

Proposed Amendments to USTA Regulations

Note: Words underlined are proposed to be added. Deleted text is shown in strikethrough. References are to the 2024 *Friend at Court*, unless otherwise noted.

R1. Proposed by Constitution and Rules Committee
Allon Lifshitz, Chair

PASSED

Amend **USTA Regulation IV.C.2.** and **FAC Comment IV.C-1.** (pg. 104-105) as follows:

2. *USTA Anti-Doping Program.* The USTA is committed to ensuring fair and drug free competition. ~~Individual~~ All athletes ~~bear the ultimate responsibility for choosing for themselves to shall~~ compete fairly and drug free. Participation in USTA tournaments constitutes consent to be tested for drugs. ~~Use of banned substances and doping methods is cheating and may result in penalties, including suspension and permanent disqualification. The USTA in conjunction with the ITF has developed a program of education, testing research, penalties, and rehabilitation. The USTA Board of Directors (hereinafter "USTA Board") has adopted and supports the USTA Anti-Doping Program. Copies of this program may be obtained from the USTA and its USTA Sectional Associations.~~ All athletes shall comply with all anti-doping rules and all other policies and rules of the World Anti-Doping Agency ("WADA"); the International Tennis Integrity Agency ("ITIA"); the United States Olympic and Paralympic Movement ("USOPC"), including the USOPC National Anti-Doping Policy; and the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency ("USADA"), including the USADA Protocol for Olympic and Paralympic Movement Testing ("USADA Protocol"). All athletes shall submit to drug testing by the ITIA and/or USADA or their designees at any time and understand that the use of methods or substances prohibited by the applicable anti-doping rules make them subject to penalties including, but not limited to, disqualification, suspension, and revocation of membership. If it is determined that an athlete may have committed a doping violation, the athlete agrees to submit to the results management authority and processes of USADA, including arbitration under the USADA Protocol, or to the results management authority of the ITIA and/or USTA, if applicable or referred by USADA.

~~**FAC Comment IV.C-1:** The USTA publishes the *United States Tennis Association Anti-Doping Program*. See this book for the list of prohibited substances. The handbook is available from the Coaching Education and Sports Science Department.~~

Effective Date: Immediately

Rationale: To update the Regulations and bring it into conformity with the requirements of the governing agencies and the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC).

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R2. Proposed by Officials Committee
Clark Higgs, Chair

PASSED

Part I. Amend **USTA Regulation I.H.2.** (pg. 58) as follows:

2. *Entry form.* Before entries open, the Tournament Committee shall place the following information on its entry form and its website:

- The specific events and the eligibility requirements;
- The specific limit, if any, on the size of the draws;
- The process for selecting players;
- The locations and dates of play (including rain dates, if any);
- The sanctioning bodies;
- The entry fee;
- The draw formats and whether any consolation is mandatory;
- The time and place of the draw;
- The match format for the main draw, consolation, and doubles;
- When applicable, a statement specifying the method of seeding used;
- When applicable, a statement of the type of Match Tiebreak used in lieu of the deciding final set;
- If applicable, a statement that the Tournament Director has been authorized to serve in the dual role of Referee;
- If applicable, a statement that the Referee has not been certified by the USTA;
- A statement specifying whether Electronic Line Calling will be utilized and on how many courts;
- The entry deadline (the date by which entries must be received by the Tournament Committee);
- The mailing or electronic address where the entry form should be sent;
- Any clothing or shoe restrictions;
- The time and place of any player meeting and how to notify the tournament if a player is unable to attend;
- The ball type (brand name not required) that will be used;
- The number of balls for play and the ball-change policy;
- The type of court surface; and
- When applicable, a statement that the tournament will play Red, Orange, or Green Ball Tennis (including the specific court dimensions, ball type, and racket size allowed)

Part II. Add USTA Regulation III.C. (pg. 95) as follows:

III. CONDUCTING THE TOURNAMENT

C. Electronic Line Calling

The USTA authorizes the use of Electronic Line Calling at USTA sanctioned play except where other USTA regulations specifically prohibit its use.

