

Arlington County Tennis Association (ACTA) Doubles League Rules (as of March 10, 2020)

The following rules apply to ACTA spring and fall doubles leagues only. The winter and summer leagues have separate rules and have not been incorporated into these rules.

- I. Eligibility
- II. ACTA Waiver
- III. Divisions and Placement
- IV. League Sustainability Guidelines
- V. Rosters
- VI. Regular Season Matches and Playoffs
- VII. Rules for Match Play
- VIII. Awards

I. Eligibility

- Age and attire. No one below the age of 19 is eligible to play in the Arlington County Tennis Association (ACTA) Adult Doubles League. All players shall be appropriately dressed. Shirts shall be worn at all times.
- Residency. All players participate in the league are required create a profile on TopDog tennis at: <https://actatennis.topdoglive.com>. This will allow the player to sign up for various ACTA events. By signing up for any ACTA event, the player is automatically considered to me a member of ACTA in good standing.
- Non-Residency fee. Non-residents must pay a \$30 out-of-county league fee mandated by Arlington County Parks and Recreation for the nonresident usage of Arlington County public tennis courts through play in ACTA leagues. ACTA collect this fee on behalf of the county during the registration process and later sends it directly Arlington County Parks and Recs.

Players are considered an “Arlington” resident if:

1. They are residents of Arlington County (including renting or owning),
2. They own property in Arlington County,
3. They are employed by the Arlington County Government
4. The following are considered “Arlington” but must pay the \$30 non-resident fee to the county:
 - Nonresidents and work in Arlington County Schools (State employees),
 - Nonresidents but are captaining a team, or
 - Nonresidents but serve on the ACTA board, or

- Nonresidents but work in Arlington County as primary job. This work location has to either be an official workstation, or his/her permanent work assignment. This applies if a person works at least 20 hours per week, or if he/she has no other work place.

Note: Each team may have “one” captain or board member nonresident who counts as “Arlington”. Co-captain nonresidents are not considered “Arlington”. However if the captain is a non-playing member, then the co-captain can take the “Arlington” designation.

For online registration, an Arlington credit card billing address is acceptable as proof of residence. Also acceptable: copy of driver’s license, business card, utility bill, or property title deed, provided it is in the name of the registrant.

The following players receive a full discount for league:

- Captains only (not Co-Captains). Note: nonresident captains must still pay the out of county \$30 fee.

II. ACTA Waiver

By registering for an ACTA program all players are deemed to have read and agreed to the ACTA Waiver and the Arlington County Hold Harmless Agreement.

III. Divisions and Placement

The purpose of ACTA having multiple divisions is to provide fun and compatible matches. There are now five doubles divisions, in which players for each division have similar ratings, which is a broad measure of skill. The most common rating which ACTA uses to determine initial placement is the U.S. Tennis Association (USTA) National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP). Another measure includes a college tennis background, which also translates into approximate NTRP ratings based on USTA’s self-rating guidelines at:

<http://tennislink.usta.com/leagues/HelpTutorials/ab050000.html>

<http://assets.usta.com/assets/1/15/General%20%20Experienced%20Player%20Guidelines.pdf>

Players new to ACTA should follow these guidelines upon entry to the league. After entry, TopDog ratings will over player’s initial USTA ratings.

- Division A: Corresponds roughly to NTRP 4.5 and above, or a college Division I, II, or III tennis background;
- Division AB: Has a combination of NTRP 4.0 and 4.5 players
- Division B: Corresponds roughly to NTRP 4.0. or below if compatible playing within this division, or a college background such as an NAIA, NJCAA, or college club; and
- Division BC: Has a combination of NTRP 3.5 and 4.0 players
- Division C corresponds roughly to NTRP 3.5 and below.

Any player new to ACTA without an existing USTA computer rating should generally follow the NTRP ratings. Any player new to ACTA who also played at the collegiate level is required to get permission from ACTA for any starting TopDog self-rating for ACTA play when there is no USTA computer rating, particularly when the player seeks to use a rating that is lower than what the NTRP rating suggests as the appropriate level. Any recent collegiate player, who does not get ACTA permission for a starting TopDog self-rating, will have their matches forfeited. As examples, recent Division 1 collegiate players need permission to self-rate as a 5.0 since they are generally rated higher than that by the NTRP scale. Also, highly rated recent Division 2 collegiate players are also almost always 5.0 level. Finally, recent Division 2 or 3 collegiate players may on a case-by-case basis be allowed by ACTA have an initial 4.5 rating.

