

# U.S. OPEN POLICIES

*Listed below are US Open policies. These were approved by the USCTA at its February 25, 2011 Board Meeting and amended at its June 4, 2011, December 10, 2011, February 2013, June 22, 2013, November 8, 2014, June 6, 2015, December 9, 2017, April 21, 2018, September 8, 2018, and April 21, 2022 meetings.*

## **1) Tournament Notice and Closing Date for Draws**

The hosting Tournament Committee (TC) must give no less than 6 weeks notice of the tournament. The TC must close the draw no fewer than 2 and no more than 3 weeks prior to the start of the Open. Within this time frame, the TC should make all efforts to include prior tournaments that may have an impact on handicaps of players likely to enter the Open. Completed draws are to be posted 3-5 days after they are closed.

## **2) Who Monitors and Verifies Draws?**

The USCTA's Tournament Policies Committee (TPC) shall be on call for any issues that may arise and, on an as needed basis, discuss and recommend U.S. Open policies to the USCTA. This committee should have at least one amateur from each U.S. club eligible to host an Open and at least one professional. If there is not a TPC, then the USCTA's Rules & Equipment Committee shall act in its place.

The TC Chair and a TPC member shall monitor and verify the draws. There shall also be at least two additional witnesses who shall be identified as part of the tournament record. The TC Chair and TPC member cannot be playing in the tournament but can be the same person. The name of the TC Chair should be included on the posted draws.

## **3) Draw Sizes**

Singles draw limited to 16 players with top 14 automatically qualifying for the main draw. The World Ranking Points (WRP) list will be used to determine seeding and auto qualification, but its usage will be capped to the top 15 players. If fewer than 14 of the top 15 players by WRP enter the tournament, then handicap (on the date entries close) will be used to determine the remaining players who will automatically qualify. If there are more than two entries for the remaining two spots, TC shall conduct a Qualifying Tournament. Information on possible qualifying rounds (dates, format, etc.) needs to be on the Tournament posting for all to see. Doubles draws limited to 12 pairs with top 10 automatically

in. Same policy as singles applies in the event that a qualifying round is needed for the last two pairs.

Prize / appearance funds for Qualifier Tournaments are at the discretion of the TC. If there are to be any qualifier funds, they must be above and beyond the funds for the main draws.

#### **4) Marking Policy**

Players are expected to mark at least one match per tournament. If they opt out, they are deducted the club's rate for marking fees from their prize/appearance funds. Singles and doubles may not be marked from the dedans. matches are to be marked from the marker's box. An additional player (hazard caller) will call hazard chases for doubles matches and will be situated at the TC's discretion in either the grille or above court location. The location of the hazard caller must be consistent throughout the tournament and needs to be specified by the TC. The TC is encouraged to post and/or circulate a marking schedule for all players to see but overall marking policy is up to the committee to administer.

#### **5) Seeding and Inactive Handicaps**

A player without a singles result in RTO in the twelve months prior to the closing of the draw cannot be seeded but may enter the tournament. Seeds are based on World Ranking Points first and then on handicaps. An inactive singles handicap has no impact on seeding for doubles draws. If players or teams have exactly the same handicap, use the most recent head-to-head result as the tiebreaker. If no head-to-head, then look up RTO records to determine the player / team that has had the lower handicap the longest and seed that player / team higher.

#### **6) Number of Seeds and Seeding Policy**

- Seed one for every two players (or teams) for a maximum of 8 seeds (6 seeds for doubles). Place 1 through 2, at the top and bottom of the draw and seeds 3 & 4 shall be drawn to potentially play seeds 1 & 2 in the semifinal. Seeds 5, 6, 7, 8 shall be drawn to play 1, 2, 3 & 4 in the quarterfinals

#### **7) Calculation of Doubles Handicaps**

Go off the better of a player's singles or doubles handicap.

**8) What to do if a player withdraws from a doubles team after the draw is closed or posted but before play begins?**

A team that loses a player can be reformed up until 48 hours before the first match. The replacement player may not have a lower handicap than the player he is replacing. If less than 48 hours until start of play, the team cannot be reconstituted.

**9) If a reconstituted team is permitted, should seeding be redone (if needed) and (if applicable) should a new team be allowed to enter?**

If the reconstituted team affects seeding, then reseeding will be done. If a spot opens up in the doubles draw due to two players (who each lose their partners) joining up to form a new team, another team may enter the draw to fill the open slot. If a Qualifier tournament was played, the new team shall be the team who advanced the furthest, with their team handicap used as the tiebreaker, if needed. If no Qualifier tournament, then the team is awarded a walkover.

