

# OC TEAM CAPTAIN MANUAL

## MENS SURREY LEAGUE

### FORWARD

The purpose of this manual is to assist captains of the men's Surrey League teams. The various tasks you will be responsible for as a captain are organised into sections that have been arranged in the order with which you are likely to encounter them. The manual has been compiled from the collective experience of past team captains and a Q&A format has been used. It is intended to update this document from time to time. I hope you find it useful.

Jonathan Pearson  
OC Mens Club Captain  
4<sup>th</sup> March 2012

### THE TEAM AND CAPTAIN SELECTION PROCESS

*Q: What was the process that led to me being asked to be a team captain?*

A: Once the players have been assigned to teams the Men's Club Captain will then look at each team and determine who would be appropriate to be the captain for that season.

*Q: Who attends the meeting to select the teams?*

A: At the beginning of each season there is a meeting which is convened by the Mens Club Captain. The Mens Club Captain invites each of the team captains from last season as well as the club's senior coaches to that meeting.

*Q: How are players ranked at that meeting?*

A: The Men's Club Captain ranks all the players who have indicated that they would like to play in the upcoming season in terms of their men's doubles ability from one down to how many there on the list (typically around 60 players). The sources of information on which the ranking is based usually includes, however is not limited to; performance during last season's matches, feedback from the player's team captain and input from coaches or other members if they are new to the club. There is no voting at the meeting as not all present know all the players plus it is only the Men's Club Captain who has the mandate from the Club's Committee. Thus the decision is up to the Men's Club Captain however he will seek feedback from all present about the players they are familiar with before the final decision is made.

*Q: How are players assigned to a team?*

A: Once the players are ranked the top players are then assigned to the top team, the next group to the second team and so on until all players who have indicated that they would like to play have been assigned a team.



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Q. On what basis is team size decided?

A: The size of team is based on achieving a balance between ensuring that all those in a team are able to play in the majority of matches, whilst at the same time enabling the team captain to have enough players within his team to mean that finding players outside the team for a match is an exception rather than commonplace.

*Q: Is the classification system of 'intermediate' and 'full' members used as part of the selection process for teams?*

A: No. All players who pay 'peak' fees are welcome to play in the men's teams and the ranking of players is based on the judgement of the Men's Club Captain as regards each player's men's doubles ability. There is no 'intermediate team', the only criteria relevant for external competition is the ability of players to compete in the external competition and the Surrey League has a large number of grades that cover a wide range of abilities.

*Q: What happens if there are more players wanting to play than teams available?*

A: In such an instance the Men's Club Captain will try to add extra teams until the numbers in each team are six or less. For example in the last couple of years we have increased the number of Surrey League men's teams from four to seven. However this is not always possible as it requires approval from the Committee to assign additional court usage to the teams and secure a new team in the Surrey League.

*Q: If I am captain for this season will I be captain again next season?*

A: Not necessarily. The team captain is only selected at the end of the process. Next season you may be in a different team. However even if you are in the same team it is very healthy for the club to actively rotate team captains so that a large number of members are able to benefit from the experience of being a team captain.

*Q: How do I find out who is in my team?*

A: The Men's Club Captain will email you a list of who is in your team.

*Q: How do I get the email addresses, phone numbers and British Tennis Numbers (BTNs) of my team members?*

A: These can be found on the OC members' website, <http://oldcollege.mycourts.co.uk/index.asp>

*Q: When should I contact my team members?*

A: If you wish, send a brief introductory email out to your team soon after the teams have been announced to say that you have been asked to be the captain for this season and that you will soon be contacting them as regards organising match dates, plus you may also want to suggest a team practice so the players have the opportunity to play together before the competition starts. Team captains have also found it very useful to gain indications of their team's availability for the season ahead as soon as possible and this is explained further below.

## FIXING DATES FOR MATCHES AND BOOKING COURTS

*Q: How are the dates set for matches?*

A: The Surrey League has set fixed dates each match for the higher divisions and has set dates to be played by for each round for the lower divisions. For example, in 2011/2012 in the Surrey League the divisions of Premier, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J and K had fixed dates set by the organisers. These matches had to be played on those dates and could only be played on an alternative date at the discretion of the organiser, or if any member of the team was selected to play for their County or Country. All other divisions have to play their matches on one of the three dates offered by the Home Team, one of these dates being the round date, and the other two being prior to the round date. Any extension to the round date must be agreed with the league organiser.

