

Tennis Défi Léman

Complete presentation and operating guide

Challenges, friendly matches, community, Ambassadors and Express Challenge

September 2026 – v5-EN – translated from the French version, which prevails

The purpose of TDL

Encourage more play, make it easier for players to meet and strengthen club life, in a competitive yet friendly spirit.

App and website

tennisdefi.ch

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Laurent Sambo and Vagram Sayadov

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Reference document

This guide explains how Tennis Défi Léman works and brings together useful information for players, Ambassadors, clubs and partners. If changes are made, the rules published in the app take precedence.

For ease of reading, the masculine form is used generically throughout this document and refers to all persons, regardless of gender.

1 Introducing Tennis Défi Léman

Tennis Défi Léman, or TDL, is a Swiss app that promotes tennis in clubs and player communities around Lake Geneva in Switzerland and France. It helps players find partners, arrange matches and move up a ranking without adding to the club's workload.

Challenges and matches organised through TDL are not officially sanctioned. Their results have no effect on official tennis federation rankings.

The project is led primarily by Laurent Sambo for the concept, network development, organisation and refereeing, and by Vagram Sayadov for software development.

Simple and accessible tennis

- Registration throughout the year from age 15.
- Challenges open to everyone and organised by playing venue.
- Friendly matches with no ranking at stake.
- Players can be found within each Challenge venue. In the Players tab, profiles can be displayed by distance, number of recent matches or recent login.
- Direct contact through WhatsApp to arrange matches.
- An online referee and local Ambassadors to support participants.
- A fully functional app available free of charge, with an optional Premium subscription offering additional features.
- A regional network

Each Challenge venue keeps its own identity and ranking. The app also connects players across the region through friendly matches and the TDL community.

2 Two ways to play

Feature	Challenge	Friendly match
Purpose	Move up the venue ranking	Play freely with no ranking at stake
Opponent	A player shown as eligible to challenge	Any available player in the network
Effect of the result	The local ranking may change	No effect on the Challenge ranking
Date and format	Agreed by both players	Agreed by both players
History	Result and statistics recorded	Result and statistics recorded
Benefit	Accessible competition and progress	Meeting players, practice or enjoyment

Key point

Challenges and friendly matches use the same organisation tools and may follow the same formats. The essential difference is their effect on the ranking.

3 How the Challenge works

Joining a ranking

Each venue has its own ranking. A player may join a limited number of Challenge venues, according to the settings in the app, and have one active Challenge at each venue. New players start at the bottom. For their first Challenge at each venue they join, they may choose an opponent in the lower half of the ranking.

Starting and playing a Challenge

1. View the ranking, then select the filter icon to display “Players you can challenge”.
2. Ideally, contact the opponent through WhatsApp before challenging them to check their availability.
3. Once the Challenge has been sent, promptly offer the opponent several dates.
4. Agree the match date and format with the opponent, then book the court.
5. Play the match in a spirit of fair play.
6. Enter the score in the app.
7. Ask the opponent to confirm the result. The ranking is then updated.

How the ranking changes

When the lower-ranked player wins, they take their opponent’s place and the opponent moves down one position. If the higher-ranked player wins, the positions remain unchanged. Absent or injured players may continue to move down as other participants progress.

Rules that keep the competition active

- Only one active Challenge per venue.
- Two players may not face each other twice in a row without each playing another opponent in between. A walkover counts as a match for this restriction.
- Players in the top 1, 3, 5 or 10, depending on the venue setting, have a special obligation to play Challenges they receive.
- The Poker Move periodically allows a player to challenge someone normally out of reach, except for the protected top positions.
- Absence or injury must be reported in the app.

To cancel a Challenge, the player sends a request directly through the app. The opponent may accept it immediately; without a response, the cancellation is automatically approved after 72 hours.

4 The friendly match

A friendly match lets players face each other without changing a Challenge ranking. It is particularly useful for meeting a new partner, playing someone registered at another venue, practising before a Challenge or simply arranging a match with nothing at stake.

The score is saved in the history and adds to the statistics and Head-to-Head record. Friendly matches are therefore a full part of TDL even though they do not change the Challenge ranking.

