



OLD COLLEGE TEAM SELECTION POLICY

This policy sets out the principles and process for selection of Women's, Men's and Mixed teams for the Surrey LTA Winter and Summer leagues. The team selection process incorporates the key values of the Club, namely inclusiveness, transparency, and fairness.

(Note: National League (formerly Aegon League) teams for Men and Women comprise players from Surrey League teams 1 and 2).

Matches

- There are generally five league matches in a season, played monthly. Either two or three matches will be at home.
- Matches are doubles play with two pairs from each club playing each other.
- Matches for both Men's and Women's teams take place on Sundays. Mixed team matches take place on Friday evenings. Midweek league matches are played during the day.
- Matches are arranged by the individual team captains liaising with their opposition captain. Courts are booked by the overall Men's/Women's/Mixed Tennis Captains or by team captains by agreement.

Eligibility

- Any Club member may express an interest in joining a team.
- While there is no specified playing category, players must, as a minimum:
 - i) Have basic stroke skills, including volley (on both sides) and serve.
 - ii) Be able to sustain a rally on both forehand and backhand sides with pace.
 - iii) Have an understanding of doubles tactics and positioning.
- Players must be Peak Members, except for Midweek Teams which are also open to Off-Peak members.
- Players must be an LTA Advantage member, so that scores can be recorded by the League. LTA Advantage is free and easy to join (<https://www.lta.org.uk/advantage/>).
- Full team players must be prepared to play in at least 3 matches per season if requested by the team captain.
- Reserve team players must be prepared to play in 1 or 2 matches if requested. Reserves can be asked to play for different teams both above or below their nominally assigned team.
- All players must be prepared to travel for away matches.

Team selection

- Team selection is made by the Mens/Women/Mixed Tennis Captains in consultation with the individual team captains and senior club coaches.
- Prior to each season, the Tennis Captains must ask all eligible members if they wish to be considered for the league teams.
- The Tennis Captain will then provide a list of interested players to team captains with provisional allocation to teams based on the previous season.
- Final allocation to teams will take place at a Selection Meeting organised by the relevant Tennis Captain and including all team captains and senior club coaches. Selection is based on:

- i) Results from previous seasons.
 - ii) Results from box leagues and club tournaments, if available.
 - iii) Team captain's feedback of performance and availability.
 - iv) Coaches' assessment.
- Teams will typically have a maximum of 8 players. This enables the majority of players to play in at least two matches, while ensuring that captains have sufficient players to put out a team for each match, taking account of availability, injury or illness.
 - The highest ranked players will be allocated to the first team, which will play in the highest division allocated to the club for that season, and so on. Reserves will be allocated across 2-3 teams.
 - Players may be moved to a higher team if they have had a consistently strong performance during previous seasons. In such cases they will replace the lowest ranked player of the higher team who then moves down. Similarly, players who have had consistently poor results may be asked to move to a lower team.
 - While previous results are important in deciding which team to assign a player, these can be impacted on occasion by the strength of the opposition or being asked to play with a weaker partner. Judgement calls will be inevitable and where it is difficult to separate players, the coaches' assessment will take priority.
 - New members who wish to be considered for the teams may be invited to join a team training session and will be allocated to a team based on feedback from coaches and team captains. Unless very strong, new members are typically assigned to a lower team for a season to confirm their standard.
 - The aim is to be inclusive and to enable as many members as possible to play team tennis if of the appropriate standard. However, there are a limited number of teams and so it may not always be possible to accommodate all who wish to play.
 - The Tennis Captain will circulate the new teams to all team players and submit the names of the team captains to the Surrey LTA league.

Team Captains

- The role of a Team Captain is to:
 - Arrange the matches for the season in consultation with opposition captain.
 - Determine availability of players.
 - Select the team for each match.
 - Upload match results onto LTA website.
 - Liaise with Tennis Captain and coaches for team practice.
 - Book courts for home matches (if agreed with Tennis Captain) and cancel courts if a match is called off.
 - Arrange informal practice between team members, to prepare for a match or try out pairings.
- Team Captains are chosen by the relevant Tennis Captain (Mens, Women's or Mixed) and are appointed each season (winter or summer). If all goes well, they will usually be reappointed for the following season.
- It is beneficial for the club to rotate captains, so there is a breadth of experience. Captains can be in role for a maximum of 3 years. The Tennis Captain should then ask for volunteers or offer the role to another player. If no-one else comes forward who is suitable, the acting captain may be re-appointed for subsequent seasons, for a maximum of 5 years.

- A player may be a captain of a Women's or Men's team and a Mixed team at the same time. If the tenure expires on one, they may continue as captain of the other team until that tenure expires.
- Once a player has had a break from being a team captain for one year they become eligible to act as a team captain again if requested by the Tennis Captain.

Match selections

- The team captain will select the team for each match.
- The aim is to win each match and so the priority for selection will generally be the strongest team available, rather than on a rotation basis. While this may mean that weaker players have fewer matches during a season, captains should ensure that all players in a team are selected for at least one match
- Captains should match pairs with complementary strengths and aim to have consistent pairings if possible. Players should play with whomever is requested by the captain.
- Full team players take priority over Reserves. If there are not enough Full players available for a match, Reserves should be asked first before asking a player from a lower team.
- Captains should confirm selection and pairings for each match as soon as possible, to enable players to practice if desired.

Approved by:

Tennis Committee – April 2023