

# SAZ LEAGUE RULES

## 2022 Local Rules and Regulations

(changes are in red)

### USTA LEAGUES- Rules/Regulations

All USTA Southern Arizona Leagues including USTA SAZ Adult and Mixed Leagues are governed by the USTA National League Regulations, the USTA Southwest League Regulations, the USTA SAZ League Rules and The Code of Conduct contained in Friend at Court [www.SAZ-USTA.com](http://www.SAZ-USTA.com)

These SAZ League Rules are developed to supplement the USTA National and Southwest Section Rules and Regulations. The SWS office has approved these Local Rules and Regulations.

In all matches played without officials, the USTA "Code" of Conduct shall be observed. A copy can be obtained at [www.saz.usta.com/captainscorner](http://www.saz.usta.com/captainscorner).

All players, as a condition of their participation in the USTA League Tennis Program, agree to abide by and be bound by the league rules, the standards of good conduct, fair play and good sportsmanship. **Team captains shall be responsible for knowing the National, Southwest and SAZ League Rules.** Team captains shall inform all team members of their obligation to be bound by these rules. Failure to comply with any league rule shall not be excused on the grounds that one was misinformed by a USTA staff member or volunteer. The National and Southwest League Regulations are available on the USTA Southwest website [www.southwest.usta.com](http://www.southwest.usta.com) and/or [www.saz.usta.com](http://www.saz.usta.com)

### SAZ LEAGUES

Leagues only held locally, with no advancements to championships for league winners. All USTA league rules still apply towards ALL SAZ Leagues.

### Local League Administration

The Local League Coordinator shall establish the method and deadline for team registration. The coordinator may also allow teams to register after the deadline on behalf of the league only if the schedule has not been published.

Local Team Rosters may not exceed 18 players.

A Local League with 13 or more registered teams may be split into (2) flights.

## ELIGIBILITY

Each team member must be a valid USTA member throughout the entire league season.

Each team member shall reach the required age of 18 years for 18&Over Adult and Mixed. 40 years for 40&Over Adult and Mixed. 55 for 55&Over Adult and 65 years for 65+ **prior to or during the calendar year** in which such player plays in his/her local league match. Players who turn 18 in the league year can register for a league team but will be put on a holding list until they turn 18 to play in a league match.

## PARTICIPATION

Examples:

A 4.0 rated player may play on one 4.0 team and also play on one 4.5 team.

A 3.5 rated player may play on a 3.5 team in Tucson and a 4.0 team in Tucson or he/she can play on a 3.5 team in Tucson and a 3.5 team in Phoenix.

A player can play on two teams such as a 3.5 and 4.0 team, each in the Adult 18 and over and Adult 40 and over League at the same time but may not play on the third team such as a 4.5

If there is a day division and a night division with a play-off to determine the local league winner, the player can either play on a day team or a night team, not both.

Players who play on two teams must notify their captain.

In all matches in which ineligible players participate the team using ineligible players shall be penalized by forfeiting all individual matches played by such players. (Exception is for players registered in error on two teams in two flights at the same level, matches played in good faith will stand).

A player shall not play a league match under another player's name and/or falsify their age. Any player who does so, the team captain, and any team member who plays in the same match with knowledge of the impersonation or false information, may be suspended from all USTA sanctioned activities up to a year.

The Local League Coordinator in agreement with the SAZ League Committee has the right to suspend the playing privileges of a captain, player, or team whose behavior has been disruptive and/or found to be not in compliance with the regulations.

## RATINGS

Players with a rating on file in TennisLink must enter a USTA League Tennis division at that rating or the next higher level. You must play 'at level' or one level up. No more than 1.0 rating (level) may separate the rating of the partners in each individual doubles team. New players without a NTRP rating must self-rate on USTA website. **All Self-Rated players and Appealed Players will need to complete 3 local league matches**

with NO Defaults counting to advance to Section Championships. Players who are moved up with year end ratings, will not be able to advance to Section Championship with their previous lower rating.

## **CAPTAIN**

Each team must have a captain or designated co-captain present at each match who will be the only official spokesperson for that team. All correspondence/communications, etc. will be done by the captain or designated co-captain.

Home team captain shall contact the visiting team captain at least three days prior to the match to confirm the following:

- Date and time of match
- Directions to tennis facilities
- Number of courts to be utilized

Team captains or their representatives at matches shall be responsible for their actions and the actions of their players. Teammates, spectators, or coaches **may not** volunteer advice on line calls, scoring, or on the conduct of the match. It is the home team's responsibility to control the conduct of spectators during match play.