*Q: How do I find out if my team has fixed dates or 'to play by' dates?*

A: You need to go to the Surrey section of the LTA website <http://www.lta.org.uk/in-your-area/Surrey/competitions/leagues/>. The answer as regards the fixed dates is given in the downloadable pdf document saved as a letter to team captains. There you will also find other useful information some of which we cover below. However to find out the actual dates you need to go to <http://lta.tournamentsoftware.com> and search for example for 'Wilson Surrey Winter League 2011-2012'. Then once you are on that page you need to click on the tab for 'clubs' then scroll down to the 'Old College LT & CC' entry and click on it, then click on the tab for 'teams', and you will find your team, click on it and then click on the tab for 'matches' and there you will see the dates. To illustrate, the page for the OC men's second team is shown below.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the LTA website. The page title is "Wilson Surrey Winter League 2011-2012" and the team selected is "Old College Mens 2". The page shows a list of matches with the following data:

| Time           | Draw                                      | Round | Stage | No | Home                 | Away                | Score | Location | Status |
|----------------|---|-------|-------|----|----------------------|---------------------|-------|----------|--------|
| Sun 23/10/2011 | Men's Doubles - Group 2 - Division H East | 1     | 3     |    | Old College Mens 2   | Cheam Fields Mens 2 | 3-1   |          |        |
| Sun 20/11/2011 | Men's Doubles - Group 2 - Division H East | 2     | 4     |    | Old College Mens 2   | Reedham Park Mens 1 | 4-0   |          |        |
| Sun 18/12/2011 | Men's Doubles - Group 2 - Division H East | 3     | 7     |    | CASSAC Mens 1        | Old College Mens 2  | 0-4   |          | ✓      |
| Sun 29/01/2012 | Men's Doubles - Group 2 - Division H East | 4     | 11    |    | Old College Mens 2   | Norbury Park Mens 1 | 2-2   |          |        |
| Sun 26/02/2012 | Men's Doubles - Group 2 - Division H East | 5     | 14    |    | South Croydon Mens 3 | Old College Mens 2  |       |          |        |

The page also includes navigation tabs for Organization, Draws, Matches, Clubs, Teams, Locations, and Find. The bottom of the page shows the LTA logo and the text "provided by tournamentsoftware.com".

*Q: If I have fixed dates how do I book courts for the home matches?*

A: As soon as you know the dates for your home games immediately contact the OC Tennis Manager (currently Maria Szekely). Note it is possible to request what two courts you would like reserved but it is not always the case that you will get your first choice. The Tennis Manager reserves the courts for you on the booking system.

*Q: If I have 'to play by' dates how do I book courts for the home matches?*

A: As noted above the rules are that teams with 'to play by' dates have to play their matches on one of the three dates offered by the Home Team, one of these dates being the round date and the other two being prior to the round date. A process that has been used successfully by a number of captains is as follows:

1. Contact your team members and check to see if they know now of any Sundays over the season where they will not be available, in particular the home match round dates.
2. If your team is available for the home round dates then contact the OC court committee chair and ask them to tentatively reserve you courts for your team on those dates. If the home round date is not available then pick another date that both your players and courts are available. You may need to consider starting at alternative time to the traditional 10.30am slot on some days, and please ensure there is enough time to complete the match in daylight.
3. Contact the opposition captains via email and suggest that they agree to lock in the date for your match now using the date you have just reserved courts for. As you are doing this one to five months in advance of the actual match date the response you will get based on experience is that nine out of ten times the other captain will be very pleased to have the date sorted, they will agree to that date, and often say they wished the division had fixed dates like the higher divisions as it makes life simpler.
4. If the opposition captain has agreed then contact the court allocation committee chair and tell them that your team's booking should be changed from tentative to confirmed. If the opposition captain has said that the date will not work then cancel your tentative booking with the court allocation committee chair and ask them to tentatively reserve you courts for your team on two other dates prior to the round date that your team is available to play. Then go back to the opposition captain and suggest the two other dates, one of which they must accept. Then report back the outcome to the OC court committee chair.