**10) What to do if a singles player withdraws after the draw is closed or posted but before play begins?**

If a player withdraws after the closing or posting of the draw and before 48 hours before the start of play, the Tournament Committee will, in the interests of balance, alter the draw using the procedure below. If less than 48 hours before the start of play, a walkover will be awarded.

If seed 1 withdraws, seed 3 moves into seed 1 position and is replaced by seed 5. The 9th best player in the draw moves into seed position 5 and is replaced by the next best entrant to the tournament (if there is one).

If seed 2 withdraws, seed 3 moves into seed 2 position and is replaced by seed 5. The 9th best player in the draw moves into seed position 5 and is replaced by the next best entrant to the tournament (if there is one).

If seed 3 or 4 withdraw, they are replaced by seed 5. The 9th best player in the draw moves into seed position 5 and is replaced by the next best entrant to the tournament (if there is one).

If seed 5-8 withdraws, the 9th best player in the draw moves into seed position 5 and is replaced by the next best entrant to the tournament (if there is one). The next best entrant is the lowest handicap player in the qualifying event not to qualify. If two players have the same handicap at #9, then the player who has had that handicap the longest shall become the ninth seed.

If a non-seeded player withdraws or if a spot opens up due to re-seeding: His place should be taken by the next best Qualifier from the Qualifying Tournament (with handicap used as a tie breaker, if needed). If no Qualifier Tournament, then a walkover will be awarded.

### **11) Who does what and who calls the shots? Who implements Open rules?**

The following people / parties are central to the Open – TC, TC Chair, Marker, Hazard Caller (doubles only), and Marker's Assistant. The TC is the organizing body for the tournament. The TC Chair acts as a tournament director and is the point person for all non-play (match) decisions. The Marker has authority and control for all play decisions once the match has started. Refer to the USCTA's policy on player conduct, marker authority, and incident reporting for more information. The Hazard Caller calls all hazard chases (as per item #4). The TC shall appoint a Marker's Assistant for the singles final. The Marker's Assistant has a front row seat in the dedans and is on call to help as needed by the Marker. One or both players may request the Marker to have a fault caller for quarterfinal, semifinal, and final matches of the singles tournament. If the Marker decides to have a fault caller for these matches, the TC shall appoint a Marker's Assistant to call faults.

### **12) What constitutes an injury and when should timeouts be granted and for how long?**

A player must ask the Marker for an injury timeout, which shall be granted at the discretion of the Marker. Only one timeout per match is permitted and it shall be for no longer than five minutes. During the timeout, the player can receive treatment. Bathroom breaks are permitted at the Marker's discretion and are not considered timeouts.

### **13) Suspension of Play**

A player can ask the Marker for play suspension due to unsafe court conditions. This shall be granted at the discretion of the Marker who can consult with TC members.

#### **14) Tennis Balls**

Balls are to be USCTA regulation size and weight. As of 2/1/11, this size and weight are as follows: the balls shall not be less than 2 7/16 inches and not more than 2 9/16 inches in diameter and they shall not be less than 2 3/8 ounces and not more than 2 5/8 ounces in weight. A minimum set of 120 balls is to be used for single court venues for singles and doubles and no new sets of balls may be introduced after the Round of 16.

Every tennis ball shall be weighed and sized prior to the tournament by both a TC member and TPC member.

#### **15) Amateur Prize Money Allocation**

In the event of amateur competitors, prize / appearance money for those players is to be reallocated back into the pool for professional contestants.

#### **16) Prize / Appearance Money Breakdown**

Prize / appearance money allocation needs to be transparent and must be communicated to all players for everyone to see. Total purse allocation shall be 65% to singles and 35% to doubles. Prize and appearance ratios are 60/40 for both singles and doubles.

As of 12/9/17, the minimum tournament purse shall be \$30,000 with the USCTA and host club splitting that by a 67/33 ratio (\$20,000 / \$10,000).

For singles, prize money shall only be awarded to players who have won a match, and to round of 16 losers who either won a round of 32 match or a qualifying match. For doubles, prize money shall be awarded to players who have won a match, and to round of 8 losers who have won either a round of 16 match or qualifying match.

