

Matches Played Without a Chair Umpire

Updated 26th March 2010



All players should be aware of the following basic principles when playing a match without a Chair Umpire:-

- i) Each player is responsible for all calls on his/her side of the net, however it should be noted that a Court Supervisor or Referee is permitted to reverse an incorrect line call. This reversal may be made by the official located within or outside the court enclosure. On the first occasion where this occurs the point will be replayed (regardless of whether it was point winning shot or not) and for subsequent incorrect calls the player loses the point.
- ii) If in the opinion of the Court Supervisor or Referee an incorrect line call is a deliberately blatant action the offending player will automatically lose the point and may receive a code violation for Unsportsmanlike conduct.
- iii) All "out" or "fault" calls should be made promptly after the ball has bounced and loudly enough for the opponent to hear.
- iv) If in doubt, the player must give the benefit of the doubt to his/her opponent.
- v) If a player incorrectly calls a ball "out" and then realises that the ball was good, the point should be replayed, unless it was a point winning shot or unless that player made an incorrect "out" call earlier in the match. In these circumstances, the player who called "out" loses the point.
- vi) A service "Let" may be called by either player/team.
- vii) Foot faults may only be called by an official standing on court or by a chair umpire. Players may be requested to correct their foot faulting problem by a Referee or Court Supervisor, who will require the player to make an effort during the match to rectify the problem. The receiver may not call a foot fault against the server.
- viii) The receiver must play to the reasonable pace of the server.
- ix) The server should call the score before each 1st serve, loudly enough for his/her opponent to hear.
- x) If players cannot agree on the score, they should calmly discuss the points/games that are disputed. All points or games which the players agree on stand and only those in dispute should be replayed i.e. two players cannot agree on whether the score is 40-30 or 30-40 and disagree only on who won the first point in the game. The game shall continue from 30-30, since both players agree that they have won two points each. When the game score is in dispute the same principles applies i.e. two players cannot agree on 4-3 or 3-4, and disagree only on who won the second game. The match shall continue from 3-3, since both players agree that they won three games each. The player who received in the last game that was played will serve in the next game.
- xi) When a player has created an involuntary hindrance (ball falling out of pocket, hat falling off, etc), the first time a "let" should be called and any similar hindrance thereafter will be ruled deliberate.
- xii) Any hindrance caused by a player that is ruled deliberate by the relevant official will result in the loss of a point.
- xiii) Where a ball interrupts play, either by rolling/bouncing onto the court, and/or creating a visible interruption behind the court a let should be played. Either player can call a let in these circumstances provided they do so in a timely manner. Where this is between a 1st and 2nd serve, a second serve only should be played.
- xiv) In a situation where a ball is lying on the court at the commencement of the point it will be deemed to be part of the court during the rally. Movement of this ball during the rally does not constitute hindrance.

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- xv) Players are entitled to request the opponent to remove the ball from the court prior to the commencement of the point.
- xvi) Players should only leave the court for a toilet break or any other reason with the permission of Referee/ Court Supervisor.
- xvii) If at the completion of a match, the players involved realise that the scoring format used is incorrect, the match result shall stand provided all players have left the court enclosure. If the mistake is realised before the players have left the enclosure, the correct scoring format should be used to finalise the match. If this is not possible (i.e. the match has progressed beyond the point where the correct scoring format can be implemented), then the score based on the incorrect format stands. (Refer to correcting errors in the Rules of Tennis)
- xviii) Where a code violation second offence / Point Penalty is determined by the Referee or Court Supervisor this may be applied at anytime during the specific game where the offence occurs. If the point penalty cannot be issued during the specific game a code violation second offence will still be issued. It should be noted that any code violation second offence between games is deemed to be part of the following game.
- xix) If a player is unhappy with his/her opponent's actions or decisions, he/she should call the Referee (or assistant) immediately. This may include any disputes regarding Lets, Foul Shots or Not Up situations where players cannot reach agreement.

Matches played on Clay Courts

For matches played on clay courts, there are some additional procedures that all players should follow:

- i) A ball mark can only be checked on a point ending shot, or when play is stopped (a return is permitted, but then the player must immediately stop).
- ii) Players are prohibited from checking the mark of the ball on their opponent's side of the court, unless invited by their opponent to do so.
- iii) If a player erases the mark, he/she is conceding the call.
- iv) If there is a disagreement over a ball mark, the Referee (or assistant) can be called to make a final decision.
- v) If a player calls a ball "out", he/she should, in normal circumstances, be able to show the mark.
- vi) If a player incorrectly calls a ball "out" and then realises that the ball was good, the player who called "out" loses the point.

Players who do not fairly follow these procedures could be subject to the Hindrance Rule and the Unsportsmanlike Conduct provision of the Code of Conduct. Any questions on these procedures should be referred to the Referee.

Etiquette

- i) When ball persons are not available, all balls on your side of the net are your responsibility, to pick up and, where appropriate, return directly to the server.
- ii) The receiver should not return the first service if it is an obvious fault – let it go by or ground it.
- iii) Do not enlist the aid of spectators, including parents, coaches in making line calls, or attempting to determine the score or other on-court matters.
- iv) To avoid controversy over the score, the server should announce the game score before starting a game and the point score prior to serving for each point.
- v) Wait until a point is over before walking behind a court where a match is in progress.
- vi) To retrieve a ball from another court or to return a ball to another court, wait until the players have completed a point.
- vii) Do not stall, sulk, complain or practice gamesmanship.
- viii) Screaming regularly and loudly, whether in relation to winning and/or losing a point is likely to cause interference to play on nearby courts and may be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.
- ix) Overt celebration directed at an opponent may be considered intimidation, and therefore unsportsmanlike conduct.
- x) In doubles, when returning service, the partner of the receiver should generally call the service line for him/her. The receiver should generally call the centre and side service lines. The call needs to be loud enough to stop their opponents/partner playing.