by the league coordinator after the first reported offense. Second time offenders are subject to penalties at the discretion of the league coordinator, up to and including defaulting the match to the visiting captain that was not notified of the match time.
- f) Matches are expected to be played on the scheduled day and time, and captains are not obligated to honor re-scheduling requests except for those listed in rule 8. However, if BOTH captains agree, and if courts are available:
 - i) A team match or an individual match may be changed to an earlier or later start time on the same scheduled day.

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- ii) A team match or an individual match may be changed to a day and time before or within 7 days after the originally scheduled match.
 - iii) Once a date, time and location for the re-scheduled match has been agreed upon by both captains, that match should not be cancelled or rescheduled for any reason other than inclement weather.
 - iv) Team captains are not obligated to honor requests to re-schedule matches (other than Rule 8) and disputes should not arise if a request is turned down. If a captain can not field a team and the other captain is unable to honor a re-schedule request, the match will be a default. It is every captain's responsibility to make sure that they can field a full team on each scheduled match day.
- g) Team captains are required to honor match accommodation requests for players participating in the following:
- i) Any USTA Local Playoff or post season Championship (Districts, Sectionals, Nationals)
 - ii) The RTA sponsored Club Challenge and Recreational Club Challenge
 - iii) Players and teams not participating in the above functions should play matches as scheduled.
- h) Matches accommodated for the players participating in the above functions should use the following procedures to re-schedule:
- i) The captain needing the accommodation must notify the other captain by email at least 14 days in advance. If captains know that accommodations are needed more than 14 days in advance, they should notify the other captain as soon as they are aware of the conflict.
 - ii) Accommodated matches must be played before or within 7 days after the originally scheduled match date. (Note: This is why sufficient advance notice is important.)
 - iii) The captains involved in the accommodation are responsible for working out the details of the re-scheduled match. The match can be played as a team match on an agreed upon date and time, or the individual matches may be split up.
 - iv) Once a date, time and location for the makeup match has been agreed upon by the captains, that match should not be cancelled or rescheduled for any reason other than inclement weather.

5) **Match Format & Courts**

- a) Indoor or outdoor courts may be used for league matches. Team captains must notify opposing team captains in advance if matches are played indoors.
- b) If the home team's courts become unavailable due to an unforeseen conflict such as a club tournament or other event, the match should be moved to the visiting team's courts. If the visiting team's courts are not available do one of the following:
 - i) The teams may find alternate courts and play the match on the scheduled date.
 - ii) The match may be handled as a rainout.
 - iii) Re-schedule the match according to rule 4 f. of the Match Schedule section above.
- c) If a player arrives late for a local league match, the player is entitled to a 5 minute warm-up but local league penalties apply as follows:
 - i) 5 minutes late or less: Loss of toss plus one game

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- ii) 5:01 – 10 minutes: Loss of toss plus two games
 - iii) 10:01 – 15 minutes: Loss of toss plus three games
 - iv) More than 15 minutes: Default
- d) Warm ups are limited to 10 minutes. If a player arrives late for a local league match, local league penalties in rule 5c above will apply, however, the player is still entitled to a 5 minute warm-up. (MAS Rule 8)
- e) Match play will consist of best of two sets using regular scoring and a set tiebreak (12 pt, or first to 7 points by 2 points) at six games-all in each set. In the event of split sets, a match tiebreak (10 pt, or first to 10 win by 2) in lieu of a third set shall be played immediately following the end-of-set rest period. The Coman tiebreak procedure will be used for all tiebreaks.
- f) The continuous play rule shall be observed as follows:
- i) No more than 20 seconds may elapse between points within a game or between games not involving a change in ends.
 - ii) No more than 90 seconds may elapse between games where a change of ends is involved with the exception of the change of sides that occurs after the first game in any set, in which case play is continuous).
 - iii) A set break of no longer than 120 seconds (2 minutes) will be taken at the completion of all sets. This includes the break between the 2nd set and the 3rd set match tiebreak.
 - iv) The above time intervals are measured from the instant the point is completed to the time when the next server begins his/her service motion.
- g) Bathroom breaks should be taken during a set break. If this is not possible they should be taken during an odd game changeover.