Because ratings are a broad measure of skill, it is possible for players or teams of a given rating to dominate players or teams with the same rating. To ensure fun and compatible matches within divisions, ACTA reserves the right to move players or teams to the appropriate division regardless of rating if they are dominating a division. This will generally be done by the League Coordinator using multiple criteria, including TopDog ratings, winning more than 80 percent of matches and more than 66% of games, nomination by team captains, and observation of match play.

Typically players with currently active NTRP ratings are not allowed to join ACTA divisions below their corresponding rating (e.g., an NTRP 4.0 cannot play in the C-League). Exceptions can be made and Waivers can be provided at the discretion of the League Coordinator for expired NTRP ratings (more than three years old), physical injuries or issues which adversely impact playing ability, or visual ratings obtained from a rating clinic. Players with expired NTRP ratings are recommended to attend a rating clinic. Players may join a higher ACTA division if they are competitive in that division. Players without NTRP ratings are allowed to self-rate. Guidelines for self-rating are available online at the USTA website at:

<http://tennislink.usta.com/leagues/HelpTutorials/ab050000.html>
<http://assets.usta.com/assets/1/15/General%20%20Experienced%20Player%20Guidelines.pdf>

Among other guidelines, players under the age of 50 who have played tennis on a college team or who are tennis professionals should not play in the “C” division, unless permission to play in a

lower division is granted by the League Coordinator due to special circumstances. Players or their captains who are uncertain about the appropriate self-rating are encouraged to attend a visual rating clinic prior to each season. Players should only self-rate if they cannot attend one of the rating sessions, or if they join the league after the rating sessions occur. Captains are required to ensure new players NTRP or recent college experience is within the boundaries for their division.

Mid-season review of a player's rating is allowed for unusual situations, and may result in a player being moved up during a season. Players who are found during a season to have self-rated inappropriately shall have all their matches forfeited. Players are expected to select the appropriate skill level and ACTA reserves the right to move players to the appropriate skill level. Players with USTA NTRP ratings whose rating changes during the course of an ACTA season may finish the ACTA season at their present level, then must move up to the appropriate division the next season. See the TopDog rating scale below for more details..

IV. League Sustainability Guidelines

Captains will typically be asked about one month prior to the beginning of the season if their team would like to continue into the next league, and if they would like to continue being the Captain. Captains should email the appropriate flight coordinator to register their team for the upcoming season.

Starting in the fall league of 2017, the ACTA board decided to use TopDog ratings to determine a player's playing level. This will override the player's USTA rating, assuming the player has played in at least ten (10) matches in ACTA where the matches affected their TopDog rating. This is a change from prior seasons, when a player's USTA rating overrode TopDog ratings. The justification for this is to create a playing level field for all competitors.

2019 Rating Rules:

- 1) Players will use their current TopDog rating to determine their playing level. Ratings are frozen at the start of the season and will be unfrozen after the last match. The following scale will be used (note as of 2020 we are using only two decimal places for ratings):

5.5 (5.26 to 5.75)

5.0 (4.76 to 5.25)

4.5 (4.26 to 4.75)

4.0 (3.81 to 4.25)

3.5 (3.26 to 3.80)

3.0 (2.76 to 3.25)

2.5 (2.26 to 2.75)

- 2) The player's initial TopDog rating is based on their USTA rating (or self-rating) when they first register in TopDog.
- 3) For players that have played 10 or fewer matches, their TopDog rating will be adjusted to their USTA rating if it changes. The ten played matches do not include forfeit wins. They will be allowed to complete that season at the prior rating, since ratings are frozen during the season.
- 4) In rare cases, players can appeal their rating to the Ratings Review Board to adjust it in cases of injury, having a child, or extended time off from playing.

