

## **Brookside's USTA Team Guidelines**

(Updated March 31st, 2015)

### **Background:**

Participation in USTA sponsored league tennis can be one of the most rewarding tennis experiences for Brookside Club members. It provides an opportunity to play competitively at a wide range of skill levels against neighboring tennis clubs (possibly even moving beyond one's local league to district, sectional, and national levels). In the process USTA league play provides a strong incentive to members to improve their individual skill levels. The team spirit and camaraderie arising from the practices, league matches, and post-season competition build friendships within and without the club. By providing a focal point to rally behind, USTA involvement strengthens the cohesiveness of the Club in important ways.

For all of these reasons, the Club encourages the formation throughout the year of as many USTA teams as practical.

Because of the increasing number of Brookside USTA teams and the complexities of the team formation, match play scheduling, and overall coordination process with other Club tennis activities, the Club has established the USTA Team Guidelines.

The Club recognizes that USTA team formation is dependent on individual Brookside Club members volunteering to organize and captain the teams (a significant commitment on their part). These Guidelines, therefore, are intended to facilitate the complex task of overseeing a USTA team giving the volunteer captains appropriate latitude and incentive to form and manage their teams. Although individuals who captain USTA teams may have different motivations for forming teams and different styles in managing the teams during a season, the Club expects each volunteer captain to adhere to these Guidelines.

Brookside's primary objective in forming USTA teams is to give Brookside members the opportunity to participate in the unique USTA competitive experience. It is therefore Brookside's policy to limit participation on USTA teams to Brookside members only. A secondary but important objective is to field a competitive team. For that reason, if the captain of a particular team determines his/her team does not have enough players, that captain may petition the Tennis Committee for permission to add one or more non-members to his/her team. The purpose of the petition is to oversee the non-member presence at Brookside and to facilitate a competitive balance on Brookside USTA teams.

## Brookside Club of Saratoga

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### **Rules:**

1. All teams must be approved by the Brookside Tennis Committee which will provide guidance for match and practice times for court scheduling.
2. Team captains should notify the Tennis Committee Chair of their interest to form a team prior to USTA team registration. Team captains must be Brookside members.
3. A captain may only serve as captain for two consecutive years, at the same level and league. For example: Joe may captain the 3.0 team for two years, the third year he is rated higher and instead captains the 3.5 team. Jane may captain the mixed 7.0 team, and may also captain the 3.5 team for two years, the third year some else captains the 3.5 team.
4. Team captains may decide on a) team goals and objectives, b) the number of players needed on a team, and c) who plays and those decisions must be consistent with these guidelines. Should a player have any concern over a captain's decision, that player may bring their concern to the Tennis Committee for a final decision.
5. Captains are strongly encouraged to publicize their coaching/management philosophy early in the team formation process so that there can be a clear understanding about likely playing time for a prospective team member. A team objective template attached to this document can be used to help present team philosophy.
6. Computer-rated Brookside members can always join Brookside teams at their level.
7. Beginning on April 1, 2013, every team must have a minimum of 6 at-level players.
8. If computer-rated a member player wishes to play up one level, that player must obtain team captain approval and must have won a minimum of 50% of his/her at-level matches in a preceding USTA league not more than one year prior to the league in which s/he wishes to play up. Captains are not obligated to ensure a minimum number of matches to team members who are not rated at the team's designated USTA level.
9. Self-rated members require captain approval to join a team at their level or any above level.
10. Any Brookside USTA team must have a minimum of 50% Club members. During the first two weeks of USTA team registration, only Brookside members may sign up for a team. If a captain determines that non-members are needed to complete a Brookside USTA team, he/she shall make a good faith effort to assure that each Brookside team member rated at the team's designated USTA level has an opportunity to play a minimum of three league matches during the season. Interest of members in preferentially playing singles or doubles should also be considered.

