

AVAC USTA POLICIES & PROCEDURES

All Almaden Valley Athletic Club USTA league policies are established by the AVAC Tennis Policy Committee, either at committee meetings or by online discussions when necessary. The AVAC website always has the most current version of these policies, which supersedes all earlier versions.

Any member with concerns about either enforcing or changing the current policies should contact a member of the [AVAC Tennis Policy Committee](#).

POLICY GOALS

AVAC USTA policies strive to balance three – sometimes competing -- goals of AVAC tennis members:

- Having at least one team available to play on in each league that can be competitive with teams from other facilities.
- Being able to join a team in each league at one or more desired levels of play.
- Playing in a fair number of matches on each of which one is a member.

PLAYER REGISTRATION

Key to meeting policy goals is a registration process that helps to determine the number and size of teams that will best allow the goals to be met.

In advance of each league season AVAC will conduct an online registration process in which players can sign up to play at one or more levels, as well as volunteer to be a team captain.

LATE FEES

Because of the importance of having this information to form teams, there is a registration deadline for each league season. A member who misses the deadline may pay a \$20 late fee to play if there is still room on teams for players at their level. The late fee will be waived in cases where a team is actively recruiting additional players.

Members who are new to AVAC at the time teams are forming are exempt from the late fee, and we highly encourage captains to place them on teams if possible.

ADMINISTRATIVE FEES

Each AVAC member will be charged an administrative fee at the start of the season for each team they join. This fee will be waived for any team on which the member serves as captain. The fee is currently \$20.

PRIORITIZATION OF AT-LEVEL PLAY

When possible, AVAC tries to accommodate members who want to play at more than one level in the same league. However, the primary goal is to place everyone who signs up for a league onto a team at their own level.

Any AVAC member who signs up to play in a league will be invited to a team at their level -- if there is one. Players will be offered the minimum number of matches to become eligible for postseason play, provided player availability is maintained, and reasonable for scheduling by Captain

An AVAC member is not guaranteed to be placed on a team where they are not an “at-level” player, defined as follows:

Adult 18+, Adult 40+: An at-level player is one whose level is equal to that of the team. (A 4.0 player on a 4.0 team, for example.)

Mixed Doubles, Adult 55+, Adult 65+: An at-level player is one whose level is exactly half that of the team. (A 3.5 player on a 7.0 team, for example.) Players whose levels are a half-step higher and lower may partner to form pairs equal to the team level, but they have no guarantee to be invited.

Combo: An at-level player is one whose level is either of the two that add up to the level of the team. (A 3.0 or a 3.5 player on a 6.5 team, for example.)

CAPTAIN MAY CONFIRM SELF- OR APPEALED- RATING

If a player is at-level, but has a self-rating or an appealed rating, their team captain may decide whether the player is truly able to play at the level of the team. This decision should come after the captain has had multiple recent opportunities to observe or play with the

player, and has reviewed the player's recent match record (if any). If the captain decides that the player is not correctly rated, the player should be alerted that while they can join the team and practice with it, no minimum number of matches should be expected.

It is recommended that a player who needs to do a self-rating, or is considering an upward appeal of their year-end computer rating should first consult with the captain of a team at their desired level to find out if their decision will limit their ability to play in matches. An appeal of a computer rating is irreversible for the year in question.

TEAM SIZES

For a normal length season (approximately 10 matches), recommended team sizes are as follows:

- **Adult 18+** (2 singles 3 doubles): Average size 18. Range 14-26
- **Adult 40+** (1 singles 3 doubles): Average size 17. Range 12-24
- **Adult Daytime** (1 singles 2 doubles): Average size 15. Range 10-18
- **Adult 55+, Adult 65+** (3 doubles): Average size 16. Range 12-20
- **Combo** (3 doubles): Average size 16. Range 12-20 (6-10 each level)
- **Mixed** (3 doubles): Average size 17. Range 12-22 (6-11 each gender)

At the end of the registration period, if the number of at-level members signed up exceeds the top of the range, formation of two teams is recommended.

If the number of at-level players signed up is not enough for one team of minimum size, or is slightly less than enough for two teams of minimum size, we will look for additional players among:

- At-level AVAC members who did not sign up
- AVAC members who are not at-level
- Non-AVAC members (preferably at-level)

Prioritization among these groups is at the discretion of potential team captains in collaboration with the AVAC USTA Coordinator.

Even if a team meets the minimum size requirement, if the captain is not confident of being able to fill lineups due to player availability issues, he or she can recruit additional players among the same groups listed above.

In cases where the above measures do not provide enough players, we can consider combining players with another club, playing half of the home matches at each location.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR MIXED DOUBLES

For mixed doubles, when deciding if there are enough signups for two teams, signups from players who are not at-level should be counted pairwise, with a balance of men and women one full level apart. For example, at the 7.0 level, if 6 level 3.0 women and 2 level 4.0 men have signed up, 2 women and 2 men should be counted in team size evaluation. The likelihood of playtime for players not-at level could be increased by having an established partner that would level them up and bring them to the team, with Captain's knowledge.

TEAM FORMATION PROCEDURES

Once the number of teams is known, and captains have been selected, team formation can begin.

Until this time, any discussions between players and prospective team captains, must be considered provisional and subject to change. Players and captains should avoid making commitments that may later need to be retracted.

