



2013 Orange County LOCAL LEAGUE RULES

(subject to revisions)

Welcome!!

Our Local League is just that. It's local, and it incorporates many of the same teams, captains and players, year after year. Let's keep that in mind as we work together to maintain a cooperative, fair, friendly and fun environment for all of us. The most current version of these rules will always be posted on the website: www.orangecountyusta.com

Objective

The objective of the local league is two-fold. We hope to provide a competitive, fair and friendly tennis environment for local players. Additionally, first place teams in each flight progress on to the next level of competition- Local League Playoffs, Area/District Playoffs, Section Championships, National Invitational and/or National Championships. Below are the policies, guidelines and rules, which govern our local league. Please remember that a key objective is to try to make sure all matches are played.

Circumstances are not always going to be perfect and ideal. We want to avoid defaults whenever possible. Defaults skew what the true results would be as they provide an artificial win for a team. In applying the information below, please use as much flexibility and common sense as you can. Please always ask questions if you need any clarification regarding these local league rules.

Participation Clarification for our Local League

Orange County is separated into two different Areas for the Women's Leagues & Mixed Doubles Divisions, Weekday and Weekend and each sends a representative to Sectionals. The men's divisions play only on the Weekends. Players may not play on multiple teams at the same level in the same area. Playing on a 3.5 Friday, and 3.5 Weekend would be ok ~ Two 3.5 weekend teams... not ok.

Roster Size Limits

There are no team size limits, but players must be added before deadline dates and before they play their first match.

Captain

Each team must have one captain who is responsible for reading and knowing the rules and making sure their players also know them and know where to find them. Captains are strongly encouraged to attend who a pre-season meeting. Those who do will receive a gift. **Captain who do not attend are still responsible for all the material.**

Captain's Responsibilities

Captains and Co-Captains need to go to the website: www.orangecountyusta.com and on the right-hand side, put your cursor over the section on the right that says OC USTA LEAGUE Tennis. Familiarize yourself with what's contained in those tabs. Click on each one so you know where what information is found, and then go to the Rules and Forms page and click on each link and read that information. Next, print it out and put it in a notebook that you take to each of your matches. Keep all your scorecards in there after they are completed. If you ever are unable to be at a match, give the notebook to whomever you have designated as captain of the day. Direct all the players on your team to the same Rules and Forms Page on that website and ask them to read through those materials. (This is a request from many captains who say the captains know the rules but the players do not.) You will be added to the captain's email list, and you will need to make sure you read through the emails I send. You will also receive a monthly newsletter that covers current league information and will inform you of upcoming leagues and OC Tennis Opportunities. Please read through everything and let me know what questions you have.

The captain of a team may have their \$22 league fee waived **if and only if** they register on the captain's-only team, costing them only \$3. These numbers change every year and are posted on the website: www.orangecountyusta.com Make sure you don't give the captain's team number out to your team players. Only the team captain, or the co-captain may register using the captain's team number and **no refunds will be processed for captains who fail to use it when they register.** ***Any player mistakenly registering on that team will be ineligible to play until they re-register on their correct team number, and will not be refunded the \$3 fee.

Tennis Balls & Refreshments

The HOME team provides the balls and refreshments. Most teams provide refreshments after the match. When you confirm your match with your opponent, please let your opponents know what will be provided after the match. They are not mandatory.

Team Format

In our local league we typically play best 2 out of 3 sets, only playing a match tie-break in lieu of a 3rd set when it is a playoff situation, not in our Local League. (There are occasional exceptions to this but everyone will be clear on the format before the season begins.) New balls for the 3rd set will be used in a match if any players in that match request them, and they are available. Players who prefer playing with new balls in the 3rd set should be prepared to provide them. All tie-breaks, whether in Local League Play or

OC Local League Play will be played using Coman Tie-Break Procedures, ([posted on the Rules and Forms Page.](#))

Scheduling Procedures

Schedules will always be posted the Sunday night (late, at midnight) the week before the beginning of the season. If that Sunday is also a holiday, then the schedules will be online following Monday night. Flight's who begin a week late, will have their schedules posted a week later. When the schedules first come out, they are extremely tentative, and will change continually, without notice, during the first week. Once the schedules are published online, each captain needs to check theirs for errors—there will be errors. These need to be reported on the Schedule-Change Spreadsheet linked on the website: www.orangecountyusta.com Arranging for team-bye requests is the responsibility of the captain. I will try to accommodate as many as I can in the original schedules, but most will need to be handled between captains. After the schedules are published, if you have any team bye requests that were not honored, or you need to change the date and/or time of any of your matches, that must all be done within the reschedule window during that first week. Contact your opponent, decide with them a new date and/or time, and then list the reschedule information on the Schedule-Change Spreadsheet before the deadline date. I will then make the change in TennisLink and that becomes the new official day/time for your match.