As players participate in the league, their ratings will change. But that change will only be displayed at the end of the season, when ratings calculations are turned "on" on the TopDog website. Note that the winter and summer leagues, ratings will be turned off permanently.

Because ratings are a broad measure of skill, it is possible for players or teams of a given rating to dominate players or teams with the same rating. To ensure fun and compatible matches within divisions, ACTA reserves the right to move players or teams to the appropriate division regardless of rating if they are dominating a division. This will generally be done by the League Coordinator using multiple criteria, including TopDog ratings, winning more than 80 percent of matches and more than 66% of games, nomination by team captains, and observation of match play.

V. Rosters

1) Basic Roster Requirement.

- A player cannot play a match unless first officially placed on a team roster in accordance with the deadlines discussed below. They must be in the online scoring database and placed on a team roster. Any match played by a player in violation of this provision is an automatic forfeit.
- A player cannot be on the roster of more than one team during the same season. Violation of this provision by a player may result in suspension from the league and/or the team for whom the player played will forfeit the match.
- Each team roster goal should be to have at least 2/3 Arlington County residents (or 66% Arlington residents) in order to meet the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Arlington County and ACTA (effective since 1 July 2009). The 2/3 requirement will be strictly enforced by assessing match penalties to the teams not meeting this.

2) Roster Deadlines/Modifications. Teams may add or delete players up to the last scheduled doubles match. If a player does not play in a single match, they are considered not on the roster and do not help or hurt a team to meet their residency requirement. The player may ask for a refund for their ACTA dues and league fees. Any player on a team roster who plays a minimum of one match is considered a permanent member of that roster for the remainder of the season. No substitutions can be made for injured players.

- 3) **Playing Requirements for Arlington County Residents.** Every season, each Arlington County resident listed on a team roster must play at least once during the regular season. Failure to do so will result in that person NOT counting toward roster Arlington residency requirements. A penalty to the team's total match wins will be assessed equal to the number of un-played matches by residents that put the team at the residency requirement. The TopDog website now shows up to date non-Arlington playing penalties. Once a player considered "Arlington" plays one match, the team receives one point. Once a non-resident plays one match, the team receives minus two points. The total accumulated team points from all players is the non-residency penalty.

If a team is under the residency requirement, use the actatennis.org website, ACTA socials, tournaments, or the ACTA ladders to recruit more Arlington players if necessary. The league coordinator may also have a list of players signed up on the division "New Team".

VI. Regular Season Matches and Playoffs

- 1) **Regular Season Schedule.** In the spring, the regular season normally begins the first or second Sunday of each April or last of March. In the fall, the regular season normally begins the last Saturday in August or immediately after Labor Day. The league schedule, however, may vary from season-to-season at the discretion of the league coordinator or ACTA board.

The regular season match format for each division is as follows:

- A, AB and B – Women's, Open 1 (First Time Slot)
 - Mixed, Open 2 (Second Time Slot)
- BC and C – Women's, Men's (First Time Slot)
 - Mixed 1, Mixed 2 (Second Time Slot)

Open = Open to either men or women participation

Please see Stacking rules for allowable combinations of Open 1-2 and Mixed 1-2 or Mixed 1-3 found at (VII)(9) below.

- 2) **"A" Division Rules -** The A division has the widest range of playing ability, and as such the rules for play are the most diverse to allow for fun and compatible matches. This is the highest division in ACTA and 50% of the team should be 4.26 or higher.
 - The Open 1 allows up to a maximum of an NTRP 9.5 pair, such as a 5.0 player and a 4.5 player of any gender, and
 - The Open 2 line can have a maximum of a 9.0 pair that should be weaker in comparison to the Open 1 line (e.g., lower TopDog combined rating or lower NTRP compared with the Open 1 pair);

An exception is made as female players are allowed to play Open 1 or Open 2 at a rating 0.5 lower than their current level. One example for the Open 2 line, if a 5.0 women and a 4.5 man can play Open 2, the woman is considered “4.5” and hence the combined rating for the pair is “9.0”. Regardless of combinations used, it is strongly advised the Open 2 pair should be weaker than the Open 1 pair (e.g., a 5.0/4.0 pair in Open 2 is weaker than the two-4.5 pairs at Open 1).