Challenge or friendly

Play a Challenge to move up the ranking or a friendly match to play freely. In both cases, the players agree the date and format and then arrange their match.

5 Profiles, partners, statistics, coaches and match offers

Player profile

The profile allows players to add a photo and provide their identity, any official ranking, playing style and availability status. A comments field can also be used to describe playing level, availability or any other useful information.

Finding partners

Players can be found within each Challenge venue. In the Players tab, results can be sorted by distance, number of matches played or recent login. Location data is used only in this tab to find nearby players. WhatsApp contact then makes it easy to arrange a match.

Dynamic NTRP rating

The NTRP (National Tennis Rating Program) is an international system for assessing playing level. In TDL, the rating ranges from 1.0 to 5.5. Initially set at 2.5, it changes with results and becomes more representative after about ten matches. It complements the local ranking and helps players find partners of a similar level without replacing official rankings.

Responsiveness and activity

An indicator calculated over the previous 90 days shows a player's recent activity, taking account of Challenges, match volume and the variety of opponents faced.

History and Head to Head

Results are stored in the history. Head to Head shows the matches played between two players. Full access to this data is a Premium feature.

Coaches

Coaches are identified in the app by a "Coach" badge. They can add their experience, lessons, training camps and prices to their profile, gaining visibility among TDL players who can contact them directly.

Open match offers

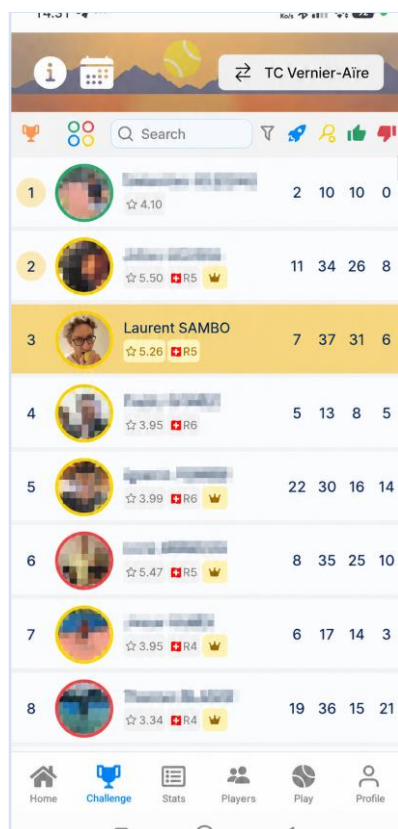
In the Play tab, Create a match allows an available player to look for one or more partners for singles or doubles without contacting several people individually. The player enters the date, time and preferred level range and may indicate that a court is already booked, including the time slot. Interested players can view the offer, respond and agree the match details directly. This feature makes spontaneous matches easier and helps players meet new partners.

Court availability at Vernier-Aïre

At TC Vernier-Aïre, TDL displays booked and available courts for the next 14 days, covering the full booking period offered by the City of Vernier. This exclusive view makes arranging matches much easier.

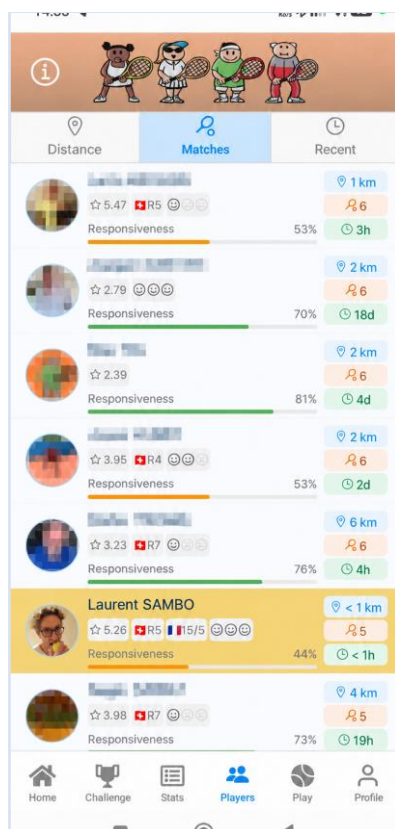
6 TDL in pictures

The app brings partner searches, match organisation and ranking tracking together in one place.



