

# HOW TO BE A TEAM CAPTAIN

The League Coordinator is the heart of any tennis league and the Team Captains are the backbone. The more Captains there are, the more teams there are and thus, league competition is enhanced. It's not difficult to be a Captain, but it takes leadership, communication and a little planning. Here's how:

## Form a Team:

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*Watch the [AATL web-site](#) for season notices, special offers, and deadlines*

- Inform your tennis pro and the Aiken Area Tennis [League Coordinator](#) that you intend to [be a team Captain](#); the League Coordinator will contact all prospective Captains to explain upcoming season guidelines, including deadlines.
- Establish your team name in [Tennis Link](#); click the Captain "Yes" box; note your assigned Team Number.
- Recruit team members and have them sign up (see [How to Join an AATL Team](#)). Be sure to recruit at least the minimum number of players by the initial registration deadline. You can continue to add players (within maximum limits) up to before the second-to-last match of the season (timing may vary – check rules for your season/league).
- Assure your player [NTRP](#) self-ratings are accurate.

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## Before the Start of Season Play:

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*Practice to rank players and find best doubles partners*

- After the registration deadline, the League Coordinator will establish match schedules (and any specific rules) for all teams. Get phone numbers of other team Captains.
- Confirm your home match court reservations.
- Contact all players on your roster:
  - Give your phone number(s) and e-mail address.
  - Inform them of practice and match schedules.
  - Collect player available/unavailable dates.
  - Determine best way to communicate with your team (call during evenings, e-mail, cell phone, etc.).

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*Give your team number only to players you want to recruit*

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*There are strict rules against NTRP self-rating abuses*

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*Scout opposing teams for weaknesses*

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- Get a pro to give your team one or more strategy clinics.
- Contact a pro or experienced Captain for advice on formulating line-ups. Rotate all players fairly.
- Make a copy of and become familiar with “The Rules of Tennis” and “Friend at Court,” as well as any season/league rules/policies (available on the [AATL rules web-page](#)).

*All players should play at least twice in the season*

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*KNOW the rules*

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## Week before Match:

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- If you have designated a Captain replacement, inform him/her of all pertinent info. Pass along blank scorecard and phone numbers for players and opposing Team Captain.
- Contact scheduled players/confirm their availability – remind them where and what time to arrive and, if you are the home team, to bring new tennis balls.
- Contact the opposing Captain three days prior to match.
  - Confirm number of players - any possible defaults?
  - Confirm directions to the home facility.
  - Exchange cell phone numbers.
- Print out a blank scorecard for that date and pencil in the names of your players (scorecard is available in [TennisLink](#) - under “*Report Drill-Down*,” click on “*Leagues Advanced Search*” then drill down to your team's schedule and click on the match number for a specific date).

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*Print two score cards, in case the other Capt'n forgets*

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*The home team brings new balls*

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*Tell team NEVER to assume that the courts aren't playable before arrival*

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*A warm-up prior to match start-time is a big help*

## At the Match:

- Have your team arrive at least a half-hour before play (rain or shine) and start warming up; have alternates available for no-shows. Check condition of courts and discuss strategy. Cordially introduce your players to the opposing team.

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*Bring copy of rules and phone #s to every match*

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*No cell phones or beepers on the court*

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- If weather is inclement, agree with opposing Captain on a make-up date (refer to league rules/policy).
- Check-in with home Captain to identify what courts are assigned for each match position.
- Finalize your first, second, and third positions in the match line-up; fill in scorecard and inform your players.
- Captains exchange scorecard /line-ups simultaneously before play begins; check the opposing team's line-up to confirm all players are registered (registered players are auto-listed by *TennisLink* at the bottom of the scorecard) and are the appropriate NTRP level; resolve late player problems, defaults, etc. (consult the rules).
- Remind players of good sportsmanship, honest line calls, and method for breaking set or match ties.
- Players should be on courts at designated match start time and warm-up for 15 minutes only.
- No coaching players during matches.
- Be alert to quickly prevent/resolve problems or grievances.

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*Don't reveal your lineup too soon*

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*Control "hot-heads" on your team*

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## After the Match:

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*File any grievance promptly as strict deadlines apply. See*

*[AATL web-site](#) for grievance info*

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- Scores are reported to both Captains, scorecards are completely filled out; both team Captains should agree on the scores and sign each other's card before leaving.
- Typically, the home team Captain enters the scores in [TennisLink](#) within 24 hours after the match is completed (you'll need your USTA member number and match number). The visiting team Captain should verify scores in *TennisLink* within 48 hours after match is completed. Errors can be corrected by the [League Coordinator](#).

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*Win or lose, have refreshments to celebrate!*

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