- The Women’s 1 line can be a maximum of a 9.0 female pair or below, such as two-4.5 Females or a 5.0 and 4.0 female pair, and
- The Mixed 1 line can include any mixed combination at 9.0 or less.
- Note that the combination ratings are not “TopDog” ratings. For example, a 4.74 and 4.69 pair are still considered “9.0” since each person is considered rated “4.5”. See IV.

3) “AB” Division Rules – The AB was a division formed in the fall of 2019 due to an increasingly wide range of playing abilities found in the “B” division. Participants in AB are generally high ranked “B” or low ranked “A” players. However, not that there are no restrictions on the “B” player’s lower range. ACTA encourages using players that are at least 3.8 but the minimum defined rating for this division is TopDog 3.0.

The format of lines played in a team matches are the same as the “B” division:

- Open1 Doubles: Uses two “B” players OR one “A” and one “B” player
- Women’s Doubles: Uses two “B” players OR one “A” and one “B” player
- Open2 Doubles: Uses two “B” players
- Mixed 1 Doubles: Uses two “B” players OR one “A” and one “B” player
- Mixed 2 Doubles (Playoffs only): Uses two “B” players
- Standard ACTA rules for stacking will apply (see section VII 9).
- Roster limitation: Teams are not limited in the number of “A” players on their roster.
- Levels are determined by the player’s TopDog rating captured upon registering for either the spring or fall season (which override the player’s USTA rating):
 - A “B” players has a TopDog Rating from 3.0 to 4.250
 - An “A” player has a TopDog Rating of 4.251 to 4.750
 - A player new to TopDog is initially ranked at their USTA rating or player self-rating.
 - A player’s rating will remained fixed throughout the season, regardless of any TopDog rating changes past the thresholds.
 - If a player self-rates as “B”, and it is obvious by the results by one or two matches and observations by peers that the rating was too low, the player’s rating will immediately adjusted to “A” as determined by the ACTA ratings review board.
 - An exception is made as female players are allowed to play Open 1 or Open 2 at a rating 0.5 lower than their current level.

- Team participation in the AB league is determined by the ACTA board/team choice. A guideline for AB team eligibility is mostly 4.0s and 4.5s, 75% of which should be 3.81 or higher.

4) “BC” Division Rules – The BC was a division formed in the spring of 2017 due to an increasingly wide range of playing abilities found in the “C” division. Participants in BC are generally high ranked “C” or low ranked “B” players. The format of lines played in a team matches are the same as the “C” division:

- Men’s Doubles: Uses two “C” players OR one “B” and one “C” player
- Women’s Doubles: Uses two “C” players OR one “B” and one “C” player
- Mixed 1 Doubles: Uses two “C” players OR one “B” and one “C” player
- Mixed 2 Doubles(Regular Season): Uses two “C” players
- Mixed 2 Doubles (Playoffs only): Uses two “C” players OR one “B” and one “C” player
- Mixed 3 Doubles (Playoffs only): Uses two “C” players
- Standard ACTA rules for stacking will apply (see section VII 9).
- Roster limitation: each team is permitted up to four (4) “B” level players. Each captain will identify his/her “B” players at the beginning of each season to the league coordinator. Any additional “B” players will be removed from the team.
- Levels are determined by the player’s TopDog rating captured upon registering for either the spring or fall season (which override the player’s USTA rating):
 - A “B” players has a TopDog Rating of 3.81 to 4.25. A “C” player has a TopDog Rating of 3.80 or less
 - A player new to TopDog is initially ranked at their USTA rating or player self-rating.
 - A player’s rating will remained fixed throughout the season, regardless of any TopDog rating changes past the thresholds.
 - Once a player age has reached 60 years, they may retain their prior rating “C” even if their new TopDog rating moves them up to “B”. B players over 60 will remain B players with a TopDog rating over 3.800, unless their appeal their rating to the ratings review board in the event of injury.
 - If a player self-rates as “C”, and it is obvious by the results by one or two matches and observations by peers that the rating was too low, the player’s rating will immediately adjusted to “B” as determined by the ACTA ratings review board.
- Team participation in the BC league is determined by the ACTA board. A guideline for BC team eligibility is mostly 3.5s and 4.0s, with only two player rated below 3.26.

