

Timberhill Tennis Club USA League Tennis Regulations

(Effective 2005)

1. USA League Tennis

The USA League Tennis Program is the country's largest recreational tennis league and is governed by the U.S. Tennis Association (USTA). USA League Tennis provides organized, structured team competition for men, women, and mixed doubles at all ability levels at various times during the year. Teams consist of either all women, all men, or mixed gender players of equal ability based on the National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) for determining the levels of competition. Whether you are a beginner or the club champion, there is a league for a player like you. Because all teams are set up according to NTRP rating, League Tennis provides a social atmosphere and lively competition at comparable ability. There's no better way to have fun, make friends, and travel in an entourage of teammates to other tennis clubs in the area while playing the game you love. **GET IN THE GAME!**

The *USA LEAGUE TENNIS REGULATIONS* as published by the USTA shall apply to match play in the TTC League Tennis program. In addition, league teams participating in USA League playing at TTC must observe the *TTC USA League Tennis Regulations* as contained in this document. These regulations were established by the TTC Board of Directors to provide guidance for league team membership, utilization of club facilities, and to ensure equal opportunity for all club members to participate in USA League Tennis.

2. League Seasons and Player Eligibility

TTC plays teams in Southern Oregon from Salem on south to Ashland/Medford, east to Bend and Sun River, and west to Coos Bay and Salishan though travel to the farthest locations are not required every year.

It's possible to play year round in USTA leagues. In the spring (March thru May) it's the Adult League, same-sex teams where matches consist of 3 doubles matches and two singles matches. Team members must be 19 or older. In the summer it's the Mixed Doubles competition where team matches comprise three doubles matches. Again the players must be 19 or older. In the fall it's Senior Doubles (the over 50, but not over the hill crowd) competition also consisting of 3 doubles matches.

For each season it's possible to have teams with NTRP rating from 2.5 through 5.0, though at TTC teams from 3.0 through 4.5 are most common. Players must play on a team at their NTRP level or at most one level higher (see team restrictions of playing above-level below). In any given season, a player may play on two teams but only if the teams are at different NTRP levels. For example a 3.5 player may play on a 3.5 team and "play up" on a 4.0 team.

All players must be members of the USTA in good standing. Players may join the USTA, register for a team, and captains may enter team scores at the USTA League web site shown below. This site also shows the current standings of the teams.

USA League Tennis Web Site: <http://national.usta.com>

3. Formation of Teams and TTC Team Regulations

Regulations

Adult League teams must have a minimum of 8 players. Senior League and Mixed Doubles teams must have a minimum of 6 players. There is no maximum, but a large team means less play for everyone. If possible, a large team should break into two teams by recruiting more members if necessary. No member of the team can have a NTRP ranking higher than the team ranking. The number of below-level players on a team may not be more than 20% of the team. If more below-level players have signed up for a team than are allowed by the 20% rule, then the players with the best League record during the previous season will take precedence.

Team members do not have to be TTC members but non-members may not constitute more than 20% of the team. The captain of the team, however, must be a TTC member.

Non-members of a TTC team will pay a \$90.00 USTA standard season (i.e. match play not exceeding 4 months) membership with club privileges. The \$90.00 USTA standard season membership is only offered to non-members playing in the Adult League (this will not be offered to non-members playing in the Mixed Doubles or Senior Leagues). If a TTC team has less than 12 at-level members and *recruits* non-members to field a team, the recruited non-member(s) will not be required to pay the \$90.00 USTA standard season membership fee or a guest fee when playing home matches. However, the recruited non-member who elects not to take advantage of the \$90.00 USTA standard season membership will be required to pay a guest fee for any team practices on TTC courts.

Teams not conforming to these regulations will not be allowed to schedule home matches or will forfeit all home matches.

Team Formation Process

In the paragraphs below a *team decision* is a decision agreed to by a majority of the members of the team.

Prior to the start of the season, signup sheets will be posted in the TTC clubhouse. Players who want to play on TTC USTA League teams must sign up before the team organizational meeting. The TTC General Manager will schedule team organizational meetings by NTRP level. Teams will be formed at these meetings from the signup sheets. Once a team is formed from the signup list, new members may be added only by a team decision. Teams must also make the following decisions.

Choose a Captain – The captain's responsibilities include scheduling match play with the other League teams, choosing the players to compete for each match, keeping the team informed about match results, and recording the results of match play.

