

FLEX RULES

Last updated 3/21/2022

WAIVER CLAIMS

Players, participants and any spectators or individuals that are participating in the USTA FLEX League acknowledge the risks associated with playing competitive tennis, accept those risks voluntarily, and in consideration of their acceptance in the USTA FLEX League Program, assume all loss or damage, and any claim or demand therefore on account of injury and/or exposure to infectious syndromes or diseases to the person or property or resulting in illness and/or death arising out of or related to their participation, whether caused by negligence or otherwise. By participating or attending a league event, the players, participants and any spectators assume all risks whether known or unknown. Furthermore, players, participants and spectators hold harmless the USTA, its affiliated Sectional Associations and Districts/Subdivisions and the host facility, their officials (Released Parties) and the Released Parties, employees and agents with respect to any injury or loss caused by negligence or otherwise to the fullest extent permitted by law.

REQUIREMENTS

Please join the league if you are committed to scheduling and playing 5-15 matches in a season. The number of matches is solely dependent on how many players are registered to a flight.

Coaching is not allowed in FLEX League.

Players must be age 18 or over prior to playing their first match and willing to play the league within the defined area.

SPORTSMANSHIP POLICY

All players participating in FLEX League, as a condition of said participation, agree to abide by and be bound by The Code: The Player's Guide to Fair Play and The Unwritten Rules of Tennis. Tennis is a game of courtesy and honor. USTA NorCal expects the highest level of sportsmanship on and off the court. Players who repeatedly hinder the enjoyment of the game will be warned and eventually suspended from the FLEX League program.

Please report unsportsmanlike conduct to flex@norcal.usta.com as soon as possible.

1. First offense, players will be flagged in our system.
2. Second offense, players will result in suspension from the current season and the following. No refunds will be offered if suspended.
3. Third offense, players will not be allowed back into the FLEX League program.

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What constitutes an offense will be deliberated on a case-by-case basis and at the sole discretion of the FLEX League Administrator. Players who return after suspension are subject to a no-tolerance policy. Any further complaints on returning players are ground for permanent suspension from the league.

RATINGS

FLEX League results do not affect NTRP ratings. Players with current NTRP Ratings in Tennis Link must use that rating. They may play no more than 0.5 above their rating level and may not play below their level. Players without ratings must self-rate according to the NTRP guidelines.

FLEX League does not accept NTRP related grievances. Players are expected to exercise the highest level of integrity while competing in this program.

MATCH SCORING

A round robin format is used with one match assigned per week. One or two additional weeks are included at the end of the season to make up missed matches if possible.

Scoring format is best 2 of 3 sets with a 10-point match tiebreaker in lieu of a third set and scored as 1-0. If both players agree, the third set may be played out, but will still be scores as 1-0.

SCHEDULING

Our website offers an availability page where players can notify their opponents where and when they prefer to play. Please be flexible with a variety of available days/times.

FLEX League uses “play by” dates to encourage players to schedule weekly matches. Matches can be played at any time, in any order, as long as they are completed by the season deadline. Daytime only flights must play matches on weekdays (Monday-Friday) between the hours of 9 am-3 pm, unless otherwise agreed upon by the players.

The home player is responsible for initial contact to schedule the match but both players are encouraged to make contact. It's recommended to contact all opponents at the beginning of the season to start the scheduling dialog. Some players' schedules are more compatible than others. Schedule and play the most convenient matches first.

Player(s) listed as “home” should reserve the courts for their home matches and expect that the “away” player travels to them. The “home” player can offer to travel to the “away” player's location if he/she chooses. The date, time and location of the match must be agreed upon by all the players.

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If a match is rained out, it should be rescheduled and completed as soon as possible.

COURT

USTA NorCal offers a court finder service on our website.

Visit the courts you're planning to use in advance for lights, condition, parking, time restrictions, etc. Communicate this to your opponents. Reserve courts for enough time to finish a match. Rescheduling an unfinished match can be difficult, especially for the visitor.

Your club/facility may have guest fees that apply to your opponent. If your club/facility does not waive fees for FLEX matches, the fee is your responsibility.

FACILITY

During the COVID-19 epidemic California is enduring, facilities may prohibit non-members from coming to the facility. If your facility currently does not allow non-members in, you will need to find another facility to play your home matches out of within your designated area you registered for.

BALLS

During the COVID-19 epidemic California is enduring, USTA NorCal is requiring every player to provide a brand-new can of balls for every match they participate in. If both players agree, they can use one new can of balls for the match that the home player will provide.

DEFAULTS

Within 24 hours of the agreed match time, the player unable to play will default the match unless the player receiving the default win prefers to reschedule the match.

It is the home player's responsibility to ensure that the court is playable prior to the scheduled match time. If the visiting player(s) arrives and the court is not playable, the visiting player(s) may take a default win or ask to reschedule the match at their court.

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If a player does not arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled time, that player(s) will default the matches unless the opponent agrees to extend the time or reschedule the match.

Defaults can greatly impact standings in many ways but are sometimes unavoidable. Defaults will be scored as a 6-0, 6-0 win for the player receiving the default. Excessive defaults by players who do not withdraw will be monitored for future seasons.

Lack of communication is another method by which a player can earn a default. If you are unable to make contact with your opponent after three tries (two via email and one by phone):

1. Report the incident
2. Record the match as a default win (6-0, 6-0)

If your opponent communicates after you've taken steps one and two that they would like to play, it is your choice to reinstate the match. Contact your administrator to reset the Match.

After three reports of a player being non-responsive; the player will be contacted, remaining matches will be scored as defaults wins for their opponents, and the player is suspended from playing the next season.

WITHDRAWING FROM THE LEAGUE

If a player must withdraw from the league prior to completing the schedule, that player will notify the administrator and their opponents.

If a player withdraws prior to playing a match, all the player's matches will simply be deleted.

If a player withdraws in the flight after playing a match, all players in the group will receive a 6-0, 6-0 win against the withdrawing player. This rule attempts to credit players who played the withdrawing player without penalizing those who did not play the withdrawing player. The administrator will attempt to replace the withdrawing player with a substitute.

No refunds will be issued once schedules have been posted.

AWARDS

Flight winners will be determined by the standings on the last day of the season. In the event of a tie, tiebreaks will be broken in the following order:

1. Fewest number of sets lost

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2. Fewest number of games lost
3. Winner of head-to-head matches
4. Coin toss