5) “B” Division Rules – All lines played with players TopDog 4.25 or less. Teams should have at least five players higher than 3.81.

- 6) “C” Division Rules – All lines played with players TopDog 3.80 or less.
- 7) Commitment to Play Scheduled Matches. In each season, all ACTA team captains must commit to playing all scheduled matches regardless of whether the matches will affect the outcome of the team standings for playoff purposes. Forfeits are greatly frowned upon and, if excessive, will be reviewed by the League Coordinator for possible action.

4) Playoffs

- Player Eligibility. Players participating in the playoffs must have played at least one time during the regular season. Forfeits do not count as a played match.
- Team Playoff Eligibility. Standing to play in the playoffs will be based on the number of individual matches won during the regular season minus any match penalties due to not meeting residency. Teams in divisions that play an uneven number of matches will use percentage of matches won to determine playoff standings. The top four teams will make the playoffs in each division. The first place team in the standings will play the fourth place team, and the second place team will play the third place team. Note for divisions of five teams or less, the ACTA board will determine the playoff configuration. This might lead to a reduced number of teams due to court availability.
- In the case of a tie of two or more teams, the determining factors will be used to break the tie (by priority):
 1. Highest head-to-head winning percentage of individual matches among the teams during the regular season,
 2. Fewest forfeit lines during the regular season,
 3. Fewest sets lost total in the course of the entire regular season,
 4. Fewest number of games lost total in the course of the entire regular season and
 5. Coin flip.
- Playoff Format and schedule. For the Semifinals and Championship Finals, the team lineups will consist of five doubles teams (expanded from four during the regular season). The playoff format for each division is as follows:
 - A, AB, and B – Women’s, Open 1 (First Time Slot)
 - – Mixed 1, Mixed 2, Open 2 (Second Time Slot)
 - BC and C – Women’s, Men’s (First Time Slot)
 - – Mixed 1, Mixed 2, Mixed 3 (Second Time Slot)

VII. Rules for Match Play

1) Starting Time of Matches. In the spring league, the first two matches are played Sunday afternoons at 3:00 pm and the second two matches whenever the first two matches conclude but not earlier than 4:30 pm unless otherwise agreed upon by both team captains. In the fall league, the starting times are Saturday mornings at 10:00 am and 11:30 am (or whenever the 10:00 am matches conclude but see VII.7). Note that start times may be moved to enable matches to complete before darkness sets in (especially for the playoffs).

Warm-Up: A ten minute warm-up, beginning at the times shown above, will precede each individual match. Please keep warm-ups short to avoid play running past the allotted time. If courts are free and both teams agree, the ten minute warm-up may occur prior to the match start time. Used balls may be used, in addition to the new balls, to speed up warm-up if both teams agree.

Keeping Time: For purposes of calculating lateness, forfeit times, the length of bathroom breaks, the length of warm-ups, and the third set tiebreaker occurrence the following rule shall apply. The Home Team captain or his/her designee shall be the timekeeper, unless the two captains or their designees agree to an alternative method of keeping time. If agreed to otherwise by the two team captains or their designees, an official timekeeper on each individual court can be selected by consensus among the four individual players playing the match on that court.

2) Line up Cards/Substitutions. Captains will exchange COMPLETE lineup cards no later than five minutes before the first warm-up begins. Once the lineup is exchanged, substitutions will be allowed only in cases of injury or illness, onset of injury or illness during warm-up, or failure of a player to show (players on the official team roster who are not originally listed to play according to the originally exchanged lineup card qualify as eligible substitutes, but substitutions cannot be made after an individual match has started). If, after official exchange of the line-up card, a captain notifies the opposing captain of a forfeit, the non-forfeiting captain may rearrange players among matches not already begun (still no player can play more than one match).

3) Court Reservations. The courts will be reserved in ACTA's name for each team match. If agreeable to captains and players, empty courts not reserved by ACTA may be used to expedite matches. Players on extra courts must follow posted rules for public use. Signs should be posted on the courts to indicate ACTA Doubles League reservations.

