



## **NORTHERN VIRGINIA TENNIS LEAGUE Policy and Rules**

**Revised June 22, 2019  
(changes reflected in red)**

### **Section 1. Policy and General Rules**

#### **A. Statement of Policy**

It is the policy of the Virginia Tennis League that:

1. In arranging the order of play in any given match, team captains should play their players according to their ability on the day of the match and should not stack their lineups by playing them out of position for the purpose of winning the match. This policy does not apply to top players who, by their own preference, normally play only doubles.

2. If a member club enters two or more teams in any Division, the club should determine the roster of its players according to their playing ability. Remember that the main reason for this league is the camaraderie of playing against players from other clubs in the area, not just winning. We all want to play good tennis, have a good time, get some exercise, as well as win matches.

#### **B. General Rules of Play**

1. The current edition of the USTA rules shall govern match play. "The Code", as a handbook of ethics and fair play, should be understood and followed by every player.

2. For conduct which reflects discredit upon a player, a club, or the League, upon written protest of a duly authorized representative of a competing club, a player may be expelled from participation in the League matches after having been given an opportunity to present the



circumstances of the incident followed by a majority vote by the Board of Directors in favor of such expulsion.

3. A team will be ineligible for the next season if it forfeits two team matches, unless there are extenuating circumstances approved by the Board of Directors.

4. Coaching from the sidelines is forbidden.

5. Should a team captain feel that a violation of any League rule is being committed, or about to be committed, by an opposing team, the team captain must apprise the opposing team captain of the alleged violation immediately. Otherwise, the captain shall be considered to have waived the right to protest. Should the opposing team captain disagree and refuse to correct the alleged violation, the complaining team captain may elect to play the match under protest. Within two days, the protesting captain must file a written complaint (preferably by email) to the appropriate Vice President explaining the circumstances and basis for the protest. That Vice President will solicit a written response from the other captain. The Vice President will review the complaint with at least one other Board member to make a final determination of the outcome of the situation (including the forfeiture of one or more of the individual matches).

## **Section 2. Player Eligibility**

Any player who is a bona fide member, or dependent of such member, of a club belonging to the Northern Virginia Tennis League shall be eligible to play on any team representing that club. Should a player be a member of more than one League member club, once the player has participated in a team match for one club in any given Division, the player may not play for another club in the same Division (e.g. two Men's teams of two different clubs. The player may, however, play for the Men's team of one club and the Mixed Doubles team of another club).



## **A. Eligibility of Pros**

1. Definition: One who makes the majority of his/her income from the teaching of tennis.
2. Pros must be a legitimate member of the club/team, just like any other member.
  - a. In the Men's Division, pros under age 50 are eligible to play in the 10-man flights. Pros age 50 and over may play in either the 10-man or 7-man flights.
  - b. In the Women's Division, pros may only play in the A division. This restriction also includes current members of college teams.

## **B. Rosters**

Each member club shall keep a current roster of all its team members.

1. Additions to a roster may be made after the season begins provided the team captain sends an email to the appropriate Division Vice President or Webmaster prior to the player participating in a match. The email must include the captain's name, team name, flight, and the new player's name, phone, and email. **In the case of players in the Junior Division, only a name is required for a player to be added to a roster.** The Vice President or Webmaster will send the captain a confirmation email when the addition is processed.
2. Captains may delete a player from their online roster after the season has begun as long as that player has not played in a match during that year. Vice Presidents do not need to be notified of player deletions.
3. Clubs that have more than one team in the same Division are allowed to make roster changes, higher or lower, PRIOR TO the playing of the team's first match. Once a player has played a match on a team, they may NOT be removed from that team for that season, except as described in Paragraph C.2 below.



### **C. Substitutions**

1. There will be no doubling up within any Division, e.g., a player cannot play both singles and doubles during the same team match except in the Junior Division.

2. Within the same club, a player may substitute for a higher-level team of the same club twice during the season. If a player substitutes a third time for the same higher-level team, then the player becomes a member of the higher-level team.

