

# Team Captains' Responsibilities

## Mandatory Responsibilities of an Adult Team Captain

- Recruit sufficient players (16-20 recommended) to form a viable team. USTA/Maryland District rules stipulate a maximum of 20 players per Adult team;
- **Recruit a Co-captain/Assistant Captain** to, at a minimum, function as the Team Captain in your absence. Consider appointing an assistant to manage financial matters including payments/matches played/fees paid/reimbursements to players; consider using one of a number of excellent spreadsheets developed by league captains; there is a sample posted on the mctatennis.org website;
- Ensure players' USTA membership are current; through end of local season is required, and through end of the calendar year is recommended;
- Ensure that players who need to self-rate do so during their registration process on [TennisLink](#) and provide guidance and information on determining the appropriate level;
- Ensure that team members register to play on the team online through [TennisLink](#); provide support and guidance on using TennisLink if required; there are helpful downloadable documents on the mctatennis.org website;
- Download scorecard from [TennisLink](#) before each match and record your lineup on the scorecard;
- Carry a copy of the **Acting Captain's Checklist** in your tennis bag for easy reference.
- Carry a copy of the **Tennislink Team Captain's Report** in your tennis bag in case you need to contact the opposing captain prior to a match.
- Ensure that written scorecards are exchanged no later than 5 minutes before the start of the match and keep a scorecard available during the match;
- If home team captain, you determine the ONE timepiece to be used for the entire match; if visiting team captain, you decide what person(s) are authorized to call "Time" using the designated timepiece.
- Ensure that all matches start promptly after 10-minute warm-up and after any adjustments for default courts;
- After each match, ensure that scores are recorded accurately and each captain must verify that the scores are accurate by signing the card. Circle the winning team for each match. Each captain must retain a copy of the signed scorecard; be certain to record the mutually agreed upon timepiece on scorecard;
- Record scores on [TennisLink](#) within 72 hours after the match (any team can enter scores; winning team is recommended to assume this responsibility).

Opposing team captain must verify scores within 48 hours of time when winning team captain records scores on TennisLink. If scores are not reported within 72 hours, match is scored as a double default. Losing captain, who does not verify within 48 hours of when scores are posted, will lose right to challenge scores;

- Keep a copy of, and know, the USTA League Rules and Procedures, Section, District, and MCTA's Local Rules. All Rules and/or links may be found at MCTA's web site; purchase copies of Friend At Court for team members; go to [www.usta.com](http://www.usta.com) (store) for information on purchasing Friend At Court;
- Distribute all rules to team members and review the most frequently violated rules based on experience, e.g., continuous play rule, injury timeouts, how to resolve scoring disputes, serving order disagreement, restroom breaks, etc; review carefully recent Local Rule changes;
- Experience has shown us that almost all disputes can be resolved by [The Code](#). "The Code" applies to all unofficiated tennis matches. "The Code", Rules of Tennis, Rules FAQs and other related documents may be reviewed on line. MCTA provides links for you to all Rules sets;
- Attend league team captain meetings, as scheduled;
- Notify level coordinator, as necessary, of any problems relating to match competition or any questions/concerns about a particular match e.g., deviations from rules; and
- Please do not call District or Section on local matters, disputes, questions, complaints – please work with your local level coordinator and local Adult Leagues Coordinator.

## Tips for Becoming a Successful Team Captain

Team captains should consider implementing any of the following tips which are designed to maximize the enjoyment of USTA League tennis as well as to help the team captain to be an effective and efficient team administrator.

- Hold an initial team meeting or combine a brief meeting with a team practice and opportunity to meet and play with potential new partners before the season starts; discuss the goals of the team - communicate with the team members openly and candidly and, share the team goals and strategies. For example, will the strongest players available be used first, or is the goal to equalize team members' playing time? Is the captain's goal to 'win' and all effort will be directed toward this goal or is the captain equally concerned with providing a fun and social experience as well as a competitive season for all players? There is no right or wrong goal for a team to have but it helps to make everyone aware of the team goals before the season starts;
- Consider implementing a singles and a doubles ladder. This is an excellent opportunity to minimize subjectivity relative to the captain's decision-making responsibility, i.e., provides support for the captain's decisions. It also adds to the enjoyment of the season by fostering healthy, internal team competition and promoting team camaraderie;

- Schedule regular team practices -- another way to obtain data to support the captain's decision-making – some teams hire coaches on a regular or periodic basis;
- Distribute a team roster to all players. Include telephone #s and e-mail addresses;
- Distribute league schedule to all players. Before the season starts, have the players indicate for which matches they are unavailable;
- Always have players confirm with you prior to the match;
- Ensure that players arrive at scheduled matches at least 15 minutes ahead of the starting time;
- Arrange your lineup for a match sufficiently in advance of the scheduled match, i.e., don't wait for the last minute. The longer you wait, the greater the possibility that you will not be able to field a complete lineup. Tell players in advance which matches they are scheduled to play and with whom they are partnered, to the extent possible;
- Consider implementing a reliable accounting process that includes matches, dates, players per match, distribution of costs, assigns amounts of money owed to captain by player(s) as well as reimbursements from captain to player(s);
- Assign an additional player for each match to minimize the number of forfeits in league play due to players not showing up for matches. Once all players have arrived, the extra person is free to leave or s/he can watch the match;
- Consider having a pre-season event, e.g., barbecue, pot-luck dinner. This is a nice, social way to start the season that allows all team members to meet each other;
- Consider after-match social activities;
- Consider a post-season event to mark the close of a season and possibly to discuss next year's plans;
- Arrange scrimmages and practices, especially for post season play and tournaments, with other winning teams or teams at one higher level;
- Be complimentary and supportive – always – even if team/player is losing;
- Always encourage your players to come to you directly with questions, issues or complaints rather than allow the problem to fester;
- Provide routine and regular updates on all matters related to tennis in the community in addition to match results to all members of your team; and
- Encourage your team members to think about volunteering at the local level to give back to the game that has given so much to them.

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