Type of Play – In the past, teams have often chosen to be either *Equal-Play* or *Strength-Based*

teams. In an *Equal-Play* team the captain attempts to schedule all team members the same number of matches regardless of the players strength. In a *Strength-Based* team the team agrees to play its best players in order to be most competitive (winning teams can go on to divisional, regional, and/or national playoffs). In such a team it is understood that below-level members may only get to play as a substitute when at-level players are not available. The decision on how the season should be played should be made by the team.

Match Assignments – The team should decide how match assignments are to be made. The simplest way is to assign this task to the captain. However a *Strength-Based* team may want to use last years USTA results or a tennis ladder to determine which players are the strongest. It is important that the team understand and agree to (by majority vote) the process of assignment of players to the season matches.

4. Use of TTC Facilities for League Matches

The Adult, Senior, and Mixed Doubles League Divisions of the USA Tennis League offer league match play throughout the year and are supported by the TTC through the use of its facilities. During the spring and fall TTC allocates time on its indoor courts for home matches. In the spring, five or more courts are reserved for a period of 1.5 hours for each team match. In the summer and fall three courts are reserved. Current Regional Regulations require a match to consist of two normal sets (with a 7-point tie breaker in case of a 6-6 score) and if necessary a match tie-breaker (first to reach 10 points by two) to break a split set tie.

League play during the regular season (March-June) places the heaviest demands on club facilities due to the best-of-5 match format and the greater number of league participants. Historically, TTC has fielded one or more league teams for men and women at NTRP levels from 3.0 to 4.5 for a total of about nine teams. During the regular season, five indoor courts are allotted for league play and home matches can only be scheduled at the times prescheduled on the TTC calendar near the telephone.

5. Scheduling Process for Home Matches

Each TTC league team should schedule no more than one match more than half of their league matches at TTC. Prior to the start of the season, team captains must contact the opposing team captains to schedule home and away matches. After a date for a home match has been agreed upon and confirmed by the TTC and visiting team captains, the TTC team captain must register the home match date to reserve the courts for league use by marking the date, time and team information on the club calendar at the TTC clubhouse (located on the office partition by the common-use telephone). Team captains are advised to use the TTC clubhouse telephone to contact opposing team captains to ensure the availability of dates and times for home play. Home matches are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis according to the club calendar. TTC captains may not reserve the home courts prior to confirmation of match dates with the opposing team captains. Upon completion of scheduling all home and away matches, TTC captains must provide the Club Manager and the regional USTA coordinator the schedule. During the league season, the Club Manager is responsible for reserving the courts for league play as indicated on the club calendar and the teams' schedules. Changes in registered home

matches are allowed at any time and, after confirmation with the opposing team captain, must be recorded on the club calendar. Further, the TTC captain must provide the Club Manager with an amended team schedule at the earliest convenience. The Club Manager will notify the team captains of any changes in home match dates to allow better scheduling of their home matches. Failure to report scheduling changes to the Club Manager will result in a team fine of \$20 and potential forfeit of the team match if played at home.

The home captain will be responsible for complying with the *TTC USA League Tennis Regulations* for USA League Tennis when forming a league team and scheduling league matches. In the event that TTC has more than 12 USA Tennis League teams, TTC Board of Directors may use a lottery system to allocate days and times for home matches. Keep in mind that the use of TTC courts for USA league play is a privilege and should not be abused at the inconvenience of fellow league and non-league playing members.

4. Some Do's and Don'ts

Do provide new cans of balls for home matches.

Do provide food and drinks for visiting teams.

Don't assume that the visiting team captain remembers the date, time and place of an upcoming league match. Do contact the opposing team captain a few days prior to an upcoming match to confirm the time and place and determine whether either team will be short-handed.

Do learn about local club rules regarding match play, ad/no-ad scoring, time limits, injury time outs, tiebreakers, score-keeping, warm-up period, etc prior to play.

Don't forget to sign the score sheet after completion of all matches.

Don't forget to record match scores within 48 hours of the completed match.

Do have fun and remember, it's only a game!

Go Timberhill!

Revision History

Unknown month 2000 – Original Regulations.

April 2004 – Completely rewritten. Team membership and process for team decisions was made more explicit.

March 2005 - Under Formation of Teams - Regulations