## **Section 3. Match Schedule and Times**

### **A. Season Schedules**

The season shall commence no earlier than May 1st and shall end no later than September 30th of each year. Team matches shall be scheduled so that each team will play every other team in its flight at least once, with approximately half of the team's matches scheduled for its home courts and the other half scheduled to be played away.

### **B. Captain Coordination**

1. Both team captains should contact each other in a timely fashion before a match to confirm match times, directions, line-up requests, etc. When singles matches are played, the normal order of play is to play singles first followed by the doubles as the singles finish. All efforts should be made to honor both team requests, e.g. a player cannot play singles before 11 a.m., so play doubles first and singles later. However, the home team captain (or acting captain) has the right to dictate the order of play, but the captain must inform the visiting team well in advance of any changes in the normal order of play so they can send the correct players at the proper time. The home team captain (or acting captain) has the final say if agreement cannot be reached.



2. In unusual circumstances -- clubs cannot reserve the courts during morning hours, other club activities interfere, etc. -- matches may be scheduled outside the normal block of time. Matches may also be switched to the visiting team's courts by mutual agreement or by the division Vice President if no agreement is reached. The NVTL expects that each captain will be accommodating whenever possible and work to resolve scheduling issues in the spirit of cooperation and good sportsmanship.

### **C. Match Start Times**

Team schedules shall be prepared, posted on the NVTL website, and distributed on the League website at least 14 days prior to the first scheduled match and shall be governed by the following:

1. Junior Division matches shall be scheduled for Wednesday's and shall normally begin at 9:30 a.m.
2. Men's Division matches shall be scheduled for Saturday mornings and shall normally begin no earlier than 9:00 a.m.
3. Mixed Doubles Division matches shall be scheduled for Sunday afternoons and normally begin at 4:00 p.m. but may be scheduled earlier or later if both captains agree.
4. Women's Division matches shall be scheduled for Tuesday's and Thursday's and shall normally begin at 10:00 a.m.
5. Women's Evening Division matches shall be scheduled for Tuesday's and shall normally begin not earlier than 6:30 p.m. or later than 8:00 p.m.
6. The Men's Division Post Season Tournament shall be scheduled in August.



7. The Women's Division Post Season Tournament shall be scheduled in September.

#### **Section 4. Match Procedures**

##### **A. Adult Match Formats**

Individual matches for Men's, Mixed Doubles, and Women's Divisions shall normally be the best two out of three sets. Any set reaching a score of 6-6 shall be decided by use of the USTA 12-Point Tiebreak (first to 7 leading by 2).

1. In the Men's Division, if the overall team result has been determined, then by MUTUAL consent of all players on that court, a 10-Point Tiebreak (first to 10 leading by 2) may be played in lieu of a full third set.

2. In the Women's Division, Women's Evening Division, and Mixed Doubles Division, with the MUTUAL consent of all players on a court, a 10-Point Tiebreak (first to 10 leading by 2) may be played in lieu of a full third set.

3. In all Divisions, a 10-Point Tiebreak (first to 10 leading by 2) shall be played in lieu of a full third set if the area is under (a) a Code Red weather alert, (b) a Code Orange weather alert, or (c) the temperature at the time a court splits sets is 90 degrees or higher.

4. Coman Tiebreak procedures shall be used (exchange ends after the first point and every four points thereafter). The only exception to this rule can occur if a match is played indoors and players have agreed to switch ends only at the end of each set.

##### **B. Junior Match Format**

Individual matches for the Junior Division shall be one set with the first individual or team to win 8 games leading by 2 games. If the score reaches



8-8, then a 7 Point Tiebreak (first to 7 leading by 2) with a change of ends after every 6 points.

