



2011-2012 Rules and Regulations

The purpose of COTA League play is to promote USTA team tennis for men and women at established ratings of the National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) within the counties of Barrow, Clarke, Jackson, Madison, Morgan, and Oconee.

I. Regulations

The Clarke Oconee Tennis Association (COTA) agrees to the rules and regulations of the USTA, USTA Southern, and USTA Georgia as published. In addition, COTA also sets forth the following rules to apply to local league matches.

II. Membership

- A. All adult team members must be at least 18 years of age within the calendar year. The minimum age requirement is 50 for seniors and 60 for super seniors. All team members must be paid members of the USTA through the current league season. Each member must pay local league fees, as applicable.
- B. Players must play at or .5 above their NTRP level. (E.g. a 3.0 player can play at 3.0 or 3.5, but not 4.0). Any player without a computer rating must self-rate using the self-rating form on Tennis Link, and follow guidelines set forth by the USTA. Tennis Link will require a non-rated player to self-rate when registering for a team.
- C. Players may play on more than one team in the COTA league, but a player may not register for more than **three** teams within a specific league in the same season. Playing on three teams during one season must be within the parameters described below:
 - A player may play on a weekday & a business team at the same NTRP level.
 - A player may play on a weekday & a business team at a different NTRP level.
 - A player may play at two different NTRP levels, within the same league.
 - A player may play on both an adult team and a senior team at either the same NTRP level or at different NTRP levels.
- D. Once a player's name appears on a Tennis Link team roster they cannot change teams if league play has begun. Exception – DQ'd players may move to a team with a higher NTRP rating.

Please note: Playing at different NTRP levels may increase the player's risk of being disqualified at the lower level.

III. Captains: Team Responsibilities

- A. The captain should read and be familiar with the rules of the USTA, USTA Southern, USTA Georgia and the COTA League rules. It is the captain's responsibility to make sure his/her players have read and understand all the COTA League rules.
- B. Team Registration: Captains of men's, women's, seniors, mixed, super seniors, and combo teams **MUST** establish a team number through Tennis Link **and have the minimum number of players registered to fill a match roster** by the designated date. Team names should be entered in the following format: **Facility Name/Captain's Last Name. Example: Bishop Park/Smith.**
- C. Captains must list a COTA approved facility as their "home" facility. Those facilities can be found at www.cotatennis.net. It is the captain's responsibility to contact the facility **prior** to registration **to get approval to use the facility as their home court** and find out the facility's requirement of teams using those facilities. **The LLC must have written notification, via e-mail, from any Clarke County or Oconee County publicly funded facility that a team has been approved.**
- D. A team Co-captain is recommended as an additional point of contact.
- E. Captains/Co-captains **MUST** have a current e-mail address at which they can receive league information throughout the season. Captains/Co-captains **MUST** enter a phone number in Tennis Link when establishing a team number. If this phone number differs from the phone number listed with the USTA membership data, contact USTA at 1-800-990-8782 or memberservices@usta.com to update. The number listed with the USTA membership data will appear on the captain's report. Change of phone number or e-mail address after team registration, must be forwarded to your Local League Coordinator (LLC). E-mail will be the primary form of communication between the coordinator and the captains.

IV. Captains: Match Responsibilities

- A. COTA encourages playing positions by order of strength, as established by fair play practice in "The Code."
- B. Each team shall identify and reserve its home courts. The "home" team must guarantee a minimum of 2 courts with an available on-site bathroom for **regularly scheduled matches**. Lights are required for evening matches.
- C. The "home" team pays any court and/or guest fees and provides new balls and water for each home match. Other refreshments are optional.