*Q: How do I find the contact details for the opposition captains?*

A: Go to <http://lta.tournamentsoftware.com> and search for the Surrey League (for example for 'Wilson Surrey Winter League 2011-2012'). Then once you are on that page you need to click on the tab for 'clubs' then scroll down to the 'Old College LT & CC' entry and click on it, then click on the tab for 'teams', and you will find your team, click on it and then click on the tab for 'matches' and there you will see the teams you are playing against. If you click on the opposition team it will take you to a page where when you click a second time on the opposition team it will come up with the contact phone number and email address of the opposition captain.

*Q: If I have fixed dates do I need to contact the opposition Captains?*

A: Yes to confirm the start time. It is also the case where a team has been promoted up to the level of fixed dates that the opposition captain may not even realise (for the first match at least) that the dates are fixed as they assume it is the same as last season.

*Q: What if it rains on the day?*

A: Reschedule the match with the opposing team. Note that if you are having trouble agreeing a new date the organisers have set aside 'rain' dates to facilitate agreeing a new date. Email the organiser confirming the change in match date.

## **ORGANISING PLAYERS FOR MATCHES**

*Q: Should I rotate players or just play the strongest four players each week?*

A: This is a balancing act that all captains must address, and if the team sizes are optimal, not a situation you will encounter frequently during your tenure. It is possible to monitor the performance of your opposing teams by logging onto the LTA website. Captains should try to play their stronger team against the best teams, however care should be taken to ensure that all players are given an opportunity to play because there is a reasonable expectation that a player will get to play in the team they have been selected for. Note if there are 6 players in your team and players were rotated equally then some would play 3 matches and others 4 matches. It is not a requirement that captains do this. However, as a general rule, team captains should ensure that players who are available to play 4 or more matches get to play in at least 2 matches.

*Q: Who decides which players play together?*

A: Possibly the most interesting responsibility of the Team Captain is to decide who plays together on the day. The consensus seems to be that the best tactic in most instances is to play your strongest pair as the first pair. The strongest pair is usually the strongest two players but sometimes certain combinations of players are very effective and may be the strongest pair. Knowledge of your partner's game and experience playing together also assist in making an effective partnership. However sometimes partnerships can stale and it is up to the captain to judge when to stay with the status quo and when to change.

*Q: What happens if I am short a player for a match?*

A: You will be given a list of reserves by the Men's Club Captain. The people on this list have indicated that they are happy to play as a reserve if required but are unable to play in a regular team due to other commitments. Reserves are not assigned to any particular team and so you can call anyone on that list, however if that player has already filled in twice that season for teams above your division then they are not allowed under the rules to play for your team.

*Q: Can I ask players from the team above to fill in for a match?*

A: The Surrey League rules state that regular team members may play for another team in the same competition subject to the following restrictions:

1. A player may not play for a team junior to that for which originally selected.
2. If a player plays more than once for a higher graded team than that for which originally selected, he may not return to the lower graded team.

3. If a Club has two or more teams in the same division of a league there must be no interchange of players between these teams.
4. A player may play for only one Club in any one type of competition in a season but a player may play for another Club in a different type of competition.

A liberal interpretation of the above rules would be that so long as the player has not played in a match in a higher team then you can ask them to fill in.

*Q: What happens if we are unable to field a team for a match?*

A: You should contact the Men's Club Captain as soon as possible prior to this happening. The Surrey League rules state that if a team cancels within 36 hours of the scheduled start time, without good reason, it risks forfeiting the match in favour of its opponents. Further, unless there are exceptional circumstances, a team not fielding a full complement of players will forfeit the match. Any team competing in a league competition and not completing at least three matches (if there are five teams in the Division) or four matches (if there are six teams in the Division) is liable to have its entry rejected for the equivalent competition for the following year. Team captains should note that, there will be no guarantee of re-entry to the Division from which they were excluded, in the following year.