1. The Juniors 11-18 Boys and Girls Flights shall play 2 singles and 1 double court for each age group (i.e., 12 and under, 14 and under, and 18 and under). In the Junior Mixed Team flights, teams shall play 1 male singles, 1 female singles, and 1 doubles court of any combination of players (male and female) for each age group (i.e., 12 and under, 14 and under, and 18 and under). The Mixed 10 and Under Flight shall play 1 male singles, 1 female singles, and 1 doubles court of any combination of players (male and female).

2. For all junior matches, an officially designated club pro, assistant pro, or captain is permitted to coach their players during odd game changeovers within the normal 90-second time period. This does not apply to a change of ends during a 7-point Tiebreak. These officials may, at any time, assist with the administration of the match such as scorekeeping, proper positioning to begin a point, tiebreak procedures, and if requested by a player, serving as a roving umpire.

3. To determine age group eligibility, a child's age as of June 1 of each year shall be used. A child may play up in age, but not down.

4. In any match, a player may play no more than two courts (singles or doubles) at or above the player's age level.

5. At a minimum, for the first match of the competition, each court will begin with a new can of USTA approved balls.



## **Section 5. Line-Ups**

Before the start of any individual matches, team captains shall exchange lineups for all positions (including doubles) and the players' first and last names filling those positions. This exchange constitutes a commitment for both teams. No reassignments or substitutions will be allowed unless agreed to by both captains or acting captains. If a captain leaves the court area, temporarily or permanently, the captain should designate an acting captain.

**A.** Teams must determine lineups according to the strength of players in order to make fair and competitive play for all. Scheduling stronger players below weaker players is prohibited. Winning and losing shall be defined as results of matches played to date, not just the results of the last match played.

**B.** During the regular season, any doubles pair may move up or down only one position from the last match played together. An individual player may move up or down two positions from the last match played with a different doubles partner. For example, a pair playing at position #2 may split, one player may go to position #4 with a different partner and one may play at #3 with a different partner. However, when the pair plays together again, they may not play lower than #3 for that match. Any team not complying with these rules shall forfeit all courts from the position of infraction and below.

## **Section 6. Balls and Refreshments**

The home team shall provide three new USTA-approved balls for each match played in Men's, Women's, and Mixed Doubles play. In the event that a team has requested and has been authorized by the Vice President of the Division to play a scheduled home match on an away court, such team shall supply the balls. In all Divisions, the home team shall provide water for the visiting team and light refreshments for the match.



## **Section 7. Postponements**

### **A. Team Matches**

Postponements will be allowed only because of unplayable conditions of courts. It shall be the responsibility of the home team captain to determine the playability of the courts and to notify the visiting team captain at least two hours before the time of the match of unplayable court conditions. Within the Evening Women's Division, the home team captain must notify the visiting team captain by 4:00 pm the day of the match. In the absence of such notification, it is the responsibility of the visiting team captain to have their team at the courts or be subject to the default rules in Section 8. Postponed matches shall be moved to the end of the season and played on the normal day of the week for the applicable Division in the order in which the postponements occur unless the two team captains can mutually agree to an earlier date. At the end of the regular season, if a postponed match has not been played and the outcome of the match does affect the regular season flight winner or a determination of which teams will be in any post-season tournament, either captain may elect to not reschedule the match by notifying the appropriate Vice President.

### **B. Individual Matches**

Individual matches shall be postponed only because of unplayable conditions of courts due to inclement weather conditions or darkness. Play will resume on a makeup date using the score at the time of postponement provided the same players resume the match. If one player(s) of an uninterrupted match is not available to play on the agreed makeup date, a player(s) of a comparable level of play may be substituted. In that event, the match begins at love-all.

## **Section 8. Defaults**

In cases where a team cannot field a team, the captain shall call the other captain as a matter of courtesy to let them know which matches will be defaulted so they can then tell their players. Defaults will be made in



accordance with the following rules:

**A.** Matches must begin no later than 15 minutes of the scheduled time or available court for the start of the match. Any match when a player is not present at this time will be defaulted.