- D. Start times are listed on Tennis Link schedules. Check schedules as times vary depending on the league. If both captains agree:
- The team match or individual match may be changed to an earlier start time on the same scheduled day.
 - The team match or individual match may be changed to an earlier day and time during the regular season schedule.
 - The team match or individual match may be changed to an alternate location on the same scheduled day.
 - Once an agreement has been made, the LLC must be notified of the match date, time and location, and all participants must be present at match time, or forfeit.
- E. If inclement weather occurs, matches must be rescheduled. If both teams cannot agree on a make up day/time prior to the original match schedule, the scheduled date reverts back to the original date/time on Tennis Link. Any changes to a team or individual match start time/day needs to be emailed to the level representative/coordinator by both captains, prior to the match, with a copy sent to the opposing captain. The e-mail is to include: team names, league, level, new date, time, line # and location.
- F. Any team involved in a USTA League State, Sectional, or National match, regardless of the league, must notify their coordinator if requesting from their opponent consideration in rescheduling their USTA Local League match prior to the original scheduled day of the match. A team with this concern must notify their coordinator and the affected opponents at least two weeks prior to the scheduled match to reschedule individual matches. Opposing teams are required to cooperate fully in these circumstances. Only positions involving players attending said championship need be rescheduled.
- G. "Home team" captain should contact the visiting team captain no less than **3 DAYS** prior to a scheduled match to make final arrangements for the match, including the number, surface type, and location of courts (or alternate courts in case of inclement weather). Visiting captain must field as many courts as are presented. The location of the match cannot be changed without notifying the visiting captain 3 days prior to the match unless both captains agree. If the captain/co-captain listed on the schedule will not be present at the match he/she must be accessible to the opposing captain via phone, or he/she must notify the opposing captain the name of the person acting in his/her stead.
- H. The captains may agree on the order of play. However, if no prior agreement is made then the order of play will be #1 singles, #1 doubles, #2 singles, #2 doubles and #3 doubles. Players in the second time slot must be available one hour after

the first time slot begins; players in the third time slot must be available 2 hours after the first time slot begins.

- I. If you know you must forfeit one or more positions at the start of the match, follow the guidelines stated in the USTA Regulations handbook. You must default from the bottom of the line-up i.e. either #2 singles or #3 doubles. In the case of 2.5 and 5.0 leagues, you can default either the #1S or the #2D. If an Adult League team must forfeit 2 positions, you have the option to forfeit #1 and #2 singles, or #2 and #3 doubles, or #2 singles and #3 doubles.
- J. Team captains, or a representative, must simultaneously exchange scorecards **PRINTED FROM TENNIS LINK** with completed line-ups **BEFORE** the scheduled match time. Match time is stated on your Tennis Link schedule. This match time is the beginning of the 15-minute default time (see section V.E).
- K. Scores must be entered in Tennis Link within **24** hours of the match start time by **the winning captain**. Score confirmation or score disputes must be made within 48 hours of the score entry. If scores are not confirmed or disputed within 48 hours of the score entry, the opposing team will lose the right to dispute the match score. Tennis Link will confirm scores automatically after the 48-hour period has passed.

NOTE: *Playoff matches may require score entry immediately upon completion of the match.*

- L. Tennis Link does not accept partial match results. The scores for all match lines must be entered at the same time. To dispute the scorecard that has been entered, you must dispute the match in Tennis Link and notify your coordinator within 48 hours of the match. You must provide what the discrepancy is along with the corrections and copy the opposing captain.

V. Format of Play

- A. COTA does not provide linesmen, umpires, court monitors, etc. for matches.
- B. Spin racket **before** the warm-up to decide serve/side.
- C. A warm-up must be accomplished in a maximum of 10 minutes, including serves. **Do not practice** return of serve during warm-up.
- D. After the first game of each set, play shall be continuous and players shall change ends without a rest period. The rest period during all other changeovers

is 90 seconds. When and if the score in a set is 6-6, the winner will be decided by a 7 point tiebreak. **The Coman Tiebreak Procedure is to be used.** There is no rest period during changeovers of a tiebreak. The rest period between first and second sets is 2 minutes. **COTA plays best two out of three sets.** A 10-minute break may be taken between second and third sets. Coaching is allowed **ONLY** during the rest period between the second and third set.

- E. Defaults: The 15-minute default clock begins at the scheduled match time, when a court is available and a player has not arrived.
 - a. When a player does not show up within the 15-minute default time, or a player becomes ill or injured during warm up and there is no substitute available, only the affected position is defaulted. Players already listed in the lineup cannot be moved to another position. However two players already in the lineup will play together in the higher position when both of their partners do not show in order to avoid two defaults.
 - b. If a substitute player, not already in the lineup, is available within the 15 minute default time, then that player may substitute for an absent, sick or injured player, at the affected position **ONLY**. If a substitution is made during the warm-up, the substitute player is entitled to a 5-minute warm up.
- F. Players should be ready to take the court when the previous match is finished. For example, if a match begins at 9:30am and ends at 10:15am, default time for the next match on that court is 10:45am, since 10:30am is the scheduled time of the next match. If the first match ends at 10:50am, then players must take the court immediately since the next time slot players must have been available at 10:30am. Captains should communicate and agree ahead of time which positions will take the court and in which order. If the captains cannot agree, refer to IV. H. (Captains: Match Responsibilities).
- G. If a team forfeits an entire team match or forfeits a number of matches **greater than or equal to the number of scheduled matches in a season, the team may be removed from competition immediately.** If removed, then all matches that team has played, or matches to be played shall be null and void. If all teams in contention for the League Championship have already played the forfeiting team in good faith, the matches stand as played. The forfeiting team may be placed on probationary watch or not permitted to play as a team the following season.

