

Managing a Match for the LRTA

Firstly, thank you very much for agreeing to organise a match on behalf of the LRTA. Matches are an important part of the LRTA's activities and the LRTA Executive Committee very much appreciates you agreeing to run one.

Please note throughout this document, the Blue Book means the LRTA Members Handbook, the LRTA website address is www.lrta.org.uk and the current holder of any LRTA position can be found on the website under About the LRTA/Who does what? If you cannot contact the nominated person, contact a member of the LRTA Executive Committee.

Home or Away?

Unlike most club matches, LRTA matches are nearly always "away" matches in the sense that we have no home court. However, by agreement with the host clubs, the LRTA is sometimes the "home" team in terms of responsibilities. We also hold a few "home" matches at Hardwick House which kindly allows us to use its court for this purpose. Home (H) or away (A) should be indicated in the LRTA Fixture List on the LRTA website or in the Blue Book but if you are not sure whether you are running a home or away fixture, please check with the LRTA Fixtures Secretary who will advise you.

Opposing Team Manager

If you do not know who the opposing team manager is, contact the professional at the club concerned who should be able to give you the information from the club's Fixture List and be able to provide contact details. If the opposition has no home court or no professional, a contact for the club should be available in the T&RA Annual report. If you do not have a copy of this yourself, the professional at your club should be able to help.

Match format

Some matches are always played using the same format, eg all Singles matches, all Doubles matches or a mixture of the two, off handicap or level. If you are not sure if there is any convention for the match you are managing, please check with the LRTA Fixtures Secretary. If there is no convention, the format usually depends on the number and standard of the players. In any case, the format should be agreed with the manager of the opposing team.

In these discussions, it is worth including pointers to the handicap levels that the LRTA is likely to be able to include in its team so that the opposing team is aware that, if they can't match them, handicap games may be necessary. It is also worth mentioning that their team can include as many men as they would like, the team doesn't have to be all women.

Home team manager responsibilities

The home team manager normally:

1. Ensures the court is booked appropriately.
2. Arranges for markers if required - professional markers are not necessary, but do ensure that the opposing team and the club where the match is being played will be happy if you wish to use members of the teams as amateur markers rather than the club professionals. There are no professionals at Hardwick House, so matches played there are usually marked by team members volunteering from both teams.
3. Leads the agreement re the match format (see above) with the away team manager.
4. If the away team manager has not already done so, tactfully prompts them to provide their team selection in a timely fashion (ie in sufficient time to sort out your home team). The away team manager should always be given the opportunity to nominate their team first.
5. Organises any catering required. At most courts, this means providing appropriate "home" cooking (get your team to help with this) but if the court has catering facilities, agreeing with the catering staff what is required and what the charges will be. If you are using club facilities to provide the catering yourself, please ensure that you tidy up and wash up afterwards and leave everything as you found it.

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6. Determines how many people catering is required to cover. Supporters are always welcome at LRTA matches and are equally welcome to join in any meals provided at the same cost as to competitors. Do ensure that all players are aware of this.
7. At Hardwick House, ensures match balls will be available on the day. Contact Tim Tomalin on his email address in the Blue Book.

Away team manager responsibilities

The main responsibility of the away team manager is to understand the type of team they need to assemble and to provide the home team manager with the details as soon as possible so that the home team manager has plenty of time to get together their own team. The away team manager should also provide the home team manager with numbers for lunch or any other catering being planned including any special dietary requirements.

Although it is formally the home team's responsibility to provide any catering required, if there are no professional facilities available at the host club, it will probably be very much appreciated if you offer to help in this area.

Team members

Some matches are open to any LRTA member to volunteer to play and others are restricted to team members who are invited to play by the manager. (The latter are marked with an asterisk on the LRTA website and in the Blue Book.) Even for "open" matches, it will probably be necessary for the manager to contact potential players and not to be dependent on volunteers. **Please remember that anyone representing the LRTA in a match must be a full or junior member of the LRTA**, Social members of the LRTA are not eligible to play for the LRTA. See also under Match Fees below about encouraging younger players to join match teams via the LRTA U30 Match Fee scheme. A description of the scheme can be found on the website under Fixtures/results.