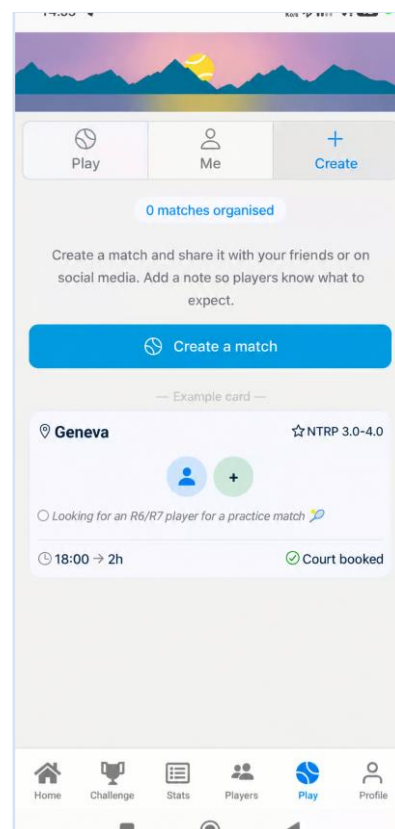
The Challenge ranking

View your Challenge venue ranking, identify eligible opponents and contact other players easily.



Player search

Find profiles by distance, number of recent matches or recent login.



The match offer

Create matches to find an available playing partner.

Finding a partner and arranging a match takes only a few moments.

Profiles and results

Each player can present their background and playing style, then view scores, statistics and match history.



Laurent SAMBO

Message

OVERVIEW

StatusActive

Responsiveness44%

Last active< 1h

Playing level5.26

Official rankingsR5 15/5

Friendly matches

COMMENTS

Hello, I am the creator of the Challenge in Vernier. Always motivated to meet new players, whatever their level. See you soon! 😊

CHALLENGE

TC Viry#1

TC Grand-Saconnex#2

TC Les Vues (club privé)#2

TC Vernier-Aire#3

Geneva Expats#97

Joined15.01.2025

BIO

GenderMale

Age55

TENNIS STYLE

ForehandRight-handed

BackhandTwo-handed

Playing styleServe-and-volley player

Preferred surfaceFast

CoachPatrizio Maucchi

Tennis idolsNick Kyrgios, John McEnroe

A complete profile

Identity, level, rankings, responsiveness, comments and playing style.

15:11

TC Vernier-Aire

Scores

Search

AllChallengesFriendly

ChallengeAugust 21TC Vernier-Aire

66

33

ChallengeAugust 20TC Vernier-Aire

36

67

ChallengeAugust 19TC Vernier-Aire

45

67

ChallengeAugust 18TC Vernier-Aire

566

7310

FriendlyAugust 18TC Vernier-Aire

6

7

ChallengeAugust 13TC Vernier-Aire

21

66

HomeChallengeStatsPlayersPlayProfile

All results

Challenge and friendly-match results.

Head to Head also shows previous meetings between players.

7 Community and communication

TDL is both an app and a community. A general WhatsApp community connects players from different venues. It complements the WhatsApp groups for each Challenge, which share local information, match offers, notable results and ranking updates.

Channel	Main purpose
TDL app	Challenges, friendlies, rankings, profiles, results, statistics and news
TDL WhatsApp community	Regional information, updates and matches between venues
Venue WhatsApp group	Local activity, reminders, results and practical arrangements
Online referee	Questions about rules, decisions and dispute handling
Ambassador	Welcome, recruitment, activity and local contact

8 Premium and development

TDL's essential features remain free. Premium provides additional information while directly supporting the development and maintenance of the app.

Plan	Price
Monthly	CHF 5 per month
Annual	CHF 40 per year

Players can subscribe to Premium directly from their profile using the dedicated button.

- Head-to-Head statistics with any player.
- Match history and current matches of other players.
- Follow a match and receive a notification when the result is confirmed.
- Direct support for technical work and the development of new features.
- “Premium” badge visible on profiles and in rankings

Ambassadors receive all Premium features free of charge while serving in their role.

