

Memorandum

To: NM High School Tennis Coaches
Fr: Scott Owen, NMAA High School Championships Tournament Director
Brian Bingham, Tournament Referee/Site Referee/Roving Official
Da: March 13, 2025
Re: What Coaches Should Expect from USTA Chair Umpires on the second day of the individual portion of the 2025 NMAA Championships Tournament

For the planned chairing of the final deciding matches in all categories of the individual competition of the state high school championships, the chair umpires will conduct the matches in the following way in accord with USTA best practices and procedures and within each individual umpire's training and experience.

USTA Solo Chair Umpire Procedures

1. Preparing for the match, each chair umpire will:
 - Check the sun position – moving the position of the chair if necessary;
 - Check the height of the net, and set up the singles sticks (if in use) for all singles finals;
 - Check availability of courtside supplies – chairs, water, towels, etc.;
 - Eliminate stray used balls from anywhere around the court

2. Meet the Players/Pre-match Conference
 - Umpire should be on assigned court when players arrive;
 - Check pronunciation of players' names;
 - **Conference** – at the net, near the center strap (in a subtle way, establishing that the chair umpire is in charge of the match) **Chair Umpires will explain:**
 - a) Number of balls in use for the match, and, the ball change pattern;
 - b) Players will call all lines on their side of the net;
 - c) Chair umpire will overrule any clear mistake;
 - d) Chair umpire will call everything else – service lets, foot-faults, touches, invasions, not-ups, and announce the score;
 - e) Remind the players that they will be playing every tournament match (including this final) by **The Code (2025 FAC pages 37 – 43);**
 - f) Remind the players that the USTA Point Penalty System is in effect, and, explain the “outburst” provision in effect during this tournament (reference associated memo inclusive of this subject);
 - Determine which player will call the coin toss;
 - Have the player make their call before the toss, confirm their choice, then toss coin;
 - Announce the winner of the toss and ask their choice – Serve/Receive, Side, Defer;
 - Confirm their selection, then ask opponent their choice from the remaining options;
 - Set tone of relaxed but confident control; supply players with relevant information; and ask “Are there any questions?” – **(Coaches – please encourage your players to ask questions as they are not used to playing tennis matches with a chair umpire);**

3. Time Warm-up and Introduce the match
 - **5-minute warm-up** – keep warm-up flowing with “2 minutes,” 1 minute,” gently nudging the players to prepare to play;
 - Chair Umpire will announce – “Ladies and Gentlemen, this (**age division, school size, etc.**) **final match** will be the best of three tie break sets. To the left of the chair, from (school name or place name as the coaches determine), player name. To the right of the chair, from (school name or place name as the coaches determine), player name. Player name won the toss, and chose to _____.
 - Complete announcement and call “Time” to end the warm-up. The players will walk to their respective chairs to collect themselves before walking back out onto the court. The chair umpire will announce - “Player’s name to serve”- Play!” Upon reaching the second game, “the second player’s name to serve” (and thereafter the 3rd & 4th players names for their first service games in the case of a doubles match).

4. During the Match
 - The Chair Umpires will:
 - a) **Use The Code as a match control tool, and, 2025 FAC Table #14 – the Point Penalty System presented on page 110;**
 - b) Never ignore abusive or dangerous actions;
 - c) Apply The Code and the rules of tennis with judgment and common sense;
 - d) Always consider what actions are necessary to keep the match under control;
 - e) Announce the score, observe the point loser, and start the stop-watch at the end of each point;
 - f) Let players play by The Code;
 - g) Overrule clear mistakes;
 - h) Let players play slightly out balls as if they were good;**
 - i) Keep the match moving along through timekeeping – 20 seconds between points, 90 second changeovers, 2-minute set breaks, 10-minute rest period in a split set situation between the end of the second set and the beginning of a third set;
 - j) Confirm calls on any ball hit close to (or on) the lines, or, on any important point;
 - k) Maintain a scorecard for each chaired match;
 - l) Administer time violations in accord with **2025 FAC Table #15, page 111;**
 - m) Administer Medical Time Outs and Bleeding Time Outs as & when necessary under the guidelines presented in **2025 FAC Table 13, page 98 – “Medical Timeouts, Bleeding Timeouts, and Toilet/Change of Attire Breaks.”**

5. Upon Completion of any match, no chair umpire will talk to the press unless requested by, and in the presence of, the NMAA Tournament Director or Executive Director.