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M-E-M-O-R-A-N-D-U-M

TO: Carol Cohen, Vice President and Leagues Coordinator **DATE:** November 11, 2007
FROM: Dave Pullen, Executive Director
COPIES:
SUBJECT: **Why Adjust League Scorecards?**

As you know, MCTA uses time-limited matches for all league programs. In certain instances (for example, 6-1, 1-2), TennisLink will not accept data entry reflecting actual, on-court results at the time that play is stopped and using the “Timed Match” code built into the system for just such an occasion. In these instances, players are compelled to use the “Retired” code in order to report the data at all and to do so in a timely way consistent with existing regulations MAS Rule #6, MD District Rule #9, and MCTA Unified League Rule J (all of which are derivative from national league regulation 1.05).

However, using the “Retired” code (or more to the point, allowing it to become part of the permanent record in TennisLink) has the effect of distorting tiebreaker data in Standings within TennisLink, which MCTA relies upon to certify its local league winners. Hence, absent a change in the “business rules” that dictate how TennisLink treats “Timed Match” outcomes—there is sound reason for the treatment mandated for “Retired” matches and hence that regulation is unlikely to be changed—a manual adjustment of the reported scores is necessary.

Why is this? Simply stated, the TennisLink software utilizes a series of “business rules” that are designed to treat match data *consistent with national league regulations* (which do not contemplate “timed” matches at all.....). Hence, to win a match, one must “win” 2 sets (national regulation 3.01G, affirmed by MCTA Unified Rule G.2.). Further and unlike matches labeled as “Timed,” matches labeled as “Retired” affect Standings differently since they are controlled by national league regulation 3.03O [which applies to local match play by explicit reference in national regulation 3.01H(2)].

League Regulation 3.03O states:

3.03O Scoring of Retirements. In case of a retirement, the non-retiring player (doubles team) shall be credited with such number of additional games as would have been won if the match was completed and the non-retiring player or doubles team won every subsequent game.

So, when a “Timed” match is entered using the “Retired” code, TennisLink automatically adds to the victor’s “games won” total consistent with Regulation 3.03O. Using our original example, if a “Timed” match score is 6-1, 1-2 when time expires, the winning team has lost 3 games and the losing team has lost 7 games. However, when reported as “Retired”, the winning team is “credited with such number of additional games as would have been won if the match was completed and the non-retiring player or doubles team won every subsequent game”—meaning TennisLink construes the score as 6-1, 6-2 and the losing team is assessed with 12 games lost, or 5 more than actually occurred on the court (while the winning team’s game count remains unaffected). This is significant because “Fewest Games Lost” is one of the tiebreaker criteria mandated by national league Regulation 3.03I(1). Hence, “supplementing” the game count when a match is reported as “Retired” can have serious consequences for Team Standings—and the right to

advance beyond local league competition.

For these reasons, when TennisLink will not accept data entry using the “Timed” Code, MCTA (with the concurrence of the League Rules Committee) employs an administrative “work-around” *recommended to it by ACTIVE.COM/TennisLink staff*. Specifically, where captains report a match “timed out” but TennisLink would not accept the data reported that way, captains are instructed to enter the data exactly as it occurred on court; to assign the “Retired” code to the match; and to report this incident to the local league administration (you or me).

The administration then edits the relevant scorecard to achieve the intended policy outcome, to wit: (1) the individual match winner (whoever that may be pursuant to local rule J.4) is credited with “winning” two sets; and (2) the game count reported in TennisLink Standings is exactly the same as actually occurred on the court.

This objective is met by editing the scorecard as follows:

First, reduce the “winning” team’s reported score by one game (usually in the second, incomplete set)

Second, award the “winning” team a 1-0 match tiebreak score (Regulation 3.01G mandates that a match tiebreak be scored as “1 set and 1 game for tiebreak procedures.”); and

Third, mark the result as “Timed” (instead of “Retired”), which distinguishes it from a “Completed” match.

It is our hope that all local leagues within Mid-Atlantic Section that rely on time-limited match formats will agree to treat match scorecards consistent with the above “work-around” principles. Until such time as that is the case, it is proposed that the edit process described above be retained as an administrative function only (that is, not performed by captains at the point of initial data entry). This seems prudent so that we do not introduce the notion that “manipulating” reported scores is an acceptable practice—this can only contribute to an increasingly “litigious” (read, grievance-filing) environment, which no one should encourage.