6) **Line-up Exchange**

- a) The team captains must simultaneously exchange written line-ups prior to the scheduled match time. All players should arrive at least 15 minutes prior to match time. This will allow captains to exchange line-ups before the match time and get the match started promptly.
- b) If a captain is missing a player, but in good faith believes the player will arrive before the 15 minute default time, the line-ups must be exchanged at the scheduled time. If the captains allow a lower match to start out of sequence and later the higher match ends in a default, all matches stand as played.
- c) If a team knowingly begins a team match without a full complement of players for the line-up (e.g. 4 players rather than 6) they must forfeit from the bottom. For example, a team with 4 players would forfeit #3 doubles.
- d) Once the teams exchange line-ups no movement of players is allowed. Exception: Two players will play together in the higher position when both of their partners do not show in order to avoid two defaults. (USTA National Reg. Interpretations Page 7.)
- e) No substitution may be made in an individual match after the lineup has been presented, except for injury to, illness of, or disqualification of a player prior to the start of the match. (USTA Regulation 3.01H).

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- f) If a match is postponed after line-ups have been exchanged, all line-up positions may be changed except for any positions that already started their match. (USTA National Reg. Interpretations Page 7.)

7) **Score Entry**

- a) Match results must be entered in TennisLink within 72 hours after match completion. Both team captains (not the Winning Captain) are responsible for making sure that scores are entered. This is a Mid Atlantic rule that applies to all leagues in our Section. (See MAS Rule 6.)
- b) For TennisLink score entry instructions, team captains should review the document "How to Use TennisLink" on the local league website Captains Information page.
- c) If a team match is split up or interrupted by rain or other situations, use the date of the last outstanding individual match for entering the score in TennisLink.
- d) It is strongly suggested that team captains enter match scores the date that the match is played. From past experience, captains who wait to enter scores become more likely to forget to enter the scores on time. Matches can be defaulted for failure to enter match scores on time.
- e) Do not assume that the winning captain will enter scores. If a captain checks TennisLink to confirm a match score and finds that the score is not entered yet, he or she should immediately enter the scores.
- f) The non-reporting captain should confirm match scores within 48 hours after score entry. If the score is correct, the non-reporting captain should "Confirm" the scores in TennisLink. If a match score is incorrect, the non-reporting captain should "Dispute" the match score in TennisLink and do the following:
 - i) Send an email to the reporting captain, copy the league coordinator, advise which score was incorrect, and give the correct score. The TennisLink match number must be included in the email.
 - ii) If the reporting captain agrees, he or she should reply to all parties. The league coordinator will correct the score in TennisLink.
 - iii) If the reporting captain does not agree, then both captains will need to contact their involved players. The captains and players are expected to resolve the disputed match score and report the final and agreed upon match score to the league coordinator.
 - iv) If the non-reporting captain does not confirm scores within 48 hours after score entry, Tennis Link will automatically make scores "Confirmed by 48 Hour Rule".
- g) After scores are confirmed in TennisLink they are deemed final and complete with no further right of challenge. Score correction requests for scores already confirmed in TennisLink will not be accepted.
- h) Retired Matches: If a player is unable to finish a match due to injury or physical condition, enter the score as it stood at the time of retirement and mark the match using the "Retired" code.
- i) Defaulted Matches: If a match is defaulted, the match score is entered as 6-0, 6-0. The team receiving the default enters player(s) names. No team names are entered for the defaulting team.

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8) Team Defaults and Individual Match Defaults

- a) Captains must notify opposing team captains (by email) of known individual match defaults at least 24 hours in advance. Captains who do not follow this rule will be given a warning by the league coordinator after the first reported offense. Second time offenders are subject to penalties at the discretion of the league coordinator. (USTA National Reg. Interpretations Page 7.)
- b) If a player arrives 15 minutes after a scheduled match time, his/her individual match is considered a default. (See USTA 3.03L regarding order of defaults.)
- c) If a team forfeits any entire team matches during the season: (Note: For Adult Division Leagues except 2.5 and 5.0 levels, a team may default a maximum of two positions in a match without defaulting the entire match. For all other leagues and 2.5 & 5.0 Adult levels, a team may default a maximum of one position in a match without defaulting the entire match)
 - i) The team will not be allowed to advance to any post-season play.
 - ii) The team will be DQ'd from the overall league standings unless all teams in contention for the Championships have already played the defaulting team.
 - iii) The team's individual match scores will remain in TennisLink.
 - iv) The team will complete the remainder of the league season as scheduled, and remaining match scores will be entered in TennisLink even though the team is DQ'd from overall league standings.
- d) Teams who default more than 2 team matches during a league season are subject to penalties at the discretion of the league coordinator, up to and including suspension from the league the following calendar year.