4) Tennis Balls. The Home Team will be responsible for providing the tennis balls for the match. The tennis balls will be opened at the beginning of the warm-up. REGULAR or EXTRA DUTY FELT balls are recommended. ACTA no longer supply balls to teams prior to the regular season but do for spring and fall playoff matches.

- 5) Injury and Illness. Once play has begun, if the match is halted because of injury or illness, the injured player and his/her partner are considered “retired” and the opponents win the match.
- 6) Bathroom Breaks. ACTA follows the USTA regulations governing “toilet visits.” A player may request ONE suspension of play for such a visit. Such a request can only be made at the conclusion of a set. The time limit is TEN MINUTES and is not to be considered a natural loss of physical condition or injury. If the player requesting such a break does not return within the allotted 10 minutes, the opposing team is permitted to take a default.
- 7) Scoring. Matches will be the best two out of three sets using conventional scoring (i.e., playing all ad points). A 7-point tiebreak will be used if a set reaches 6-6 (i.e. first team to 7 points with at least a 2 point margin) using the USTA “Coman” Tiebreak. The Coman tiebreak involves players switching sides after the first point and then every four points thereafter (e.g., switch sides after 1, 5, 9, 13 points and so forth). This assures that a player in doubles will serve on the same side that he/she has been serving on for the whole set. It also eliminates a six-point swing if the conditions favor a specific side (due to strong wind or difficult sun conditions).

Due to issues with matches running over their allotted time schedule, the following rules are implemented to speed up play:

- If the match has split sets, the standard ACTA policy is a third set tiebreaker. The winning side is first team to 10 points with at least a 2 point margin (using the Coman tiebreak).
 - However if 15 minutes remain before the second set of matches are scheduled to begin, and all four players must agree, a full third set may be played after the first two sets have split.
 - If there are free courts available or no match waiting and all players agree, the third set may also be played out to completion.
 - All ACTA matches are played to completion (for the spring and fall leagues only). Teams do not stop the match after one and a half hours and attempt to determine the winner with an incomplete match.
- 8) Line Calls. Players are responsible for calling all balls on their side of the net and assisting opponents in making calls if help is requested. Spectators cannot be enlisted to assist in making calls. If partners disagree on any call, the benefit goes to their opponents. In unusual circumstances, a referee may be recruited to assist in line calls and match scoring. If team A requests a referee, then any mutually agreeable individual may become a referee for that match. The referee may stand on the court near the net pole or at any other location that does not interfere with play. The primary responsibility for line calls shall remain with the players;

however the referee shall ASSIST with line calls and match scoring and may overrule any team when she or he feels confident to do so. Note that excessively arguing a line call with the opposing team for over five minutes will result in forfeiture of the match.

- 9) Stacking: Stacking (playing a weaker team ahead of a stronger one) is against the rules in ACTA. This is counter to ACTA's mission of providing fun and competitive matches for all teams. So whenever there is a "No. 1" and "No. 2" (or No. 3) line designation, whether in the Mixed or Open matches, the lineup should be played in order of strength. They are penalties for failing to comply with this objective.

To measure the "strength" of the doubles line, we add to TopDog ratings of each pair that is in competition. The highest line should have the highest combined rating, the second highest line should have the second highest rating, and so on. ACTA realizes that TopDog ratings are not always completely accurate, so there is a 0.2 "leeway" granted in placing the doubles pairs. For example, a lineup could be configured as: mixed1->7.2; mixed2->7.3, and mixed3->7.2. The rule is a lower line cannot be greater than a 0.2 combined rating of a higher line.

An exception is made as female players are allowed to play Open 1 or Open 2 (In the "A" or "B" divisions) at a rating 0.5 lower than their current level. In that case, you subtract 0.5 from the sum of the TopDog ratings of that line to determine playing location.

The penalty for "stacking" is defaulting the out of sequence lines. For example, in our prior example, if mixed2 had a rating of 7.51, then mixed2 would be considered a potential stack and a default "might" be recorded on that match. However, a stack would be nullified except when any of a, b or c is applicable:

- a. The lineup was approved by the opposing captain.
- b. The higher line "wins" with the lower rated players
- c. The team that received the stack did not notify the league coordinator.