USTA normally announces year-end rating changes in early December. This introduces an extended wait time for teams forming in the fall, before commitments to players can be made.

For leagues that count toward player ratings, if AVAC fields more than one team at a given level, one will be the "First Team" and the other the "Second Team". These leagues are:

Adult 18+

Adult 40+

Adult 55+

Adult 65+

For Mixed and Combo leagues, the two teams will be co-equal.

Team formation procedures depend on whether there is more than one team at a level, and if so, whether one of the teams is the “First Team”.

When AVAC fields just one team at a given level, it is not considered to be a “First Team”, and provisions below for First Teams do not apply to it.

CHOOSING CAPTAINS AND CO-CAPTAINS

Ideally, captains should be at-level players on their team. But a member who is not at-level may serve as team captain if no at-level member wishes to do so.

If more at-level players have signed up to captain than are needed for the number of teams at a given level, the at-level AVAC members who signed up to play will participate in an online vote.

This applies to select any of the following:

- the captain of the only team for a given level
- the captain of the “First Team” for a given level
- the captain of the “Second Team” for a given level
- captains of two co-equal teams for a given level

If fewer players than needed have signed up to captain, additional captains must be found from among the players.

Once selected, the captain may name a co-captain if desired. If no AVAC member is willing to serve as co-captain, a non-member may be named.

If a co-captain is desired for a team composed of two distinct groups -- men and women in Mixed Doubles, or players of two levels in Combo -- it is recommended that a captain choose a co-captain representing the other group.

CHOOSING PLAYERS

If there is only one team, all at-level AVAC members who signed up to play will be on the team.

If there are two teams, both team captains, in conjunction with the AVAC USTA Coordinator, will agree on what number of at-level AVAC members who signed up will play on each team.

For a "First Team", the number of at-level players will be set to allow the team to be competitive without using any non-member doubles players. If non-member singles players are needed on the First Team, they will be taken into account in agreeing on these numbers.

In all cases with two teams, both team captains and members who signed up to play will contact each other to sort the at-level members between the two teams, adhering to the agreed upon numbers.

Members should be aware that a First Team captain will invite those members who signed up who they believe will make the strongest team. A Second Team captain will invite any at-level member who wishes to join. When there are two co-equal teams, all at-level members who signed up will be invited to one of them, based on available space on the teams and player/captain agreement.

If the captain of any team (except a “First Team”) is not confident of being able to fill lineups, additional players can be recruited from among:

- At-level AVAC members who did not sign up
- AVAC members who are not at-level
- Non-AVAC members (preferably at-level)

Prioritization among these groups is at the discretion of the captain, in collaboration with the AVAC USTA Coordinator.

A “First Team” captain can only recruit from these groups to provide enough singles players since the team should be large enough by design.

TEAM STYLE

AVAC USTA teams are all considered to be competitive. The goal of a “competitive” team is to win enough matches to make it to playoffs -- but also to give all players the minimum 2 matches required for postseason play, with most players receiving more than the minimum matches. At-level AVAC members have priority over non-members for playing time.

NON-MEMBER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Use of players who are not members of AVAC is for the sole purpose of increasing the opportunities of AVAC members to play on teams with others of their own level. Non-AVAC members may only be used to fill requirements that cannot be met using AVAC members at the same level. Each team may have a maximum of 3 non-member players.

A captain may invite non-member for these purposes:

- To meet minimum USTA requirements for “at-level” players.
- To have enough singles players (ideally “at-level”).
- To have a large enough team to be confident of filling lineups.
- To balance men and women on mixed doubles teams.
 - someone to play with an “at-level” member (preferred)

- someone to play with a member ½ level higher/lower than the team level (allowed)

FEES AND PRIVILEGES

Each non-AVAC member will pay a fee to be determined by AVAC management. The fee is currently set at \$50. The fee will be charged to the team captain, who is then responsible to be reimbursed by the player.

Non-AVAC members may play on AVAC courts during USTA matches and up to six practices per season for a given team. Each practice must be hosted by an AVAC member. Non-members do not have access to other club services. They may not attend Drop-in tennis or other tennis socials. They may use the club beyond these limitations by paying the guest fee (or using a guest pass).

PLAYTIME

Non-AVAC members have paid to play on the team, and the captain should make every effort to put the player into enough matches to qualify for postseason play.

ELIGIBILITY TO PLAY AS A NON-AVAC MEMBER

Prior to adding non-AVAC members, the captain must first get approval from the AVAC® USTA Coordinator. The captain must provide the name and email address of the player, in addition to the purpose for adding them.

A non-member may not play on more than two AVAC teams during one calendar year.

Former AVAC members are not eligible to play as non-AVAC members within the first two years after cancelling their membership.

Failure to abide by any of the non-AVAC member provisions may result in removal of the member from the team.

EXEMPTIONS

Any extreme circumstance(s) caused by the above restrictions for the viability of a team are encouraged to be presented to AVAC USTA Coordinator for consideration of exemption to the policy by the Tennis Policy Committee and/or AVAC management.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Any player or captain who believes that an AVAC® League Policy has been violated may seek redress through the [AVAC® Tennis Policy Committee](#). The player or captain should first direct the issue to the AVAC USTA Coordinator, who will bring the issue to the committee. All grievances should be given to the committee in writing. The committee will discuss the issue either in person or online, determine a finding and communicate this finding through the coordinator, back to the person who filed the grievance.