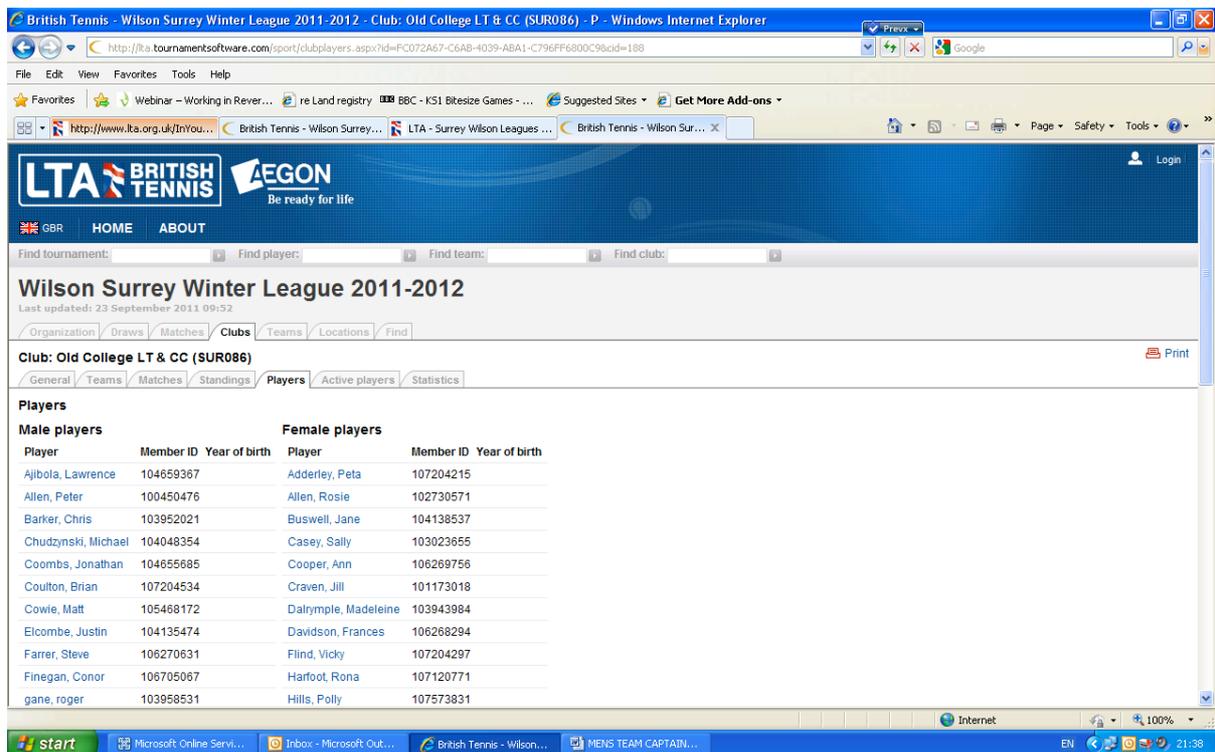
## **SCORECARDS, BTM NUMBERS AND RECORDING RESULTS**

*Q: Where do I get score cards?*

A: You need to go to the Surrey section of the LTA website <http://www.lta.org.uk/in-your-area/Surrey/competitions/leagues/>, print five scorecards and then take one to each match. Both captains must complete and sign the scorecard and retain their own copy.

*Q: What are BTM numbers and how do I check if my players and their BTM numbers are already recorded on the LTA system?*

A: BTM stands for British Tennis Membership. All players must have BTM numbers and the players' names plus their BTM numbers must be entered into the LTA website database under Old College LT & CC. To see if a player's details are already recorded on the LTA website go to <http://lta.tournamentsoftware.com> and search for the Surrey League (for example for 'Wilson Surrey Winter League 2011-2012'). Then once you are on that page you need to click on the tab for 'clubs' then scroll down to the 'Old College LT & CC' entry and click on it, then click on the tab for 'players', and you will see a list of players and their Member ID (which is their BTM number).