Contact details for potential players are available in the Blue Book and if you wish to contact the whole membership rather than just players fairly local to the match venue, you can get an email circulation list from the Membership Secretary. Please always ask for a new email circulation list, don't rely on a previous one that you may have, so that you are sure the list is up-to-date.

From the LRTA viewpoint, lady professionals may play in matches but it **must** be agreed with the opposing team that they are happy for professionals to take part.

Please remember that if anyone under the age of 18 is going to play in your team, Child Protection issues need to be considered. You must ensure that the LRTA has written parental consent for the "child" to play and that there is an appropriate, responsible adult to accompany them. The LRTA Membership Secretary can advise whether or not there is the necessary consent in place. If not, a consent form can be downloaded by the parent or the player from the LRTA website under Fixtures/Results/Child Protection and you must ensure it is signed and given to you (or sent to the LRTA Membership Secretary) before the "child" is allowed to join the team. You need to find out who the Child Protection Officer is at the venue (the professional should know) and ensure that we meet any requirements that club may have.

If the match is at Hardwick, note that it is an unsupervised private court with no public access or professional. The Friends of Hardwick's policy is that all minors that visit the court must be accompanied by their own properly qualified chaperone: parent, legal guardian, school teacher, etc. The LRTA must make appropriate arrangements for the protection of any minors that it invites to the court and ensure that the opposing team also meets these requirements.

If we are the Home team, we are the hosts wherever the match is taking place. The convention for choosing teams for matches is that the away manager finds their team and then informs the home manager who they have chosen. The home team manager then selects their team appropriately.

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Finalising and Circulating the Match details

Players should be encouraged to be present to support their team throughout a match, but if they have time constraints, the timetable for the day's play should, as far as possible, take these into consideration.

If handicaps are relevant, these should be checked on RTO to ensure they are as accurate as possible.

Once you and the opposing team manager have agreed the members of both teams, the match format, the order and times of play, circulate the details to your team at least ten days before the match date. If you are the Home team manager and a professional is going to be marking for you, copy the match information to him/her as well so that they know when they will be expected to be on duty and can calculate any handicaps for matches if necessary. If no professional is involved, you need to calculate any handicaps yourself or use the RTO calculator: www.realtennisonline.com

Match Fees

The home club should be able to advise the charges for court/marketing fees and either they will provide them for catering or you can calculate these from your catering costs. If you are the Home team manager, you should establish these and be ready to collect the money from competitors on the day and settle up with the club where you are playing. If you are the away team manager, you should be advised of the fees required and you will probably be expected to collect these from your own team.

Match fees for professionals playing in LRTA match teams are paid by the LRTA - please pay these on the day and send in a claim to the LRTA Treasurer (contact details in the Blue Book) for reimbursement. Playing professionals do however pay for their own lunches, drinks etc.

The LRTA U30 Match Fee scheme is aimed at encouraging young players to take part in LRTA matches. To this end, the LRTA will fund the fees for two team members per match. The player needs to be below 30 years of age to qualify for one of the "free to the player" places. The payment includes the cost of any catering involved. A full description of the eligibility criteria and terms of the scheme can be found on the website under Fixtures/Results. If you are aware of any young players who would qualify for one of these places, please encourage them to be part of your team. Again, please pay the fees for such team members on the day and send in a claim to the LRTA Treasurer (contact details in the Blue Book) for reimbursement.

Lunches for any professionals who are marking are provided free of charge.

Reporting

The results of LRTA matches should be recorded on RTO as 'Social' and will normally be added by the club professional. At Hardwick, the results need to be recorded in the Results Binder and will be added by the designated Hardwick member. (This may not happen very promptly!) Also, the results of LRTA matches (including any handicaps played) should be submitted as soon as possible after the match to the LRTA Website Editor (first name against Website Editor on the LRTA website) along with a report, if at all possible, and any photos. The report can be quite simple, with just an outline of players, atmosphere and possibly a sentence or two about any particularly notable games, so anywhere between 150 and 250 words. Longer efforts are welcome if the Manager or nominated writer wants to provide more information. The information will be published on the LRTA website and will be passed on to the Newsletter Editor for possible inclusion in an LRTA Newsletter. The results will also be included in the LRTA Match Book.