Exchanging Line-Ups and Recording Scores

Lineups must be exchanged before match time, SIMUTANEOUSLY, and all players must be present at that time. **Any players who are still expected to arrive, must be moved to one of the bottom of the lines that may be defaulted if the player does not arrive.**

Post Local League Play

Winning teams of each flight will proceed to either Local League Playoffs, Area/District Playoffs, or directly into Sectionals.

Local League Playoffs

Where we have more than one flight at a certain level, we will hold Local League Playoffs, (LLP's.) LLP dates are always set before the season starts and will be posted on the website: www.orangecountyusta.com The team with the best percentage record, (determined by dividing a team's total number of individual matches won, by the total number of individual matches for which they are scheduled,) will have the option to host the playoffs. An exception to this will be if only one team completes their season undefeated. That team would then not be subjected to the above percentage rule, and will have the option to host their LLPs. If a team does not finish playing all their scheduled matches, they will end up with a lower percentage rate, which could possibly hurt their chances of securing home-court advantage. Occasionally, teams play right up

until the day before playoffs. If this case, hosting will need to be determined ahead of time, and we will do what seems to make the most sense at the time based on the individual circumstances. **Hosting has historically been a much-desired option for teams. Hosting teams often need to provide courts for multiple rounds throughout the day and they are responsible for any court costs that may be incurred. If the hosting team's regular site is not available, an alternate site may be submitted for approval and will be determined on a case-by-case basis.**

Local League Playoff Dates: Are determined before the season begins and posted on the website: www.orangecountyusta.com 2013 Master Schedule Tab

Match Schedule and Reschedule Window

TENTATIVE schedules will be out the Sunday evening before the league begins. Flights that begin a week late will receive their schedules the week before they begin. As many team-bye requests will be accommodated in the original schedules. However, captains will be responsible for rescheduling the majority of their team-bye requests with their opponents during the provided window at the beginning of the season. **When making any type of schedule request, due to schedule error or a team-bye request, the requestor MUST cc their opponent when making the request so they are aware of the change in the match.** More detailed information is posted on the website: www.orangecountyusta.com Please make sure you read the Schedule Change document on the Rules and Forms page.

Rescheduling Matches

Allowable reasons for postponements without penalties are outlined in the Section Regulations. If a captain requests a reschedule AFTER the initial time period at the beginning of the season, which is set aside for match rescheduling, then in addition to exercising the option to become the now-hosting site, the opposing captain has the option to impose the following penalties:

- Line 3 default in a league that plays 3 individual matches
- 2 lines defaults in a league that plays 5 individual matches (in this instance the captain receiving the defaults determines which lines will be defaulted.)

If a captain intends to levy penalties, it must be made known to the opposing captain at the time the reschedule is arranged and must be documented in an email.

If after the schedules are set, a team has their courts taken away due to scheduling conflicts, the first option is to play the match at what would have been the away site. If neither site is available, the match is rescheduled without penalty after I verify with the site that courts are not available.

Captains may not force reschedules because they do not have enough players. If a team is unable to produce at least 4 players for a match, they risk the possibility that they will need to default the match to their opponent. In accordance with the rules, all other

teams who are in contention will receive the same full-team default for the corresponding round.

If after the reschedule window has passed, and a captain is trying to confirm their match with their opponent, and their opponent says they need to reschedule, the first thing they should ask is: "Are you sure you don't have four players available?" It only takes four to have a legal match. If their opponent says no, here are their choices:

- **1. Allow for a Reschedule**, where they agree to play 3 lines of a 5 line match or 2 lines of a 3 line match, where they decide which lines will be played, with defaulted line(s) on the bottom. They may also switch it to be a home match for their team if that is their preference. Here are the options:
 - 5 court match
 - play both singles lines and line 1 doubles, taking defaults on lines 2 and 3 doubles
 - play line 1 singles and lines 1 and 2 doubles, taking defaults on line 2 singles and line 3 doubles.
 - play lines 1, 2 and 3 doubles, taking defaults on lines 1 and 2 singles
 - 3 court match
 - play lines 1 and 2 doubles, taking a default on line 3 doubles
- **2. Take a Full-Team Default.** (Do not enter these in TL. They will need to be entered at the end of the season.) At the end of the season, all teams in contention will be awarded the same full-team default against the same team, for the purposes of calculating standings. However, any matches played against that team will count towards ratings, and towards qualifying matches for the team advancing to the next level. We want to avoid defaults whenever possible. Unfortunately, reschedule requests have gotten out of hand recently. If you CAN play the match by rescheduling, I encourage you to do so. I also encourage you to assess penalties, however, your intent to do so must be communicated to your opponent, in writing, at the time of the reschedule. If you need to split the lines, in order to get the majority of the lines played, contact me and I can usually approve that. If you are the team requesting a reschedule, you need to be prepared for the fact that you may be required to default.

Unplayed Matches

Unplayed matches may either be left as unplayed, recorded as a double-default, or a full-team default after the standings have been resolved. (The full-team default may be used to qualify players, but not as a means of advancement for the team receiving the default.)

The Code

Please make a copy of The Code (the last three pages of the Section Regulations) and distribute it to all of your players. (Please make sure they read it.)

Cell Phones

Captains, when you address both teams before the match, please announce that all cell phones need to be turned off and that your announcement is their warning. If players have been made aware, and a cell phone rings during the match, it's a point penalty.

Registration Problems

Registration deadline times are always 9:00 pm PST. It is the captain's responsibility to ensure all players are registered before they play their first match, and before the deadline to add players passes. Unregistered players who play will be defaulted.

Adding Players and Requesting Refunds

Each season has a different date by when teams may add players and request a refund, which is posted on the website: www.orangecountyusta.com Refunds will not be made if the refund form was not filled out and submitted and received by the deadline date. Emails are not sufficient to trigger a refund. Please let your players know that if they do not complete the form and submit it by the deadline, they will not be able to receive one. Refunds are processed by the SCTA after the season is over, and are sent in the form of a check for \$22 (the \$3 TennisLink fee is not refundable,) so players typically receive them 3 weeks after the season is over. Teams who pull their entire team out of the league, after the scheduling process has started, will not receive refunds for anyone on the team.

Default Times

The default penalties will be calculated from the MATCH TIME. The home team captain should be near the entry of the facility, and greet the players as they enter. The place of entry to the facility will be where the player must be present at match time. However, if players are present, and courts are not available, the home team will not be penalized. You will need to wait for courts to become available. If courts are not available within 30 minutes of the match time, the match becomes a reschedule and follows the rescheduling rules in the Full-Team Default Section.

Line Defaults

If you need to default a line, you must call the other captain by 5:00 pm the day before the match. Once you call to default, the match may only be played if the other captain agrees.*****Captains and/or players should not take a default and then play the match

“for fun.” If there is time to play the match, and people want to play, go ahead and play it. If you play the match, it should count towards the standings. Everyone on the court must be clear and in agreement whether you are playing for fun or if you it’s going to count. Players play differently in those two situations. Again, we want to minimize defaults whenever possible. Captains whose team’s no-show will be subject to sportsmanship grievances and possible sanctions.

Full-Team Defaults

All teams in contention to advance to the next level of competition may not do so as a result of receiving an entire-team default. If it is found that a team does default an entire match, and it affects the outcome of the division, then all teams in contention will receive the same default for that round of the round-robin, in accordance with our Sectional Rules. Teams who cause entire-team defaults risk possible sanctions, including being excluded from participating in future leagues.

Teams with Split Times

Some teams are required by their facility, (due to lack of available courts,) to play their matches with a split-time. Before the season begins, the captain of any team needs to communicate the procedures that will be followed immediately with all the teams in their fight. The same procedure needs to be followed for every match during the season. Example.... Doubles at 9:00am followed by singles at 11:00am. Lineups must be completely filled out and exchanged before the first match’s time.

Timed Matches

Some teams at busy facilities must revert to timed matches. Captains at these facilities need to let their opponents know that the match will revert to a timed match BEFORE the match begins, and makes sure everyone is clear on how timed-matches are scored.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding any of this. I’m looking forward to a great 2013 for our Orange County USTA League Tennis. Good luck to everyone!

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