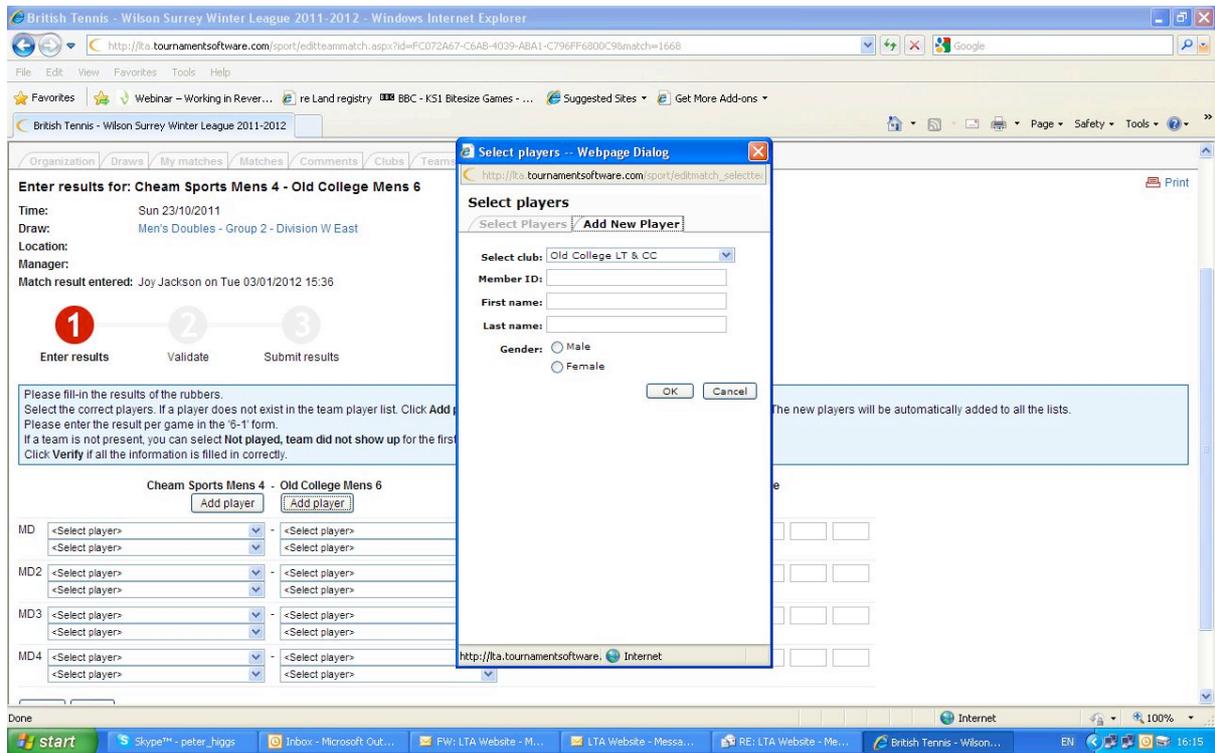
**Q:** If one of my players is not recorded how do I find their BTM number?

**A:** Go to <http://www2.lta.org.uk/Search/PlayerSearch/> enter the player's name and it will tell you their BTM number. The BTM numbers are also in the members directory on the Old College members' website.

**Q:** How can I enter any missing players and their respective BTM numbers on the LTA website?

**A:** It is important at the start of the season to ensure all your team is on the LTA system so that all results can be entered correctly by the winning captains. To do this you need to first logon to the LTA website as follows.

1. Go to <http://lta.tournamentsoftware.com> and click the logon in top right corner and enter the following details - **Login name: Itasur086 and Password: t8wr8pa5**. Note that this is a generic logon for all of OC. If you have any problems with your log in details you can contact the County Office on 01932 827207.
2. Then search for the Surrey League (for example for 'Wilson Surrey Winter League 2011-2012'). Then once you are on that page you need to click on the tab for 'clubs' then scroll down to the 'Old College LT & CC' entry and click on it, then click on the tab for 'team' and you will find your team, click on it and then click on the tab for 'matches' and there you will see a match. Click on the first unplayed match as adding a player can be done when entering the individual rubber results for any match  
<http://lta.tournamentsoftware.com/sport/editteammatch.aspx>.
3. There is an add player box and then a tab to click which allows you to add a missing player - see below. Note the Member ID is the BTM number and so you will need to have the player's BTM ready to enter – see example below.



