

Procedures for Referees

All officials are expected to be fully up to date with all current rules and procedures of the related tournament and as set out in the LTA Competition Regulations. Every official is bound by the LTA Code of Ethics and Conduct for licensed officials as well as the Joint Certification Programme Code of Conduct for Officials.

As a Referee your role consists of:

- Being the final authority on matters of tennis law (the Rules of Tennis), the Code of Conduct and the scheduling of matches.
- Being responsible for ensuring the completion of the tournament within the scheduled timescale and in accordance with all relevant rules and regulations.
- Being fully conversant with the ITF Rules of Tennis, ITF Duties and Procedures, LTA Competition Regulations and any specific circuit regulations.
- Being fully conversant with the LTA Competition Management System including Tennis Tournament Planner (TTP) and League Planner (LP) software products, and must ensure they have the latest version installed.
- Ensuring that closing deadlines and withdrawal deadlines are in accordance with the LTA Mandatory Timescales document, [here](#) and publish acceptance lists, first match times and draws by the stated deadlines.
- Submitting any reports as may be required by the Tournament Committee or the LTA Competitions Team within the allotted time.
- Being present at the tournament site from at least one hour before the start of play until the completion of that day's matches and all paperwork related to that day and the next day's order of play is complete. If there is more than one tournament site, or if the Referee has to be absent for a certain period, Assistant Referee(s) must be appointed.
- Dressing smartly in LTA Official uniform. Referees at international tournaments under the jurisdiction of ITF/ATP/WTA/TE are exempt from this requirement.

Pre-Tournament Duties

The LTA Competitions Regulations 5.6 has a comprehensive list of the referee responsibilities at all LTA sanctioned competitions. It is important to familiarise yourself with all of these to know your role.

Establish a good relationship with the Tournament Committee or Organiser and attend as many pre-tournament meetings as possible. The Referee must determine, as early as possible:

- The dates and venue of the tournament.
- The number of courts available and the type(s) of surface to be used.
- The hours of play and whether floodlights are to be used or not.
- If lights are to be used then ensure they are of a sufficient standard and are, or will be, in full working order.
- The number of events, the entry size, any restriction on the number of events a player may enter and whether this is compatible with the court time available.
- The type of draw(s) to be used.
- The scoring system(s) to be used. (These may differ for different age groups and/or events).
- Back-up facilities in case of bad weather – alternative venue(s) or indoor courts.

- The make, type and number of balls to be ordered.
- First aid facilities, including provision at any additional venue(s).
- Any relevant information to be included and published on the fact sheet.

Having established all of the above, it is the referee's responsibility to calculate whether the tournament is manageable and ensure everything is booked and ordered in order to complete the tournament successfully. If the Referee feels that the tournament is unrealistic in its proposals, then this must be discussed with the Tournament Committee and/or Organiser as soon as possible and agree upon any solutions.

Making the draw

- Finalise the acceptance list.
- Agree the pairing of players in doubles and, if possible, assist players who are looking for a partner to find one.
- Seed players/teams in accordance with LTA Competition Regulations.
- Decide the type of draw(s) to use for each event.
- Make the draw using the appropriate software, for example Tennis Tournament Planner or League Planner automatically in accordance with the LTA Competition Regulations.
- Publish the draw(s) on the LTA Competitions Portal. (Publication of draws must be done no later than one day before the start of the competition.)

Producing the schedule (some points below may only be relevant to certain events):

- Come up with an MSP for the week, allowing time for rain delays if the tournament is scheduled to be played outdoors and be mindful of the fact there may be players playing multiple age groups or events.
- Where players are involved in more than one match on a day the LTA Competitions Regulation 5.21 and 5.22 regarding rest times and number of matches should be followed.
- For planning purposes, think about the format of matches. It is recommended that for a best of three tie break sets match you allow ninety minutes per match. However, there will be some matches that take longer and provision for this should be written in to the plan.
- Singles matches should have priority over doubles matches.
- Look ahead to the semi-finals stage and likely scheduling problems created by players in multiple events.
- Inform players of the time and date of their first match, together with the Referee's telephone number during the tournament. This should be done by e-mail using TTP. In addition, match times should also be published through TTP or LP onto the LTA Competitions Portal. (Publication of first match dates/times must be done no later than three days before the start of the competition.)
- Providing information about on-site facilities can also be useful. Such as: postcodes for Sat Nav or food and drink options.
- Designate an Official Clock and an Official Notice Board, where all draws, daily order of play and the following mandatory notices must be on display: LTA Code of Conduct, Player Notices, Penalty Notice, and Electronic Devices Notice.

Daily Tournament Routine

- Arrive at least an hour before the scheduled start of play and ensure all courts are set up before the players arrive.
- Print off all necessary documents such as sign-in sheet(s) and match cards, (if possible, it is good practice to print these the night before).
- Prepare a rota for Assistants and/or Court Supervisors and brief them around twenty minutes before the start of play.