Remember, stacking only applies to lines of the same "type". So you do not compare men's doubles against mixed doubles or women's doubles for stacking purposes, for example.

Note: If the opposing captain notices prior to the matches started that teams are playing out of sequence (greater than the 0.2 leeway allowed), they can redo the lineups to ensure the matches are played in order.

- 10) Sportsmanship Guidelines. Please refer to the "USTA On-Court Rules" and "The Code of Conduct" made available on the USTA (usta.com) and ACTA websites (actatennis.org). Based on the USTA Rules and Code of Conduct, and upon events that have occurred in prior

ACTA doubles league play, ACTA has developed a set of “sportsmanship” guidelines. ACTA expects captains, players, and spectators to recognize appropriate tennis etiquette.

Play must be continuous. Attempts to stall or extend rest periods for the purpose of recovering from a loss of physical condition are illegal (unless opponents agree otherwise). Intentional distractions that interfere with an opponent’s concentration or effort to play the ball are prohibited.

Spectators, including family and friends, are welcome to watch matches. Their role, however, is clearly restricted to passive observer with no involvement of any kind during the match. It is particularly inappropriate to cheer when an opponent double faults or makes errors that are clearly “unforced”. Players are expected to maintain full control over their emotions and the resulting behavior throughout the match.

The Doubles League Coordinator will rule on written allegations of unsportsmanlike behavior in League play. Each team is entitled to one uncharged appeal per season. After that, there is a fee of \$50 per appeal. The Coordinator will be guided in his decision making process by USTA Rules and Codes of Conduct, but he or she will also have discretion since ACTA is an independent organization with its own institutional interests to consider. Parties may appeal any sportsmanship decisions by the Doubles League Coordinator to the ACTA Board. The ACTA Board will appoint a three-person panel that will be the final arbiter. The panel may not include any player from the same division (A, B, C or D) as the division where the dispute lies. The three-person panel needs a 2-1 vote for its decisions. Contact the ACTA Doubles League coordinator for the grievance and appeal forms and process (doubles@actatennis.org).

The standard of proof in all sportsmanship decisions is the preponderance of the evidence, also known as balance of probabilities. This is the standard required in most civil cases. The standard is met if the proposition is more likely to be true than not true. Effectively, the standard is satisfied if there is greater than 50 percent chance that the proposition is true. Independent third party witnesses that are not associated with either party are helpful but not necessary to meet this standard. tarajakubik22@gmail.com

11) Reporting of Results. The home team is responsible for entering the scores into ACTA’s TopDog on-line scoring system no later than 72 hours after the completion of the match. The TopDog program does not allow partial match results to be entered (if captains agree to reschedule one or more individual matches). To circumvent this, enter this match as a “double default” and correct the scorecard within 24 hours with the results of the completed individual match(s). Email the doubles coordinator with any questions or concerns (tarajakubik22@gmail.com).

For makeup matches, teams have one week to find an agreeable time to make up the match. The results should be entered on [TopDog \(https://actatennis.topdoglive.com/\)](https://actatennis.topdoglive.com/). The opposing team captain is responsible for verifying the match results. Any discrepancy must be reported to the Doubles League Coordinator within 48 hours after the deadline for reporting. Please check both the names and the scores as this could possibly have ramifications on playoff eligibility.

12) Forfeits and Postponements.

Advance Notice of Forfeits. If a team captain is aware that his or her team will have to forfeit any or all of the matches, a courtesy call or email to the opposing captain should be made as soon as it is known to prevent inconveniencing anyone. Failure to do this may result in penalty points.

Fully-Called Rain Outs. If league officials call off a match PRIOR to the exchange of lineup cards, an official rain out make-up date is established by ACTA. Players are ENCOURAGED to make up the matches on their own schedules, but the matches must be made up by the date of the official rainout makeup date established by the league officials. The captain of each team should oversee this process to ensure that all matches are made up on or before the next official rainout makeup date.

Partial Rainouts. Captains should exercise common sense when assessing a court's playability. Captains can mutually suspend matches at any time after rain begins.