## **SCORECARDS**

Match results must be reported on TennisLink by a team captain (or his/her designee) within 48 hours of the team match.

The opposing team captain or designee must log into TennisLink and confirm or dispute the reported match scores within 48 hours after they have been reported. After that time, all reported results are deemed final and complete.

Contact LC if scores need to be changed- [Fink@Southwest.usta.com](mailto:Fink@Southwest.usta.com)

## **FACILITIES**

Each facility hosting league matches must be an organization member of the USTA as of January 1st of the current league year.

Facilities must have water and bathrooms available to host league matches.

## **REGISTRATION FEES**

The fees for USTA leagues are \$30.00 (\$27.00 + \$3.00 user fee subject to change by Active.com) per player for each USTA League Division – Mixed and Adult.

The fees for 65 and Over SAZ League are \$25.00 (\$22.00 + \$3.00 user fee subject to change by Active.com) per player for each USTA 65 and Over League.

## **CREDITS**

No Refunds. Only Credits will be applied for the following reasons:

1. A league or flight is canceled by the SAZ League Coordinator.
2. A team or individual withdraws for any reason **prior** to the schedule being posted in TennisLink.
3. An individual has an unforeseen injury and the individual has not yet played any matches for that team (medical excuse may be requested by League Coordinator)

When a player is given a "credit", the corresponding registration is moved to a holding area. The player **MUST** contact [Fink@southwest.usta.com](mailto:Fink@southwest.usta.com) to have the credit (prior to registration) applied to a new team within 12 months of receiving the credit.

If the registration ("credit") is NOT used in 12 months, the credit will become null and void.

"Credits" can only be used for the registered player and cannot be transferred to another player for their use.

## **LOCAL LEAGUES**

If there are not enough teams in an area to form a league, teams may request permission in writing to play in another area. The Section League Coordinator and the Local Coordinators from each area involved must approve this application in writing. There will be careful consideration given to the effects on both league areas with the understanding that there is a responsibility and obligation to promote the growth of the program without disrupting existing leagues.

## **TWO TEAM LEAGUES**

If it is necessary to have a two team local league, a minimum of three matches must be played in the local league in order for the winning team to progress to the Section Championship. If an Adult League consists of only two teams in a level of play, each team must maintain its roster with at least 40% of its players at the designated NTRP level of play.

## **TENNIS BALLS**

Sanctioned USTA approved tennis balls will be used. The home team furnishes the balls and pays any court fees for the match.

## **COURT SURFACE**

Each Captain must declare to the District League Coordinator in advance of the start of the season the court surface their team will play on for home matches. All matches for that league season must be played on the surface declared for home team matches, unless agreed upon by both Captains at least 24 hours prior to the match.

## **League Format**

18&Over- 2 singles/ 3 doubles

40&Over- 1 singles/ 3 doubles

55&Over- 3 doubles

65&Over- 3 doubles

18&Over Mixed Doubles- 3 doubles

40&Over Mixed Doubles- 3 doubles

## **MIXED DOUBLES FORMAT**

The Local League will consist of combined rating levels of 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0, and 10.0. The combined rating system will be used at Mixed Section and National Championships.

Under this system the sum of the ratings of the individuals who make up each doubles position must be at or lower than the level in which they are playing. (Ex. 7.0 level - a 4.0 man and 3.0 woman or a 3.5 man and 3.5 woman are both valid combinations).

Each player's NTRP rating must be on the official scorecard at the time of line-up exchange before the team match begins.

No more than 1.0 rating (level) may separate the rating of the partners in each individual doubles team.

## **LOCAL LEAGUE PLAY - SCORING FORMAT**

All matches will be best of two tie break sets with a match tiebreak in lieu of a third set. If both captains agree before the match begins and the facility has court availability, a third set may be played. **IF THE TEAMS DECIDES TO PLAY THE THIRD SET IN LIEU OF A TIEBREAK THE SCORE WILL BE ENTERED IN TENNISLINK AS 1-0. ALL INDIVIDUAL LINES IN THE MATCH WILL PLAY THE SAME FORMAT.**

## **FORFEITS/DEFAULTS**

Individual Player Forfeits: Use of an ineligible player will result in a default (e.g. a non registered player). The match will be scored as a 6-0, 6-0 win for the opposing team.