## Brookside Club of Saratoga

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11. The non-member fee for participation on a Brookside USTA team is \$50 per team, payable to the Club prior to team participation. In addition, prior to participation, the non-member must sign Brookside's Waiver. The Tennis Committee will ensure that non-members have completed these requirements prior to playing the first match in the league. This fee covers league matches and team practices. Non-members may attend one scheduled practice a week, instead of just three visits a month. All other normal Brookside guest rules apply to the non-members, including signing in as a guest for team practices. A non-member may play on a maximum of three Brookside USTA teams in a calendar year.
12. All non-members participating in Brookside USTA teams are required to follow these guidelines and sign Brookside's USTA Team Non-member Waiver and Release Form before participating in team events. Team captains are responsible for ensuring that non-member recruits follow these guidelines. The Club Manager will collect fees and forms and assist the Tennis Committee in monitoring non-member registrations.
13. Due to an anticipated shortage of court availability to members during high-activity USTA seasons, the Tennis Committee may set additional restrictions for non-member use of the Club. For example, non-member USTA team participants may be restricted from participation in practices during Club "prime time" (weekends and after 3 PM on weekdays).
14. The Tennis Committee has the responsibility for scheduling home USTA league matches and team practices in cooperation with the USTA team captains.
15. USTA team practices and matches are permitted at any time on the weekend, as long as three courts remain available for social play and tennis clinics/lessons. Practices are limited to two courts and 1.5 hours. Team practices may not be scheduled at the same time as matches. These rules may be temporarily suspended only if Tennis Committee determines exigent circumstances are present. The Club will follow USTA rules in addition to the Club guidelines noted above.
16. Teams will be allocated 2.5 hours court time for scheduled home matches including 30 minute warm up time for 3 courts for 3 doubles/2 singles-format teams; 2 courts for 3 match format teams. Brookside does not allocate pre-match court availability for the visiting team warm up. Brookside captains are responsible for notifying visiting team captains of this rule.
17. Teams are responsible for providing home match refreshments and cleaning up after themselves.
18. Club Management Staff will maintain a list of home match scheduled time and sign up the time on the court reservation board at least 30 minutes before the allocated warm-up start time.
19. No more than 5 courts will be reserved at any one time for USTA play. At the discretion of the Tennis Committee, USTA match times may be scheduled with split start times for a given team and overlapping start times for 2 teams. If 2 teams are

## Brookside Club of Saratoga

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scheduled for overlapping times, 4 hours total time will be allocated to complete both teams' matches.

20. For days when 2 or more USTA matches are scheduled back-to-back, the Club Manager will post a visible sign indicating "USTA High Court Usage Day" also indicating the hours of continuous schedule use. Members not participating in the USTA matches on these days will be asked to observe special court usage rules during these times. These members must yield any court reserved for USTA usage promptly at the designated time. Further, these members should refrain from signing up for more than one available court time during the scheduled USTA matches. That is, members may sign up as usual for recreational use of an open court, but should refrain from extending their play time or coming back to utilize a court a second time during the heavy use period.
21. Tennis instruction and drills, either formal or casual, conducted by anyone other than a Brookside designated tennis professional may not have on-court equipment (ball machines, marker cones, etc.; however a basket of balls is OK) and must be limited to scheduled team practices for which the person providing instruction is either the playing captain or an active team member.

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# Brookside Club of Saratoga

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## Brookside USTA Team Captain's Strategy

Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Captain: \_\_\_\_\_ Co-Captain: \_\_\_\_\_

Season: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Stated Team Objectives at Season Outset (choose one)

	Objectives	Implications
<b>A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Win as many matches as possible</li><li>• Make playoffs and go as far as possible</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supplement team with strong non-members</li></ul>
<b>B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Try to win, but prioritize having fun</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recruit non-members selectively</li><li>• Give priority to playing Member participants</li></ul>
<b>C</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social team</li><li>• It's always nice to win and for players to improve, but it's not the overriding goal</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attempt to recruit all Members</li><li>• Preferentially balance the number of matches played by all Members</li><li>• Recruit non-members only to fill-in minimal team requirements</li></ul>

### What should also be established and communicated to all team participants at season outset

1. Will team practices be scheduled? Are there implications for choosing match players based on attendance and/or performance at practices?
2. Will there be a recommended or mandated team uniform?
3. How will home match refreshment logistics and expenses be handled?
4. Will there be an attempt to find and maintain "good chemistry" doubles team pairings?
5. Will the captain attempt to schedule match rosters well in advance (several matches ahead or even the whole season) or generally just 1 or 2 matches ahead?
6. Will there be an attempt to designate a between-set coach (as allowed by USTA rules) at each match?
7. Will back-up players be scheduled for matches? (good idea in most all cases)
8. Is team cheering (following generally accepted courtesies, i.e. cheering for winners, not unforced errors) encouraged? Are players expected to stay and cheer on teammates after their own play is finished? Are team members not scheduled to play encouraged to attend matches to cheer?
9. Establish an email list to communicate starting strategy and all updates to the team roster.
10. Communicate match results to the team email list and Club Manager – team highlight stories are encouraged for the Club Newsletter.