VI. Rescheduling

- A. Inclement Weather: The following weather conditions authorize the cancellation of a scheduled match: rain, lightning, snow, or severe weather (below 32 degrees F, **not wind chill**, or above 95 degrees F, **not heat index**), as reported by the **COTA website, www.cotatennis.net**, at the time of the match. Captains may agree to delay the match up to one hour. Once the match has started, matches cannot be canceled due to changes in temperature.
1. If teams have reported for play and the match is delayed or interrupted by rain, teams must wait 30 minutes to determine if courts are playable. If courts are still not playable after 30 minutes, teams are free to leave and reschedule unless **both teams** agree to wait longer. Any player may deem a court unsafe to play.
 2. If inclement, not including rise or fall in temperature, weather occurs after play has begun, completed matches will stand as played and incomplete matches must be resumed by the same players at the exact point, game, and set that existed when play was halted. Substitutions may be made in any individual matches that had not begun. Points awarded for defaults during the original line-up will stand. All players involved in such defaults cannot participate in the rescheduled match. Forfeits offered verbally prior to the original written lineup exchanged are nullified when the match is rescheduled due to rain or inclement weather.
- B. Arrangements for make-up matches: **MUST** be agreed upon within **36** hours of the **original match start time**. Once teams agree on a rescheduled date and time, (different positions do not have to make up at the same place or time), the make-up match may not be canceled by either party for any reason other than inclement weather. Therefore, captains agree to play an individual match at a specific time and place. Substitutions from the team roster may be made in any make-up match, at any time, prior to the match. A default will result if one team cannot play. If no agreement can be reached, the match must be played at the make-up default time (see below.) A default will result if one party cannot play. If both parties cannot play, the result is a double default. Both captains should contact their level representative/coordinator via e-mail with the agreed to rescheduled match information to prevent problems. (See IV. E.) Players added to a team's roster after the original scheduled match and prior to the make up match, may play in the make up match.

- C. Default date is the day/evening before the next regularly scheduled match with the exception of the last match of the season. If inclement weather occurs on the default day/evening, matches must then be scheduled on a day-to-day basis, until weather permits the match to be played, but excluding the regularly scheduled match day.

Original Match

Monday 9:30 am / 7:00 pm
Tuesday 9:30 am / 7:00 pm
Wednesday 9:30 am / 7:00 pm
Thursday 9:30 am / 7:00 pm
Friday 9:30 am / 7:00 pm
Saturday 9:30 am
Sunday 2:00 pm

Default Schedule

Sunday 2:00 p.m.
Monday 9:30 am / 7:00 pm
Tuesday 9:30 am / 7:00 pm
Wednesday 9:30 am / 7:00 pm
Thursday 9:30 am / 7:00 pm
Friday 7:00 pm
Saturday 7:00 pm

Exception: If inclement weather occurs on the last match day of the regular season when a play off match is necessary, the make up default time is the next day/evening after the regularly scheduled match and continues day to day until weather permits the match to be played. This exception is in effect only if a playoff match is necessary, Your LLC will alert you to this at the beginning of each season.

The following National Holidays are not to be included when calculating default dates; **New Years Day, Easter, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas** (i.e., the default date falls on Memorial Day; the default day moves to the next day).

VII. Addition of Players during a Season

- A. COTA permits teams to add players after the commencement of play. A player's name must be added to the roster (using Tennis Link) prior to the player's participation in a team match. Players cannot be added after the mid-point match date on the published schedule. Where there are an odd number of match weeks the greater number will be considered 50%. Example: where there are nine weeks of play, the cut off will be midnight, on the day prior to the scheduled match for week five.
- B. If a self rated player has been disqualified during the season they can register on a higher-level team. They will need the assistance of the LLC.

VIII. National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP)

- A. Players who do not have a computer rating on file in Tennis Link shall self-rate in accordance with the NTRP Guidelines and declare their self-rating on Tennis Link when registering for a team.
- B. To generate a computer rating a player must play at least two matches against a player with a dynamic rating (a rating calculated daily during Adult/Senior league play based on match scores and player ratings.) Forfeits do not generate computer ratings.
- C. Dynamic Disqualification is defined as reaching the specific level three times during the year consisting of all league matches except retirements received, in the Adult and Senior divisions through the Section Championships.