9 Complete Challenge rules

Summary of the Tennis Défi Léman rules

- A mixed competition open to everyone aged 15 and over at Challenge venues around Lake Geneva in Switzerland and France.
- One active Challenge per player and per Challenge venue.
- A limited number of Challenge venues per player.
- When the challenger wins, they take their opponent's place and the opponent moves down one position.
- The ranking is updated after the result is confirmed.
- Play on any surface, indoors or outdoors.
- The challenger chooses the format (1h or 2h), books the court and provides the balls. Players whose access to the venue's courts is not included pay their share at the guest rate.
- Injuries and absences must be reported.
- Matches are self-officiated by the players.

Tennis Défi Léman rules

- 1. Spirit of play:** Every Challenge must be played in a friendly and competitive atmosphere.
- 2. Joining and leaving:** Tennis Défi Léman is mixed, open to everyone aged 15 and over, and accepts registrations throughout the year. Each player may join a limited number of Challenge venues, according to the settings in the app. Players may join or leave a venue at any time, but they lose their ranking at that venue when they leave.
- 3. New players:** New entrants start at the bottom of the ranking.
- 4. Role of the referee:** The online referee oversees the competition, answers questions and settles disputes. The referee's decisions are final and sanctions may be imposed when necessary.
- 5. Eligible Challenges:** A player may challenge a higher-ranked opponent within a limit set by the referee and calculated as a percentage of the number of participants. Players marked absent or injured are excluded from this calculation. For their first Challenge at each venue they join, players may challenge an opponent in the lower half of the ranking.
- 6. Ranking changes:** If the challenger wins, they take their opponent's place and the opponent moves down one position. If the challenged player wins, the ranking remains unchanged.
- 7. One Challenge at a time:** Each player may have only one active Challenge per Challenge venue.
- 8. Repeat-match restriction:** Two players may not face each other twice in a row without each playing another opponent in between. A walkover counts as a match.
- 9. Obligations for top players:** Players in the top group (1, 3, 5 or 10, as set by the referee) may not declare an absence or injury. They automatically lose a Challenge received if they do not play it.
- 10. Special Challenge:** A "Poker Move" is periodically made available, allowing players to challenge any higher-ranked player except those in the protected top group.
- 11. Ranking update:** The ranking is updated after both players confirm the result.
- 12. Match formats***
 - 1h format: one set to 6 games, optional no-ad scoring and a 7-point tie-break at 6-6.
 - 2h format: two sets to 6 games, optional no-ad scoring and a 7-point tie-break at 6-6. At one set all, the third set is replaced by a 10-point super tie-break.
- 13. Interrupted matches:** If a match cannot be completed because of rain, injury or the end of the booked court time, the players may resume it within 7 days or cancel it by mutual agreement.

14. **Surfaces and playing conditions:** Challenges may be played on any surface, indoors or outdoors. A match may be postponed if the court is unplayable or unsafe.

15. **Arranging Challenges:** Before sending a Challenge, the challenger is advised to contact the player through WhatsApp to check availability. Within 3 days of sending the Challenge, the challenger offers three varied time slots spread over the following two weeks. The players then agree in good faith according to their availability. If the challenged player does not respond, they lose by walkover.

16. **Bookings and equipment:** The challenger chooses the format, books the court and provides good-quality pressurised balls, preferably new. Any player whose access to the Challenge venue's courts is not included pays their share at the venue's guest rate.

17. **Injuries and absences:** Absent or injured players must indicate this in the app. They continue to move down the ranking when other players win their Challenges.

18. **Match officiating:** Each player calls the balls landing on their side of the court. In case of doubt, the point is awarded to the opponent or replayed by mutual agreement. The usual rules of tennis apply in a spirit of fair play. Coaching is allowed and spectators are welcome.

19. **Ambassadors:** Players appointed as Ambassadors by the referee represent a Challenge venue, answer participants' questions and may moderate its WhatsApp group. As promoters of Tennis Défi Léman, they receive all Premium features free of charge.