A walkover is considered a win for prize money purposes.

All prize money will be distributed within sixty days of the completion of the event.

Prize and appearance monies are granted to affiliated professionals and to unaffiliated professionals who are Category 1 players (handicap 5.4 and better). Unaffiliated professionals with a handicap of 5.5 and higher are only eligible to receive prize money. Affiliated pros are those who draw a regular salary from a U.S. court tennis club or who have worked at least twenty (20) days at a U.S. court tennis club in the prior twelve (12) months.

### **Appendix A - Allocation of Singles Prize Money**

Tournament Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tournament Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Tournament Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Tournament Prize Pool: \_\_\_\_\_

(Prize Pool = 60% of Singles Purse, Appearance Pool = 40% of Singles Purse)

“Prize Points” to be distributed to Professionals in following manner:

Round of 16 Loser(s) (provided they have won a match) = 0.75 points each

Round of 8 Loser(s) = 1.5 point each

Semi-Final Loser(s) = 3 points each

Finalist = 6 points

Winner = 10 points

# \_\_\_\_\_ Losers in Round of 16 (provided a match won) multiplied by 0.75 points =

\_\_\_\_\_ (a)

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# \_\_\_\_\_ Losers in Round of 8 x 1.5 point =

\_\_\_\_\_ (b)

# \_\_\_\_\_ Losers in Semi-Finals x 3 points =

\_\_\_\_\_ (c)

Finalist (6 points) =

\_\_\_\_\_ (d)

Winner (10 points) =

\_\_\_\_\_ (e)

Total Prize Pool = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (no cents) (f)

Then, Add Items (a) to (e) inclusive = \_\_\_\_\_ Total Points (g)

Determine Prize Money “Multiplier” (no cents):

Total Prize Pool (f) divided by Total Points (g) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (h)

Allocate Prize Money According to “Multiplier” and “Prize Points”:

Round 16, each Loser (with a match won) awarded “Multiplier” (h) x 0.75 = \$

\_\_\_\_\_

Round 8, each Loser awarded (h) x 1 .5 = \$

\_\_\_\_\_

Each Semi-Final Loser awarded (h) x 3 = \$

\_\_\_\_\_

Finalist awarded (h) x 6 = \$

\_\_\_\_\_

Winner awarded (h) x 10 = \$

\_\_\_\_\_

Note: Check that Total Prize Money Distributed does NOT exceed Pool Available.

Total Money Distributed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Prize Pool \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix A - Allocation of Doubles Prize Money**

Tournament Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Tournament Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Tournament Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Tournament Prize Pool: \_\_\_\_\_

(Prize Pool = 60% of Doubles Purse, Appearance Pool = 40% of Doubles Purse)

“Prize Points” to be distributed to Professionals in following manner:



Round of 16 Loser(s) (provided they have won a match) = 0.75 points each

Round of 8 Loser(s) (provided they have won a match) = 1.5 point each

Semi-Final Loser(s) = 3 points each

Finalist = 6 points

Winner = 10 points

# \_\_\_\_ Losers in Round of 16 (provided a match won) multiplied by 0.75 points =  
\_\_\_\_ (a)

# \_\_\_\_ Losers in Round of 8 x 1.5 point =  
\_\_\_\_ (b)

# \_\_\_\_ Losers in Semi-Finals x 3 points =  
\_\_\_\_ (c)

Finalist (6 points) =  
\_\_\_\_ (d)

Winner (10 points) =  
\_\_\_\_ (e)

Total Prize Pool = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (no cents) (f)

Then, Add Items (a) to (e) inclusive = \_\_\_\_\_ Total Points (g)

Determine Prize Money "Multiplier" (no cents):

Total Prize Pool (f) divided by Total Points (g) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (h)

Allocate Prize Money According to "Multiplier" and "Prize Points":

Round 16, each Loser (with a match won) awarded "Multiplier" (h) x 0.75 = \$

\_\_\_\_\_

Round 8, each Loser (with a match won) awarded (h) x 1.5 = \$

\_\_\_\_\_

Each Semi-Final Loser awarded (h) x 3 = \$

\_\_\_\_\_

Finalist awarded (h) x 6 = \$

\_\_\_\_\_

Winner awarded (h) x 10 = \$

\_\_\_\_\_

Note: Check that Total Prize Money Distributed does NOT exceed Pool Available.

Total Money Distributed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Prize Pool \$ \_\_\_\_\_