IX. State Championships

- A. Each team that wins a specific level of local league competition shall be entitled to advance to the next level of competition.
- B. Players who qualify for the Georgia State Championships may play on two Adult teams at **different** NTRP levels, two Combo teams at **different** NTRP levels, and one Senior team.
- C. In the event of a tie, the USTA League Regulations, for tie-breaks, will be followed. The tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures that does so:
 - 1. Individual matches: winner of the most individual matches in the entire season. Sets: Loser of the fewest number of sets in the entire season.
 - 2. Games: Loser of the fewest number of games in the entire season.
 - 3. Head-to-Head: Winner of the head-to-head match. If teams played each other more than one time during the season, steps 1-3 will be used for the head-to-head matches, to declare the winner.
 - 4. A coin toss by the league coordinator in the presence of witnesses
- D. When there are two seasons at a specific level, there must be a minimum of three teams participating in one of the two seasons at that level to receive two berths to the State Championships. Two teams in both seasons will only receive one berth. A playoff following the second season will determine the league winner.

- E. Leagues with more than 10 teams (e.g. 3.5 day women) may be divided into sub-flights and, if divided, may have a Flight Playoff. The home court for playoffs will be decided by calculating the percentage of matches won. The winner of the Flight Playoff will progress to the League Playoff, if necessary, or to the State championship.
- F. In the event the same team should win both league seasons, for the same level, that team must choose which season's roster they would like to take to the State Championship. The league shall then send a second place team as a State entrant. If the same team placed second in both seasons, they must choose which season's roster they would like to take to the State Championship. If the second place team in each season is different, when there is sufficient time, there will be a play off to determine a State entrant. The home team will be decided by the best winning match percentage from their season of play. Play off teams must use the roster from their qualifying season. If one team declines a playoff, the other team is automatically chosen. If time does not permit for a play off, the team advancing to state will be determined by the teams' season records.
- G. If COTA receives a wild card it will be given to the season and NTRP level stipulated by USTA Georgia.
- H. In the event that a first place team from a specific season receiving a berth to the State Championships, declines advancement, the second place team from that same season may represent the league for that season.
- I. COTA will pay for the State competitions minimum player registration fee, currently at \$25.00 per player, for a maximum of \$200.00 per team representing COTA at the tournament. In order to protect COTA funds, teams going to State are required to send to the Local League Coordinator a deposit check, payable to COTA, to cover the minimum player registration fee paid by COTA, not to exceed \$200. For teams sending more than the minimum number of players, a separate check must be written to cover the cost of the extra players. This check, covering the additional players, is not refundable and will be cashed. All **deposit** checks will be held by the LLC and shredded once the teams have satisfactorily met the State Championship requirements.
- J. COTA will also pay the minimum player registration fee for teams representing COTA at Sectional or National tournaments following the guidelines as stated above.
- K. State Championship Berths:
 - a. Adult-Men, Women, and Business Women (2 singles and 3 doubles)

- One berth per season for a maximum of 15 teams in any given level
- Two berths per season for a maximum of 30 teams in any given level
- Over 30 teams, up to each additional 15 teams, an additional berth is given.

If the number of teams in both the Women's weekday and business leagues should reach a minimum of eight (8) teams at any given level, an additional berth to the State Championships may be requested.

b. Exception to above: 4.5 Adult (2 singles and 3 doubles)

- One berth per season for up to 10 teams and an additional berth for each additional 10 teams. E.g.: 2-10 teams = 1 berth; 11-19 teams = 2 berths; 20-29 teams = 3 berths; and so on

For State Championship dates, please view:

http://www.ustageorgia.com/adults/usta_leagues/state_championships.htm

c. Senior (3 doubles)

- One berth per season for a maximum of 9 teams in any given level
- Two berths per season for a maximum of 18 teams in any given level
- For each additional 9 teams, one more berth is given.

If the number of teams in both the Women's weekday and business leagues should reach a minimum of five (5) teams at any given level, an additional berth to the State Championships may be requested.

For State Championship dates, please view:

http://www.ustageorgia.com/adults/usta_leagues/state_championships.htm

d. Super Senior (3 doubles)

- One berth per season for a maximum of 5 teams in any given level
- Two berths per season for a maximum of 10 teams in any given level
- Up to each additional 5 teams, one more berth is given.

