

## Procedures for Team Leaders

Team Leaders are used in events where there are three or more Line Umpires on court at a time. The team leader is appointed by the chief umpire to manage the team and ensure that officials are at court on time and placed in an appropriate position based on their grade. A good team leader is one who knows how to work with a team to bring out the best they can. Qualities of a good team leader are; being approachable, a good communicator, and experience and knowledge of working at all levels of events.

Hopefully the below pointers will ensure that if appointed as a team leader you are prepared and ready for the task ahead. Some may not enjoy being team leader, and that is ok, if you feel that you don't want this role then speak to the chief umpire, everyone should feel relaxed and comfortable when working at events.

- Have a pencil, rubber and pen in your bag for filling out any team sheets, these should be clear and understandable for the chair umpire to read.
- Attend any meetings with the Chief Umpire where important information will be relayed. If you think there is something not covered then ask, after all it is your responsibility to ensure your team know everything they need to fulfil all requirements on court. For example: where are the nearest toilets? What channel is the radio for toilet breaks? Is there a scoreboard which someone needs to be in charge of?
- Give any instructions to your team clearly. The best team leaders are good communicators. You are the link back to the Chief Umpire and any information which needs to be relayed to your team will come from you.
- Ensure that at the start of the day and after every session you confirm what time you are meeting your team and where. Change of teams will run smoothly if everyone is on the same page. If there are issues with arriving late, speak to the team member privately and report back to the chief.
- If there is a rain delay, which with the great British weather is always possible, ensure you know where your team are and keep them updated of any not before times so that when play is ready to resume there aren't any issues with missing Line Umpires
- Know your team. Think about the matches which you are going onto, the grades and experience of your Line Umpires and how best to staff the match. For instance, if you know a line umpire is working their first professional tournament then start them on a long line to allow them to ease in. Or maybe somebody had a bad session on a base line and have lost confidence, maybe you need to change your plans to ensure a smooth match and that the official is given advice and support.
- There may be times on court where the Chair Umpire requires your help. Be ready to think fast on your feet, maybe a line umpire needs switching and you know who best to switch with. When you are on court you get a feeling of when you may need to help out, but wait for any instructions from the Chair Umpire and only act if needed.
- If the change of teams is due towards the end of a set or match ie: 6-5 try to double check with the Chair Umpire if this is ok. There may be a reason why they would ask you to wait, and as one team we want to ensure everyone works together.

- Being a few minutes early if everyone is there is always better than waiting and then being late. Work together with the opposite team to ensure things run smoothly, but remember sometimes it can't be helped that there is a late change.
- At the end of a shift confirm the meet time, give praise if deserved, and if anyone needs any support then do this privately.
- The main responsibility of a team leader is to assign the lines of the team for each match.
- Your job is to ensure the matches run smoothly so use the grades of the Line Umpires to help match where would be an appropriate line for them.
- If necessary, liaise with the Chief Umpire about any team members who you may not know to learn more about their experience to help you with line assignments.
- Try to plan at the start of the day shifts so that somebody isn't standing all day, work out which is the sunny end and sometimes even if people prefer to wear jumpers v not, you may want to keep them at opposite ends of the court.
- The teams are usually the same for each match, with no changes unless there are reserves to slot in, this is to maintain consistency.
- If there is Electronic Line Calling then ensure that your team members are familiar with the system, and what is expected of them, eg: don't react to challenges, don't be afraid of the system it is there to help us
- In some cases, due to a number of reasons, it may be necessary for the Chief Umpire to utilise a "crew" system for each court. This involves Line Umpires switching off at different times and not as a whole team. In this instance preparation and communication is key. Ensure all team members understand the system and keep in contact with the Chief Umpire whilst off court in case any changes need to be made.
- As a team leader you are not there to do any assessments, that role is for the chair umpire. However, you are there to monitor behaviour, punctuality and appearance and if there is any need to talk to a team member ensure this is also relayed back to the Chief Umpire.

In conclusion, the role of a team leader is more than just assigning lines for a match. It requires a range of skills to ensure the smooth running of the match. You are the link with the Chief Umpire and are there to ensure any important information is relayed to the teams to avoid any incidents. You are there to manage the on court team and ensure everything runs smoothly, but remember to be official, not officious.