**Q:** Who is responsible for entering results of matches onto the LTA website and when should this be done by?

**A:** It is the responsibility of the winning captain to enter the results within 48 hours of the match. The losing captain is expected to then logon and confirm the results. Once a result has been entered by the winning team captain and the result confirmed by the losing team captain, only League Organisers can make any amendments, e.g. player's names or set scores. Please take care as either a home or away player captain to ensure that the scores have been entered correctly in a timely manner. In the event of a draw please agree with the opposing team captain.

**Q:** How do I enter the match results?

**A:** To do this logon to the LTA website as follows.

1. Go to <http://lta.tournamentsoftware.com> and click the logon in top right corner and enter the following details - **Login name: Itasur086 and Password: t8wr8pa5.**
2. Then search for the Surrey League (for example for 'Wilson Surrey Winter League 2011-2012'). Then once you are on that page you need to click on the tab for 'clubs' then scroll down to the 'Old College LT & CC' entry and click on it, then click on the tab for 'team' and you will find your team, click on it and then click on the tab for 'matches' and there you will find your match.
3. Click on the match. Then click on the 'modify' button next to the fixture. Click 'enter rubber results'. Read the instructions in the box and enter the player names by clicking on them from the drop down box and enter the results. When happy with the result, click 'verify'. Read the instructions in the box and click 'confirm' if the result is correct, to make alterations click 'modify'.
4. Once a result has been entered by the winning team captain and the result confirmed by the losing team captain, only League Organisers can make any amendments, e.g. player's names or set scores.

Note 10 point champions tie-breaks are recorded as 1-0. For example if you win 6-2, 4-6, and 10-7 in the champions tie break then the score is entered 6-2, 4-6, 1-0. Note also that Home team scores are recorded first (e.g. if the above was an away win it is recorded 2-6, 6-4, 0-1).

## **HOME MATCHES: BALLS AND HOSPITALITY**

*Q: What time do we need to be at the courts prior to the match?*

A: It is recommended that someone from the team be at the courts at least 15 minutes prior to the match to ensure that someone is around to greet the opposition team who often arrive early.

*Q: What court preparation is required prior to the match?*

A: Captains should check the net heights, provide a jug drinking water for the players and ensure the court is safe to play on – more details on court safety aspects are given below.

*Q: How do I get balls for home matches?*

A: It is the responsibility of the home team to provide new balls. Two tins of new balls are now provided by the club for home team matches. These will be given to you by the Men's Club Captain on the next Monday night practice session. Note in an emergency the balls we are supplied with for team matches are stored on the shelf on the left in the garage. The key to the garage is in the kitchen next to the floodlight controls.

*Q: Do we provide refreshments for the opposition when we play at home?*

A: Not all teams do this as some teams want to leave straight after playing in order to get home as soon as possible. However many teams do offer refreshments when you play at their clubs. It is good practice to email the opposing Captain prior to the match to see if they would like to stay for 20 minutes at the end to have a drink and snack as you complete the results cards.

*Q: If we are providing refreshments who organizes this and how is it paid for?*

A: It is up to the Team Captain to either bring the refreshments (typically pizzas that are heated up in the oven at the club house), or to nominate or seek a volunteer from one of their players to do so. The cost the refreshments as well as any drinks provided to the opposition is usually shared equally amongst the team.

*Q: How do I get a key to the bar so I can offer drinks to the opposition?*

A: Team Captains can request a key from the Clubhouse Manager (currently Caroline Periton).

## **AWAY MATCHES: TRANSPORT**

*Q: Given it can take up to 45 minutes to drive to some of the away matches are Captains expected to co-ordinate travel?*

A: The convention seems to be that Team Captains often arrange for all their players to travel in one car. Depending on where players live the arrangements may involve picking up some players at the court and others at their house on the way. It is also common to share the driving so it is not the same person who drives each time.

## TOURNAMENT RULES

*Q: Where can I find the detailed tournament rules?*

A: Regulations for County Competitions can be found on the Surrey League website <http://www.lta.org.uk/in-your-area/Surrey/competitions/leagues/>.

