

Some USTA rules that govern amateur and recreational play.

I have been asked, as a USTA umpire, to write a few words about tennis etiquette.

Play at the amateur recreational level, such as we have at DRC or TCD, Metro, Flex Tennis or what have you is governed by what is referred to as **The Code, which is part of the USTA Handbook of Tennis Rules and Regulations - pages 45-51 of the 2012 Edition**. The Code is designed for low level tournaments where chairpersons or line judges are NOT available.

Rule 1: "Courtesy is expected. Tennis is a game that requires cooperation and courtesy." Enough said? Unfortunately, sometimes we forget this rule.

Rule 2: "Points played in good faith are counted. All points played in good faith stand." For example, if the player has served from the wrong side and then realizes it.

Rule 5: "Player makes calls on his/her side of the net. A player calls all shots landing on, or aimed at, the players side of the net." [So opponents who say "Are you sure?" or Really?" are simply being rude or poor sports, according to rule 1.]

Rule 6: "Opponent gets benefit of doubt. When a match is played without officials, the players are responsible for making decisions, particularly for line calls ' .[Remember rule 5].

Rule 7: "A ball touching any part of the line is good...A player shall not call a ball out unless the player clearly sees space between where the ball hit and the line." Rule 7 complements Rule 6.

Rule 8: "Ball that cannot be called out is good." Benefit of the doubt.

Rule 9: "Either partner may make calls in doubles." If they cannot agree, point goes to opponent.

Rule 11: "Requesting an opponent's help. When an opponent's position is requested, and the opponent gives a positive opinion, it must be accepted. If neither player has an opinion, the ball is considered good."

Rule 12: "Out calls reversed. A player who calls the ball out shall reverse the call if the player becomes uncertain or realizes that the ball was good. **The point goes to the opponent and is not replayed.** However, when a receiver reverses a fault call on a serve that hit the net, the server is entitled to two serves."

Rule 19: "A player shall promptly acknowledge when:

- A ball touches the player.
- The player touches the net or the opponent's court.
- The player hits a ball before it crosses the net.
- The player deliberately carries or double hits a ball.
- A ball bounces more than once in the players court.

The opponent is **not** entitled to make these calls."

Rule 23: "Avoid foot faults. Players should not foot fault because it violates the ITF [International Tennis Federation] rules.' This rule is often violated, even in amateur tournament play.

Rule 31: "Server announces score. The server shall announce the game score before the first point of the game and the point score before each subsequent point of the game." This simple rule prevents disputes.

Rule 34: "Talking when ball is in play.

- Singles players should not talk during points.
- Talking between doubles partners when the ball is moving towards them is allowed.
- Doubles players should not talk when the ball is moving toward their opponents court.
- When talking interferes with an opponent's ability to play a ball, it is a hindrance."

Rule 37: "Grunting. A player should avoid grunting and making other loud noises."

Rule 43: "Catching a ball. If a player catches a ball in play before it bounces, the player loses the point regardless of where the player is standing.'