**B.** In the event that singles or a doubles match must be defaulted because a team does not have enough players to play all matches, the match defaulted shall be the lowest possible position. For example, in a 10-Man match, if only three singles players are present, the fourth singles match shall be defaulted; if only two doubles teams are present, the third doubles match shall be defaulted. However, if a team appears with seven players, six doubles players and one singles player, the doubles players may, but shall not be required to, play singles. One singles match shall be played at the #1 position, three singles matches shall be defaulted, and three doubles matches shall be played.

### **Section 9. Reporting Scores**

It shall be the responsibility of the home captain to post the scores of each match to the NVTL website within two calendar days. The visiting captain has seven days from the date of the match to dispute any of the reported scores.

### **Section 10. Winning Teams**

The team champion in any flight shall be the team that has won the most overall team matches (not individual matches). In the event that two teams end the season in a tie for first place in a flight, the team champion shall be the one winning the most overall individual matches during the season, then the head-to-head competition, including individual matches if necessary.

### **Section 11. Awards**

Awards shall be given at the end of each season to the winning teams in



each flight in the Women's, Men's, Mixed Doubles, and Junior Divisions.

## **Section 12. Post Season Play**

### **A. Men's Division Post Season Tournament (known as the Prosper Hill Memorial Tennis Team Tournament)**

1. The tournament shall be divided into two divisions: 10-Man Division and 7-Man Division. At the discretion of the tournament director, the 10-Man Division and the 7-Man Division may be further divided.

2. The draws shall not exceed 8 teams.

3. Qualifiers: All flight winners, any teams tied by their win-loss records for first place, second place finishers from each division until the draw is full and/or other worthy teams as determined by the tournament director.

4. Teams with losing records in the regular season are not eligible to play in the post-season tournament.

5. Draws/Seeding: The top teams from each flight shall be seeded #1 and #2. The remaining positions in each draw will be seeded based on their regular season records.

6. Determining Home Teams: Each team's individual wins are divided by the total number of individual matches played. The team with the higher winning percentage (Power Rating) is designated as the host/home court. If the Power Rating is the same, team win-loss records will be used. If the win-loss records are the same, then the percentage of sets won/lost will be used and the last determination shall be through a coin flip. In each succeeding round, this system also will be used to determine the home team.

7. All match procedures used in the regular season will be observed and used.



8. Eligibility: All players must be on the team roster prior to the end of the regular season. All players must have participated in one league match during the regular season. Players from a lower team within the same club may substitute up. A team, if lacking enough qualified players for a match, may appeal to the Tournament Director to bring in another player(s).

a. Team captains shall inform opposing captains prior to their match if using a substitute player.

b. A substitute player must conform to the eligibility rules.

**B. Women's Division Post Season Tournament (known as the Marge Krape Women's Doubles Team Tournament)**

1. The tournament shall be divided into three divisions: B, C, and Evening.

2. The draws shall not exceed 8 teams per division.

3. Qualifiers: All division winners, any teams tied by their win-loss records for first place, second place, third and fourth place finishers from each division until the draw is full and/or worthy teams as determined by the tournament director.

4. Draws/Seeding: The top two teams from a division (e.g. B1) shall be seeded #1 and #2 followed by the teams in the same division ranked by overall match record in the regular season to fill out the draw.

5. Determining Home Teams: Each team's individual wins are divided by the total number of individual matches played. The team with the higher percentage (Power Rating) is designated as the host/home court. If the Power Rating is the same, team win-loss records will be used. If the win-loss records are the same, then the percentage of sets won/lost will be used and the last determination shall be through a coin flip. In each succeeding round, this system also will be used to determine the home



team.

6. All match procedures used in the regular season will be observed and used.

7. Eligibility: All players must be on the team roster prior to the end of the regular season. Players from a lower team within the same club may substitute up. A team, if lacking enough qualified players for a match, may appeal to the Tournament Director to bring in another player(s).

a. Team captains shall inform opposing captains prior to their match if using a substitute player.

b. A substitute player must conform to the eligibility rules.