*Q: What is the order of play?*

A: In the Surrey League the organisers have specified that the convention they want followed is for round one to be the first pair (i.e. best) of each team to play against the second pair of the opposition. Then in round two the first pairs play each other.

*Q: Who swaps courts and who stays?*

A: The Home Team Captain decides what courts the round one matches are played on, however the rule then is that the visitors remain on the same court for the round two match and the home team pairs swap courts.

*Q: How does the scoring work?*

A: Each rubber will be the best of 3 sets, with a tie-break at 6 games all in the first 2 sets. The third set to be a Champions tie-break, first to 10 points with a 2 point advantage. Points = 2 Points for win, 1 Point each for draw (on Rubbers)  
3rd set winners will score 1 set (Sets score) and 1 game (Games score).  
2 Points awarded for walk-over. No points deducted for match conceded.  
A match conceded will result in all rubbers being recorded as 6-0, 6-0 to the team receiving a walk-over.

*Q: What happens if a team arrives late?*

A: In the Surrey League the rule is that if a player be absent without good cause when called upon to play at the expiration of thirty minutes from the time agreed for the commencement of the match his opponent or opponents shall be entitled immediately to one love set, and at the expiration of sixty minutes to a further love set.

*Q: What happens if the match is unplayable due to the conditions?*

A: In the Surrey League the rule is that a referee may be appointed for any tie by mutual consent of the competing clubs or players, if not already appointed by the Council. The referee shall decide if so called upon by the Captain of either side whether or not the tie shall be stopped owing to the state of the courts, the state of the weather, darkness or other unavoidable hindrance. If no referee shall have been appointed the Captain of the opposing side shall decide. Unfinished matches must be continued from the exact score at which play ceased unless the Council having sanctioned a change in the personnel of the team, also rules that the match shall be replayed.

*Q: What happens if we are playing at Old College and our match runs over time and the court is booked by a club member for a social game?*

A: This is a difficult situation. The best solution is to avoid this happening by ensuring that matches are started on time with a sensible (as opposed to extra long) warm up. However if this situation does arise then you will need to ask the club member to either wait or to move their match to another court. However if they will

not agree to do this then you unfortunately have no option but to forfeit the remaining games.

## **PRACTICE AND COACHING**

*Q: What practice and coaching is organised by the club for my team?*

A: The Men's Club Captain has arranged for regular Monday night sessions for coaching and practice for the men's teams. The club pays for the cost of the lights, balls, and coaches' time for these sessions (which of course means that part of the player's subscriptions is being used to pay for these sessions). Team Captains should encourage their players to attend these sessions whenever possible.

*Q: Should I arrange for team practice in addition to the Monday nights sessions?*

A: This is up to the individual Captain. It is definitely recommended that if the members of your team have not played together before that you arrange a practice session prior to the first match. The probability of winning is much greater if players have played with each other before and have some familiarity with each others game as well as being able to communicate effectively on the court.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

1. The home captain is responsible for preparing the courts so they are fit to play prior to commencement – this should include:
  - a. Removal of any old tennis balls.
  - b. Checking court surface for safety.
  - c. Removal of any litter from court
  - d. Ensuring any bags, bottles and possessions and equipment are placed in a safe position that will not interfere with play
  - e. Agreeing with opposing captain that matches should start if both are happy with conditions
2. In case of rain once the match has started, the away captain is responsible for deciding whether match should continue. If on the OC red smash courts it may be possible to play in the rain but if any member of the squad or opposing team is unhappy then players should come off court. The away captain is then responsible for any recommencement of matches should weather clear and safety is assured. If in doubt do not play.
3. In case of any injury to any team member, the home captain is to ensure that they are familiar with the first aid box and agree with the opposing captain if any extra help is required in respect of a non-trivial injury. If in doubt, any injured player should be advised to seek advice from a medical practitioner. The nearest A&E is Kings College Hospital, Denmark Hill. Brixton, SE5 9RS, phone 7737 4000.
4. The home captain is responsible for making sure any refreshment provided is appropriate and to make teams aware of any H&S issues, for example wet decking and hot drinks.