*Clarifications

- **No-ad:** at 40-40, the next point decides the game. The receiver chooses the receiving side. This rule shortens close matches.
- **Tie-break:** at 6-6, the tie-break is played to 7 points and must be won by at least 2 points.
- **Super tie-break:** at one set all, the third set is replaced by a 10-point super tie-break that must be won by at least 2 points.
- **Serving in a tie-break:** the first server serves one point, then each player serves two points in turn.

10 The role of the online referee

The online referee ensures a consistent experience across venues. The referee does not replace on-court self-officiating, but steps in when players or Ambassadors need clarification or a decision. Every player can make direct contact through WhatsApp using the button in their own profile.

- Answer questions about the rules and how the app works.
- Set the eligible challenge range and the top group required to play at each venue.
- Review cancellation requests, walkovers and disputed situations.
- Make a final decision when players cannot agree.
- Appoint and support Ambassadors.
- Provide communication materials.
- Uphold fair play and impose a proportionate sanction when necessary.

Refereeing principle

The online referee is not present at the venue and does not officiate matches. Players are responsible for self-officiating on court. The referee acts remotely to answer questions, interpret the rules and settle disputes relating to the Challenge. All decisions are final.

11 Ambassador guide

An Ambassador represents a Challenge venue. The role is shown in the app by an “Ambassador” badge on the profile. Ambassadors welcome players, sustain local activity and liaise with the online referee. They are not expected to manage everything alone: decisions on rules and sensitive cases remain the referee’s responsibility.

Responsibilities

- Welcome new players and explain the venue’s specific arrangements.
- Encourage players to complete their profile, report absences and respond to Challenges.
- Recruit new participants to keep the ranking active.
- Lead by example by playing and taking part in the community.
- Run or moderate the venue’s WhatsApp group.
- Share updates, notable results and match offers.
- Facilitate friendly matches and links with other TDL venues.
- Know the rules and consult the referee whenever a case is unclear.

Welcoming a new player

1. Welcome the player and check that they have selected the correct Challenge venue.
2. Explain the difference between a Challenge and a friendly match.
3. Explain that, for their first Challenge at each venue they join, they may choose an opponent in the lower half of the ranking, then introduce the Poker Move.
4. Advise them to contact the intended opponent through WhatsApp to check availability before sending the Challenge.
5. Introduce the local WhatsApp group and the general TDL community.
6. Invite them to complete their profile and use the comments field to indicate their playing level and availability.

Keeping communication lively but light

The Challenge venue's WhatsApp group works best with short, regular messages: a notable result, ranking progress, a close match, a new player, a rule reminder or an invitation to play. A little humour is welcome, provided that players are always treated with respect.

Ambassador benefits

Ambassadors receive Premium free of charge and may mark themselves absent when unavailable, unless they belong to the top group required to play at their Challenge venue. They receive support from the online referee and the materials needed to present, run and develop their venue.

12 Ambassador communication

Sample messages

Ambassadors can reuse and adapt these examples to welcome players and run the WhatsApp group for their Challenge venue.

Welcome and venue selection

Welcome to the Challenge! Simply check that you have joined the Challenge venue where you want to play in the app. If in doubt, contact me or the online referee.

Challenge or friendly match

A Challenge lets you move up the ranking: if you beat a higher-ranked player, you take their place. A friendly match lets you play freely without changing the ranking. In both cases, the players agree the date and format.

First Challenge and Poker Move

For your first Challenge, you may choose an opponent in the lower half of the ranking. The Poker Move will then periodically let you challenge any higher-ranked player except those in the protected top group.

Contacting an opponent before challenging them

Before sending a Challenge, contact the player directly through WhatsApp from their profile or the ranking to check availability. This avoids sending a request that cannot go ahead.

Local group and TDL community

Join the WhatsApp group for your Challenge venue to follow its news, meet new players and arrange matches. The TDL WhatsApp Community also lets you connect with players from other Challenge venues and follow activity across the network.

Completing your profile

Remember to complete your profile with a photo and useful information. You can use the comments field to indicate your playing level and availability, helping other participants get to know you and suggest suitable matches.

13 The Express Challenge

The Express Challenge is a one-off, friendly event organised independently of the TDL app and the annual Challenge ranking. It is not officially sanctioned and does not count towards official tennis federation rankings. Players gather for a day of several short matches, usually singles and doubles.