9) Procedures for re-scheduling matches due to inclement weather:

- a) Rain and lightning are considered inclement weather.
- b) If the weather conditions are questionable the day of the match, the home team captain should check home court conditions and contact the opposing team captain approximately 1-2 hours before match time to decide whether the match can be played or should be postponed.
- c) If the home team captain declares the weather permissible for play, both team line-ups must show up dressed and ready to play. Failure to do so will result in a default/forfeit.
- d) If a match is rained out and either captain can reserve indoor courts at the scheduled match time or within an hour after the match time, the match must be played indoors. If guest fees apply, the guest fees will be split evenly between the teams. The captain who reserves the indoor courts must give 2 hours advance notice to the other captain.
- e) If an outdoor match is moved indoors due to weather, the "Timed Match" rule may be used if both captains agree. Team captains are responsible for making sure that players observe warm up time limits and start matches promptly.
- f) Inclement weather make up matches must be played within 7 days. See Mid Atlantic rule 7.
- g) If a match must be re-scheduled due to inclement weather, captains are responsible for working out the re-scheduling details and should use the following procedure to re-schedule:
 - i) Team captains are expected to cooperate with each other in order to reschedule and play makeup matches within 7 days.

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- ii) Captains must agree on the date and time of the rescheduled matches.
- iii) If captains cannot agree upon a date and time for the make-up match, the home captain will choose 2 possible dates and the visiting captain will choose 1 of the 2 dates.
- iv) Email must be used for communication. If captains phone each other, they must confirm the conversation by email.
- v) Once a date, time and location for the makeup match has been agreed upon by the captains, that match should not be cancelled or rescheduled for any reason other than inclement weather.
- h) For re-scheduled matches split into individual matches, the players must follow rule 9g listed above. Line-ups should be exchanged through the league coordinator as follows:
 - i) Each captain will send his/her line-up to the league coordinator. (If a league coordinator's team is involved a grievance committee member can be used.) The captains must list an email address and phone number for the involved players. (Contact info for one player per doubles team is acceptable.)
 - ii) Once the league coordinator receives both line-ups, he/she will send an email to both captains with both line-ups listed.
 - iii) Captains are responsible for making sure that the individual matches are scheduled and played within the deadlines given.
- i) If inclement weather occurs after a match has begun, completed individual matches will stand as played and incomplete matches must be resumed by the same players at the exact set, game and point when play was halted. Use rules 9g and 9h above for re-scheduling the incomplete matches.
- j) If indoor courts are used for a make up match, the home and away teams should split guest fees and court fees. Some clubs or indoor facilities may waive guest fees for a make up USTA match. Please check with your club contact.

10) Post Season Play: Local League Playoffs & District, Sectional & National Championships

- a) There is no minimum match requirement for local league playoffs. Any player on the team roster may participate in local league playoffs.
- b) Local league playoff formats will be determined by the local league coordinator.
- c) Player qualification requirements for all championships are listed in a chart on page 4 of the 2010 USTA National regulations. Local League playoffs are considered local league matches for qualifying purposes.
- d) After the local league season is completed, the local league coordinator must certify league winners to the VA District Administrator. The coordinator will send an email to the captains of all teams qualified for District Championships verifying that the team will be able to participate at Districts. The captain must check with his/her team and make sure they have enough players to participate. If the team is not able to participate, the coordinator will offer the available spot to the team in second place.

11) Grievances and Captain/Player Conduct

- a) All local league grievances and appeals will follow the procedures outlined in the 2010 USTA National Regulations. The local league grievance form can be found at www.richmondtennisleagues.com on the League Rules & Forms page.

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- b) All players and captains are expected to exhibit the highest levels of sportsmanship along with courtesy and fairness. Each league participant is expected to know, and is bound by, these Local League Rules, the USTA League Tennis Regulations, the USTA Mid-Atlantic Section League Rules, the USTA Virginia District League Rules, the Rules of Tennis, and The Code: The Players' Guide for Unofficial Matches (printed in Friend at Court, published annually by USTA).
- c) Richmond Tennis Leagues has a zero tolerance policy with regard to any physical altercations that occur at any match.

12) Miscellaneous Rules

- a) Medical Time Outs: No more than one (1) medical time out is allowed per player, per match. The medical time out can be up to three (3) minutes in duration. If the injured player is unable to continue after the medical time out due to the injury or illness, the match will result in a retirement.
- b) Cell Phones: All players' cell phones are to be turned off during all matches. Any match disruptions caused by a cell phone will result in the opposing team being awarded one point.
- c) Spectators: No communication is allowed between spectators and players and absolutely no coaching of any kind!! For indoor courts, there will be no glass hitting/pounding/ or tapping or any type of interference between spectators and players.

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Approved by VA District Leagues Administrator and Richmond Rules Committee March 1, 2010.