- Where possible brief the players before going onto court concerning the draw, scoring format, what to do if there is a problem and general housekeeping.
- See and be seen. A 'visible' Referee is in a position to defuse potentially difficult situations and avert problems such as overzealous parents, coaching or incorrect line calls.
- Be available to answer any questions from players and parents. Treat all players fairly and be as flexible as possible with your scheduling where reasonable requests are made, ie: not negatively impacting the tournament schedule, other players or OOP.
- *Control Desk*. Please refer to 'Procedures for Control Desk Officials' [here](#)
- It is very important that the control desk is adequately staffed, according to the size of the tournament. The court chart must show where each competitor is playing, the time the match went on and came off, the score and the winner. The Control Desk Official can also assist with monitoring sign-in sheets and relaying published order of play information, including 'not before' times.
- *Joint Referee*. In a multi-day/multi-event tournament with a large entry and a large number of courts on multiple sites and with matches taking place during morning, afternoon and evening sessions, Joint Referee(s) may be appointed. A Joint Referee is involved in the organisation of the tournament and is part of the discussions in connection with the making of draws and the scheduling of matches as well as being the referee at one of the alternate sites.
- *Assistant Referee*. Even at a small tournament, the Referee should not try to do everything. In a tournament with a large entry, an assistant is invaluable and the Referee can assign appropriate tasks such as; supervision of courts or additional venue(s), overseeing Court Supervisors, running 8U, 9U & 10U events, assisting with on-site doubles entries and/or the sign-in for Consolation events, updating draw sheets etc.
- *Court Supervisors*. Please refer to "Procedures for Court Supervisors" [here](#)
- Court Supervisors must know what is expected of them and what powers they have. At the briefing make sure to tell them exactly what you want them to do, hand out a rota, and give them a way to contact the Referee if needed. Do not leave them isolated or without breaks or refreshments.
- Be fully conversant with 'Matches played without a Chair Umpire' (LTA Competition Regulations 5.55). If any unwanted behaviour/actions are seen then try to deal with it promptly to avoid any problems later.

- When dealing with parents and coaches try to educate them on correct practice for tournaments, whether this is for them or their players.
- Be aware of the sensitivity of dealing with children and allow parents on court in case of any medical problems.
- Always maintain a firm but courteous approach when communicating.
- Remember to follow the Code for Officials with regard to perceived impartiality

- As the Referee you have the authority to tell a parent/guardian/coach to leave the tournament site/area of court if necessary but this should be a last resort.
- Communicate openly and clearly with all parties to keep them informed of any decisions which may be made, including changes required due to bad weather or other unforeseen circumstances. Ensure to publish frequently any updates using the TTP or LP 'Publish' facility onto the LTA Tournament website.
- Where inclement weather begins to disrupt a schedule, try not to make decisions too quickly but get a not before time communicated to the players.
- Players have committed to the duration of event dates and it may be you cancel matches from a given days schedule. If there is no possible way of completing the tournament consider reducing the scoring format and where that does not have an impact then cancel the draw. Start with consolation, then doubles and finally the singles main draw.
- 8U, 9U & 10U events are often run on a Round Robin basis so have knowledge of how to determine box winners (LTA Competition Regulations Appendix 3, 6.3). Make sure players and parents know the format. Encourage players to call out the score after every point and every game. It is important to have a few helpers, such as older juniors to lend a hand with scoring etc.
- LTA Code of Conduct applies to all matches (including 8U, 9U & 10U) and to players, parent/guardians and coaches. Common sense and discretion play a big part and a friendly word or a 'soft' warning to a player or parent may be all that is required. However, the Referee, Assistant Referee and Court Supervisors must have a thorough knowledge of the Rules of Tennis and Code of Conduct and the confidence to go onto court and deal quickly and firmly with any incidents. All code violations must be recorded in TTP or LP and an immediate default must be reported to the LTA Disciplinary Officer within 48 hours of the date on which it is imposed. Remember, see and be seen.
- Finals Day. Ascertain and confirm the timing(s) of the presentation(s) is widely advertised, in order that players, parents and any spectators are aware of plans. Brief the person who is presenting prizes as to those who require thanking and ensure that you, or a reliable assistant, are announcing the winners and runners-up as the presentations are made.
- Agree a meeting time with the appointed Officials Manager and at this meeting welcome them and give them a brief overview of the tournament and the matches they will be officiating. In addition:
 - i) Check in advance that the organiser has cash to pay expenses as agreed for the number of umpires actually requested.
 - ii) Give the Manager a copy of the proposed order of play. Agree court coverage for different matches. Decide which matches need to be covered if sufficient personnel are not available, or if you have requested umpires for only some of the match courts.
 - iii) Inform the Manager of all relevant regulations under which the matches are being played (including, Code of Conduct, scoring format, any ball changes etc).

- iv) Supply umpires' scorecards with players' names and other details – these can be printed from the TTP or LP files.
- v) Make the Manager aware of domestic arrangements for the day namely refreshments, payment, procedure for collecting balls, scorecards, players, etc.
- vi) Discuss with Manager any problems which have arisen throughout the week with players still involved in the tournament for example coaching, behaviour, slow play, foot-faulting.
- vii) Point out any logistical problems with the courts, which have occurred during the tournament
- viii) Ensure that the correct court furniture is ready.
- ix) The Chair Umpire makes all decisions of fact but the Referee can be called for any decisions on the rules (laws)

Post-Tournament Duties

- All tournaments graded 1 to 5 must use TTP or LP to submit results, Code Violations and Withdrawals (including No Shows) to the LTA within seventy-two hours of the completion of the tournament.
- All tournaments graded 6 or 7 should use TTP, LP or Results Manager to submit results, Code Violations and Withdrawals (including No Shows) to the LTA within seventy-two hours of the completion of the tournament.
- Refunds for non-accepted players and unused reserves must be processed within seven days of the end of the competition. Refunds for non-acceptances should ideally be processed as soon as the acceptance list is published.
- Complete a written report, if required, and submit it to the Tournament Organiser and/or Tournament Committee.
- Attend a final Committee Meeting shortly after the tournament has finished to review matters and consider suggestions for improvement.