



The Official Communiqué

Second Edition-Spring 2004

Training

The USTA mandates annual training clinics to acquire and retain certification(s) as an official. Three different levels of certification are available: 1) USTA Official, 2) USTA Referee, and 3) ITA Official. To acquire the referee and/or ITA certification, one must also successfully complete the USTA official training requirements.

Each year a USTA National Trainer Evaluator (NTE) is invited to Louisiana to teach a weekend clinic. This past January the New Orleans Lawn and Tennis Club (NOLTC) hosted a weekend clinic taught by NTE Lynda Hinshaw from Indiana. Forty-seven officials from across south Louisiana attended the clinic. A big thank you to Rocky Andry and the NOLTC for coordinating and hosting this event.

The LTA suggested holding the 2005 weekend training clinic in conjunction with the LTA annual meeting. Possibly conducting the full day USTA official clinic twice (on Friday and Saturday), with the ITA and referee clinics on Sunday. The 2005 LTA annual meeting will be held February 18-20, location TBD. Look for more details on this in an upcoming newsletter.

Louisiana Trainers

Louisiana has three state trainers: Jane Christensen, Aimee Johnson and Anne Burrell-Smith. If you would like to schedule a training clinic in your area, please contact Anne Burrell-Smith (anne_bs@msn.com).

Mentor Program

Our mentor program is up and running. We have 13 provisional umpires being mentored by 7 of us veterans. This program pairs provisional umpires with an experienced umpire who acts as a mentor for the first year of officiating. The goal of the program is to provide the provisional enough knowledge and experience for the promotion to sectional umpire at the end of their provisional year.

The purpose of the mentoring program is to help the new umpire with their "out in the field" education. As you know, what is discussed in the classroom and what happens at a tournament are sometimes quite different. Our job is to encourage the new umpire and watch over them as they perform the duties for the first time that are second nature to us.

With it being so early in the year, there have been only a few opportunities for us to actually mentor. One of our jobs is to help our new umpires with their work opportunities. If you know of any tournaments in your area, please contact the tournament referee and your mentoree to see if they are available to work.

I am going to send all of the mentors an evaluation form to assess their mentoree's performance. This is only an educational tool for the evaluation of their abilities.

I hope to see ya'll soon and keep up the good work!

Richie Weaver, Mentor Coordinator

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I become a line official?

To become a line official you must be a certified official and attend a line clinic. Line clinics are typically held in conjunction with a USTA Circuit event and provide actual on court line calling experience. Clinic attendees who perform well on court are often asked to work a few days of the event. If you are interested in becoming a line official, visit the USTA website (www.usta.com) and click on the Rules/Officials link.

Can a tournament schedule matches on different court surfaces?

Regulation L.4-5 states matches shall not schedule any division on more than one type of surface. However, when a tournament cannot be finished on the original surface (due to extreme weather or similar problem) the Tournament Committee may use available courts of any type.

How should a roving official handle a player who leaves the court area to find a replacement racket?

A player who leaves the court to get a replacement racket is subject to Code Violations Delay of Game under the Point Penalty System. A roving official observing such an occurrence should time the player and issue the code(s) accordingly.

When is coaching allowed?

Under USTA general regulations, coaching is allowed when play is suspended and during authorized rest periods. To help enforce this regulation during junior tournament play, players should be escorted by an official or court monitor when they leave the court for a toilet break.

College Season – by Rocky Andry

As the college tennis season is nearing an end, the Conference Tournaments and NCAA Regionals will be looking for qualified officials to work their matches. Both LSU and Tulane have made bids to host regionals and the mens' and womens' regionals are both on the same weekend, so qualified ITA officials are in demand. If you are interested in working, contact the referee for the particular school. If you are not experienced working college matches, the NCAA Regionals perhaps will give you an idea if you are interested in officiating college matches in the fall.

Beau Holton Official's Award

The Official's Committee established the following guidelines for the selection criteria of the Beau Holton Annual Award:

- The Beau Holton Official's Award will be given to one official each year. The official may be a certified umpire or referee.
- Nominees must have worked in Louisiana during the year in some capacity other than an ITA official.
- Nominees will be judged on their annual work and achievements.

Nominations for this award will be accepted from tournament directors, community associations, officials at large, the LTA, and the Officials Committee. The Officials Committee will be responsible for selecting the award recipient from the nominations.

Nominations should be sent to the Official's Committee by September 15th, 2004. Contact Anne Burrell-Smith if you would like to receive a nomination form.

New Louisiana Officials

Please welcome the following individuals who recently became certified as a USTA official or transferred to the Louisiana District:

John Bunel - Mandeville
Debbie Buxton - Lafayette
Patric DuBois – Natchitoches
Barbara Fisher - Madisonville
David Gomez – Baton Rouge
Sharon Kramer – Alexandria
Wray Logan – Baton Rouge
Madeline Murphy – Baton Rouge
Revathy Solomon – Prairieville

Chair Umpire Clinic

A chair umpire clinic will be held in Baton Rouge, May 27th at 6:30 p.m. at Independence Park. Provisional officials who would like to work the LA State Jr. Qualifying tournament and would like to receive a chair opportunity at the tournament, should plan to attend this clinic. Pre-registration is required. E-mail Anne Burrell-Smith (anne_bs@msn.com) by May 21st to register.

2004 Official's Committee

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Upcoming Junior Events

The Summer Junior season is almost upon us. If you are interested in working these tournaments this summer, now is the time to contact the referee.

- May 7 - Pelican Athletic Club – Mandeville – Referee: Barbara Fisher
- May 21 - Oak Knoll Jr. Open – Hammond – Referee: Cynthia Fauchaux
- June 2 – LA State Jr. Qualifying – Lafayette – Referee: Richie Weaver
- June 11 – ARK, LA, TEX Jr. Open – Shreveport – Referee: TBA
- June 25 – Houma Open – Houma – Referee: TBA
- July 2 – Monroe Athletic Championships – Monroe – Referee: TBA
- July 9 – Morgan City JR Open – Morgan City – Referee: TBA
- July 11 – USTA Intersectional – Shreveport – Referee: Peggy Van Norman
- July 12 – Bocage JR Open – Baton Rouge – Referee: Chris Dazet
- July 30 – Summer Sun Jr Championships – Mandeville – Referee: TBA