- Around 8 to 16 participants, depending on the event and facilities.
- Several matches guaranteed during the day.
- Short formats to play more opponents and partners.
- Groups made as balanced as possible.
- A meal or social gathering when conditions allow.
- Can be hosted by a club whether or not it participates in TDL.
- A format adaptable to the courts, weather and number of participants.

The format is deliberately flexible. An event may include different numbers of singles, doubles or matches. This flexibility is part of the concept.

Bringing communities together

Express Challenges allow players from different venues to meet in person and strengthen TDL's regional dimension.

14 TDL for clubs

What TDL offers

- Regular activity that encourages members to play more often.
- A simple way to integrate new members and players who know few partners.
- An accessible competition that complements tournaments and Interclub competition.
- A complementary one-off activity with the Express Challenge, organised independently of the annual ranking and adaptable to participant numbers and available courts.
- Matches between women and men of all generations, levels and communities.
- Greater visibility for coaches, lessons and training camps.
- Activity tools without a heavy administrative burden for the club.
- Potential for recruitment and retention, particularly when the Challenge encourages players to join the club.

Setting up at a venue

- Discuss the project with club or community leaders.
- Create the venue and define the ranking settings.
- Appoint a local Ambassador.
- Open a WhatsApp group for the Challenge venue if needed.
- Promote the Challenge in the club with posters, a banner or other visible materials.
- Open registration, announced by the club in an email to its members, then support players as they take their first steps in the app.
- Monitor ranking activity, run the local group and regularly recruit new players to maintain momentum.

The TDL team can visit to present the app, answer questions and support the club in setting up its Challenge venue.

15 Background, history and figures

The Vernier Challenge began in 2019 as a personal initiative by Laurent Sambo, before he joined the TC Vernier committee. Its modest initial aim was to bring together about a dozen club players in a ranking run simply through a WhatsApp group and a Google Sheets table.

After joining the TC Vernier committee, Laurent Sambo created the first Express Challenges in 2020. The concept later spread to other clubs. Since 2026, a dedicated web app developed by Baris Dereli, president of Viry TC, has made these events easier to organise and present while preserving their history.

Over the seasons, the Challenge grew into an established part of TC Vernier. Vagram Sayadov, a very active player in the competition, proposed turning the concept into an app in 2025. This collaboration gave rise to Tennis Défi Léman and opened the model to other clubs and communities.

The app also introduced friendly matches, allowing players to play freely without changing the Challenge ranking. In their first full season, 2025–2026, they accounted for 150 matches at Vernier.

Season	Challenges played	Friendly matches	Participants
2024–2025	578	—	About 210
2025–2026	416	150	About 200

With 416 Challenges and 150 friendly matches, the 2025–2026 season totalled 566 matches, averaging more than one and a half per day. Friendly matches diversified play while maintaining particularly strong activity at Vernier.

Of the Challenges, 95 were decided by a super tie-break, nearly one in four. This figure reflects the large number of close matches played to the very end.

16 Contacts and useful links

Resource	Details
App and website	https://tennisdefi.ch
Email	info@tennisdefi.ch
Phone and WhatsApp	+41 79 220 55 23
YouTube channel	https://www.youtube.com/@tennisdefi/shorts

Tennis Défi Léman is an evolving project. Features and venue-specific settings may be adapted by the TDL team and the online referee.



TDL brings together Challenge venues in Switzerland and France. Clubs, playing sites and communities contribute to an open and welcoming regional network.

Current venues include:

- TC Vernier-Aïre • TC Perly-Certoux • TC Grand-Saconnex • TC Viry • TC Confignon
- Tennis Maisonnex • TC Onex • TC Bernex • TC Satigny • TC Pregny-Chambésy • GHC/Global Fund Tennis
- TC Bussigny • Tennis Country Club • Tennis Vessy • TC Versoix • TC Trois-Chêne • Geneva Expats
- Tennis Cologny • CERN Tennis Challenge • TC Carouge • TC Les Vues

A network set to keep growing around Lake Geneva and beyond.