1. *System types.* Electronic Line Calling may be “Review” or “Live.” Review systems require the player to challenge a call. Live systems make calls without requiring a challenge. Only accredited and eligible Electronic Line Calling systems are authorized for use in USTA sanctioned play.
2. *Accreditation.* Unless otherwise authorized by the USTA, systems must be accredited by the ITF at the Bronze, Silver, or Gold level for use in USTA sanctioned play.
3. *Eligible systems.* The USTA shall publish at usta.com a list of systems that meet the minimum requirements for use in USTA sanctioned play.
4. *Process for authorization.* The USTA shall publish at usta.com the process for authorizing eligible systems for USTA sanctioned play.
5. *Surfaces.* Systems may only be used on the court surface for which they have been accredited and determined eligible.
6. *Notification.* Before the start of a tournament utilizing Electronic Line Calling, the tournament shall notify players via the tournament homepage at usta.com of the name of the system utilized, the system instructions, the protocol for challenging, and the number of challenges allowed per set or per match.
7. *Determination of challenges.* The sanctioning authority determines the number of challenges allowed during a set or match, or may delegate that authority to the sanction holder.
8. *Cost to players.* No additional fees outside the entry fee may be charged to the player to be able to use an Electronic Line Calling system during the competition.
9. *What may be challenged.* The following may be challenged when using Electronic Line Calling Review:
 - a. When players are calling their own lines, they may challenge:
 - any call of “fault” or “out” made by their opponent; and
 - an overrule made by an Official.A request for a challenge must be made immediately.
 - b. When a Chair Umpire or a Chair Umpire and Line Umpire(s) are Responsible for Making Line Calls:
 - A player challenge of a line call or overrule shall be allowed only on either a point-ending shot or when a player stops playing the point during a rally (returns are permitted but then the player must immediately stop).
 - In doubles a player must make a challenge in such a way that either stops play or the Chair Umpire stops play. If a challenge is made to the Chair Umpire, then the Chair Umpire must first determine that the correct procedure was followed. If it was not correct or if it was late, then the Chair Umpire may determine that the opposing team was deliberately hindered, in which case the challenging team loses the point.
10. *General procedures for Electronic Line Calling review.* These procedures apply when utilizing Electronic Line Calling Review:
 - a. Players are responsible for making prompt calls in accordance with USTA regulations and The Code unless line calling responsibilities have been assumed by a Chair Umpire or by a Chair Umpire and Line Umpire(s).
 - b. The original call or overrule will always stand if the Electronic Line Calling Review is unable, for whatever reason, to make a decision on that line call or overrule.

- c. An overturned call counts as an overrule.
- d. If, and only if, in-match coaching is authorized, then a player may utilize coaching advice in determining whether to request a Challenge.
- e. When players disagree on the particular ball impact to be reviewed, an official will use all available information to determine which particular ball impact is reviewed. If the official cannot come to a conclusion, the original call stands.
- f. A request for a Challenge may be denied if a Tournament Official deems it is being used strictly as a way to delay play, there is gamesmanship involved, or the request was influenced by someone off the court when coaching is not authorized.
- g. The on-court final decision will be the outcome of the Electronic Line Calling Review and is not appealable. The Official is the final authority on all questions of fact regarding a Challenge, and the Referee is the final authority on any question of tennis law.
- h. The Referee determines if the use of the system shall be discontinued for a match.

Effective Date: Immediately

Rationale: The Officials Committee collaborated with Juniors, Adults, Wheelchair, and League Committees in proposing the opportunity to utilize an Electronic Review System. Appendix VII. of The Rules of Tennis provide that at tournaments where an Electronic Review System is used, specified procedures should be followed. The proposed changes to Regulation I.H. and what would become a new section of Regulation III. address the use of Electronic Line Calling (ELC) at USTA sanctioned play. Throughout 2024, ELC has been piloted at various event types and levels of USTA sanctioned play. These pilots have guided the development of these proposals.

The guiding principle that was followed during the development of the proposed changes was to definitively allow for the use of ELC in USTA sanctioned play and provide a basic framework of protocols and procedures for providers, players, and Officials all while allowing for flexibility to the applicable sanctioning authorities and competition teams to do what is best for their events.

While the use of ELC has become standard at the highest levels of tennis, new systems are beginning to be approved for use at events at all levels of the tennis ecosystem. Not all existing ELC protocols used at the professional level are transferrable to community competition or to some of the new systems as they dictated strict requirements for Chair Umpires and a Review Official for each match utilizing ELC. As ELC has scaled and its implementation in community tennis has become possible, the need for these new protocols and procedures are necessary.

The use of ELC will be one of the biggest innovations in the community tennis space in many years. As a governing body and as Officials, we owe the players the fairest possible playing environment possible. ELC will help us provide that fair environment as well as to improve the overall player experience.

New Definition Proposed for Glossary:

Electronic Line Calling (ELC). “Electronic Line Calling” refers to electronic systems that determine whether a given ball impact is “in” or “out.” ELC systems can either be “Review” or “Live.” Review systems require the player to challenge the call of their opponent or an official. Live systems make audible and/or visual calls without requiring a player-initiated challenge. Systems that meet the minimum requirements for use in USTA sanctioned tournaments are published at usta.com. Only eligible ELC “Review” systems are authorized for use in USTA sanctioned play.

NOTE to FAC Editors: This amendment will require re-numbering in the remainder of this section, and conforming changes as required throughout FAC (if applicable).