The No. 2 singles must be forfeited before the No. 1 singles may be forfeited. The No. 3 doubles must be forfeited before the No. 2 doubles and the No. 2 doubles must be forfeited before the No. 1 doubles.

## **TEAM LINEUPS**

Teams are encouraged to field their team **in order of strength.**

## **ORDER OF PLAY**

If there are not enough courts available at one time for a team match the team captains must agree in advance the starting time for each individual match. The #1 position must play before the #2 position and the #2 position must play before the #3 position. Generally, TWO (2) hours should be allotted for each match.

## **PENALTY SYSTEM**

The following penalty system will be used:

- Under 5 minutes - Loss of Toss + 1 game
- Up to 10 min - Loss of Toss + 2 games
- 10 to 15 min - Loss of Toss + 3 games
- Over 15 min - Default

### **Process to start penalty clock:**

- Captains exchange line up no later than time of match.
- Players who are not at the facility yet at the match time, if the other team chooses to enforce the penalty system must declare they are starting the clock for the above time frames and show the clock with the acting captain. Only acting captains can administer the Penalty System, not players.
- In the event a team decides to play regardless of the time a late player arrives the Penalty System cannot be used. The Penalty System needs to be used in its entirety or not at all.
- The clock stops once the player arrives at the facility and is insight, not when the player gets on the court. **All players have the right to a 10 minute warm-up, even if late.**
- If players are not at facility when exchanging line up, Captains should place them at the end of the line ups to follow the Order of Play rule, in the event they default the court.

## **WARM-UPS**

**The official SAZ warm-up time is 10 minutes at the match start time.** (Example if match time is 9 am, exchange line ups at match time, go to assigned courts and players are allowed a ten minute warm up before starting the match. Matches should start no later than ten minutes after the match time.)

**Practice/ warm-ups-** SAZ accommodates 30min prior to match time for team practice. **All facilities must honor the 30 min in order to participate in the League.** The facilities that cannot offer courts for 30 min warm-up, please inform your League Coordinator and captains. Please reach out to the visiting captains at least 3 days prior to match day to organize all the court assignments and to confirm the match to be played.

All warm-ups, including serves, must be taken before the match begins (before any points are played).

## **MATCH DELAYS**

**Match Delays:** Matches should always be played according to the published schedule if possible. If there is a delay due to weather, or court surface issues both captains **must agree to** delay the match or reschedule. This should be done prior to players getting into their cars to travel to the facility **if possible**.

If a started match is delayed or interrupted by rain, teams shall, if allowed by the Tennis Court Facility, wait up to 30 minutes to determine if courts become playable, unless otherwise agreed to by the captains. Any single captain or individual player may determine a court surface is unsafe for play.

**Rescheduling of Matches:** Matches should only be rescheduled due to rain or circumstances beyond the players' control. Both captains must agree to cancel the match. Agreements for date and time of rescheduled matches must be submitted via email by both captains within **3 weeks** from the original match date to the Local League Coordinator, unless the coordinator grants an extension or reschedules the match.

Examples of circumstances beyond the players' control are:

- No available courts at home facility during the scheduled league match day and/or time
- One or more player participating in league advancement matches, such as SAZ League Playoffs, Sectional or National League Championships
- One or more players participating in a Level 2 Adult Tournament held in Tucson.

**Delay of Matches-in-Progress:** Completion of matches-in-progress delayed due to rain or circumstances beyond the control of the players should be scheduled as soon as possible and must be played using the original line-up cards exchanged at the originally scheduled match. Agreements for scheduled date and time of delayed matches-in-progress must be submitted in writing by both captains to the Local League Coordinator within 3 weeks from original match date, unless the coordinator schedules the match.

## **GRIEVANCES**

All complaints alleging a violation during local league competition shall be filed in writing with the Local League Coordinator having jurisdiction prior to the commencement of the next team match in that specific flight involving such individual or team, or within twenty-four hours after the end of local league play, whichever occurs first. Southwest

Section will process ALL grievances. There is a \$50 fee for each grievance (fee is refunded if the grievance is upheld).

Send grievance form to [Fink@southwest.usta.com](mailto:Fink@southwest.usta.com).

Grievance form is located at

[https://s3.amazonaws.com/ustaassets/assets/1/15/usta\\_league\\_grievance\\_070915.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/ustaassets/assets/1/15/usta_league_grievance_070915.pdf)

For more information on League rules and regulations for Southwest Section and Nationals, please check out our SAZ Website. [SAZ](#).