- If Captains cannot agree to suspend the match, play shall be called off if the court remains unplayable after 30 minutes from the onset of rain. If the 30 minutes lapses before the second set of matches are scheduled to begin, those matches will be called off if they cannot reasonably begin within 20 minutes of their scheduled start time.
- Once lineup cards have been exchanged, and matches are subsequently halted because of rain, captains must reschedule matches. On-going matches MUST be played with the EXISTING players on the lineup card within the next two weeks. The home team captain must give the opposing captain three dates from which to choose. If an agreeable time cannot be met the home team takes the forfeit. Substitutes can be made for matches that have not been started but are ONLY permitted if (1) the substitute was not originally listed on the exchanged lineup card and (2) the substitute is on the official team roster.
- If neither team can field the same lineup within the two week timeframe, then a new line can be played with players that are not on the lineup card.
- For partial rainouts during the last week of play, the league coordinator will reserve courts the following Tuesday night at 7:00 for any matches that still need to be completed. The same lineup is required to finish the match, so ensure those players who play the final match of the regular season are available on the date.

Non Rain-Related Rescheduling. Captains are entitled to take forfeits when an opposing captain cannot field a team. However, he or she is ENCOURAGED to reschedule the match if practical. If the Captains do agree to make up the match, it must be made up on or before the rain makeup date associated with that match. If either Captain still cannot field a team on the date and time of the next rain makeup date, the match shall be forfeited. Please see Section V.J. for reporting match results.

Forfeits. The forfeit policy is as follows and covers both regularly scheduled and makeup matches.

- Lateness / No Shows: Players are expected to be on time for matches. If one or both players on a doubles team is listed on the lineup card and fails to show, and if no qualified substitute (any player listed on the team roster who is not originally listed on the exchanged lineup card) is available, and both members of the opposing team are present, that match may be forfeited. For the first and second round matches, players are given a 15 minute grace period after which the late team is assessed a one set penalty. (Note - Home Team captains, or their designees, are responsible for keeping time). After 20 minutes, the late team will be defaulted. If a forfeit is claimed, either captains or their designees must be informed immediately at the court.
- Note if the courts are still in use from earlier match, the 15/20 minute default rule still applies. So the team that is present may take the forfeit even when a court is not available to play if the opposing team is not present after the 15/20 minute grace time.
- Often in ACTA, teams demonstrate great sportsmanship and play a match even when their opponents are late. If a match is played in good faith, it will count. For example, if someone arrives 30 minutes late, and the four players decide to play the match independently in good faith, it will count even if the captain has decided earlier he wants the forfeit. Another example is two teams playing a match because they are not “sure” they can take a forfeit when someone is late and the courts are occupied. It must be stated clearly to all parties that the match is a “practice” or “fun” match and will not count for it to be considered a forfeit. Obviously if match is played using a “borrowed” player from an earlier match, the match will not count since playing a player twice is not allowed.
- When two captains agree to reschedule a match (non-rain-related or otherwise), if one or both players on a team fail to show for the match (outside of the prescribed grace period) and both opposing players are present, the match is forfeited.
- If a non-weather related match is rescheduled and both teams cannot fully field teams, the team that originally requested the reschedule takes a forfeit.

- For a double forfeit match (where neither team can field a line), both teams will receive a zero “0” for individual match wins. The TopDog programs treats the match as “Not Played”.

VIII. Awards: The ACTA Doubles Captain of the Year Award

ACTA sometimes will present an award to a captain that the League Coordinator feels has done the best job in promoting sportsmanship and fair play in the doubles league. The following is a few of the many criteria used in the selection process:

- 1) Selecting a Co-Captain,
- 2) Inputting scores promptly to the website,
- 3) No defaults for the season,
- 4) Bringing a new player into his or her team that hasn't played ACTA,
- 5) Creating a team name,
- 6) Scheduling a team practice,
- 7) Showing sportsmanship towards other teams,
- 8) Meet the 2/3 Arlington residency requirement,
- 9) Play all team members (not just Arlington) twice during the season and
- 10) Encouraging team member participation in ACTA ladders, socials, tournaments, or joining the ACTA board.