For State Championship dates, please view:

http://www.ustageorgia.com/adults/usta_leagues/state_championships.htm

e. Mixed (3 doubles)

- One berth per season for a maximum of 15 teams in any given level
- Two berths per season for a maximum of 20 teams in any given level
- Up to each additional 10 teams, one more berth is given.

For State Championship dates, please view:

http://www.ustageorgia.com/adults/usta_leagues/state_championships.htm

f. Senior Mixed (3 doubles)

- One berth per season for a maximum of 15 teams in any given level
- Two berths per season for a maximum of 20 teams in any given level
- Up to each additional 10 teams, one more berth is given.

For State Championship dates, please view:

http://www.ustageorgia.com/adults/usta_leagues/state_championships.htm

g. Combo (3 doubles)

- One berth per season for a maximum of 9 teams in any given level
- Two berths per season for a maximum of 19 teams in any given level
- Over 19 teams, for each additional 10 teams, an additional berth is given

If the number of teams in both the Women's weekday and business leagues should reach a minimum of five (5) teams at any given level, an additional berth to the State Championships may be requested.

For State Championship dates, please view:

http://www.ustageorgia.com/adults/usta_leagues/state_championships.htm

h. Senior Combo

- One berth per season for a maximum of 9 teams in any given level
- Two berths per season for a maximum of 19 teams in any given level
- Over 19 teams, for each additional 10 teams, an additional berth is given

If the number of teams in both the Women's weekday and business leagues should reach a minimum of five (5) teams at any given level, an additional berth to the State Championships may be requested.

For State Championship dates, please view:

http://www.ustageorgia.com/adults/usta_leagues/state_championships.htm

i. Super Senior - 60's and 70's (3 doubles)

- One berth per season for a maximum of 3 teams in any given level
- Two berths per season for a maximum of 6 teams in any given level

For State Championship dates, please view:

http://www.ustageorgia.com/adults/usta_leagues/state_championships.htm

L. Player Eligibility Requirements:

- Adult Players who qualify for the Georgia State Championship may advance on **(two)** adult teams and **(one)** senior team.
- Super Seniors who qualify for the Georgia State Championship, may advance on **(one)** 60's and **(one)** 70's team.
- For all leagues: One default shall count. A retired match shall count toward advancing for all players involved.
- Adults, Seniors, and Mixed: Players must have played twice during the season (including league division playoffs.)
- Senior Mixed: Players must have played 1 match during the season (including league division playoffs) unless there is no competition during the championship year, and then they may advance directly to the state championships.
- Super Senior: Players must have played 1 match during the season (including league division playoffs) unless there is no competition during the championship year, and then they may advance directly to the state championships. The one match requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Tournament Committee for players advancing to the State Championships.
- Combo: In most levels, players must have played once during the season. Refer to the Southern Combo Regulations for Georgia - Section 7.03A(3) for requirements of each level. (www.ustageorgia.com)

X. Grievances

- A. All complaints alleging a violation by an individual or team during local league competition shall be filed in writing with the Local League Coordinator. **The complaint must be filed prior to the commencement or which ever occurs first: (a) the involved teams' next match in that flight, whether or not the involved player participates or (b) within twenty-four hours after the end of the local league season.**
- B. Any party to the complaint may appeal the decision of the Grievance Committee within the time stated in the ruling handed down by the Grievance Committee.

- C. If unsure of procedure, contact the Local League Coordinator.

XI. Self-Rate Grievances

- A. Any league captain, coordinator or member of a championship committee has the right to file a Self-Rated Grievance against a player and/or captain who commits or condones entering at one NTRP level when his/her actual skill level is at the top of the next NTRP level or higher.
- B. All grievances must be filed with your local league coordinator and must include specific and tangible information regarding the player-in-question's tennis history. The LLC will forward the self-rate grievance to the USTA Southern Self-Rate Grievance Committee. Decisions may be appealed to the USTA Southern Grievance Appeals Committee.
- C. A player with a valid NTRP Computer (C), Benchmark (B), or granted Automatic Appeal rating of a "C" is not subject to a self-rate grievance. Any other player is subject to a self-rate grievance.

Grievance Committee

Toni Pomerene
David Lyle
Jo Cochran
Trina Cyterski

Appeals Committee

Brad Evans
Janet Darvill
Brenda Smith
Scott Cook

These rules and committees have been approved by the COTA Adult League Committee, USTA Georgia, and the COTA Board of Directors.

Adopted August, 2011