



**2025 Championship Year Adult Play Regulations
Published August 2024**

ADVANCING, TRI LEVEL, 55 & OVER MIXED, AND 65 & OVER LEAGUES

GENERAL

- 1.01 These USTA Phoenix League Rules are approved and adopted by the USTA Phoenix Region and may be amended periodically.
- 1.02 These rules are intended to supplement the USTA National League Regulations and the USTA Southwest Section League Regulations for the applicable championship year and are adopted as allowed by said regulations. These regulations are not designed to be the sole or exclusive source of league regulations.

LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION

- 2.01 **Scheduling.** The local league coordinator shall establish the method and deadline for team registration. The Local League Coordinator may allow a team to register after the established deadline, at his/her discretion.
- 2.02 **Fees.** A league registration fee shall be established and approved by USTA Southwest Board of Directors. League registration fees may increase periodically.
- 2.03 **Refunds.** Refunds on league registration fees will only be provided for medical reasons with appropriate documentation provided to the Local League Coordinator AND only if the player has not played in a league match.
- 2.04 **Team Withdrawal.** If a team withdraws from a league after the team registration deadline; or does not meet the deadline for either the minimum number of players registered or an at-level percentage requirement, all registered players forfeit their entry fees. Further penalties may apply.
- 2.05 **Deadline.** The player registration deadline shall be designated by the League Coordinator. Players may not register for any team after the last regularly scheduled league match or just before any playoff match. Teams that do not meet the minimum player deadline or the at level requirements are subject to removal from the league. Rostered players on those deleted teams forfeit registration fees paid.
- 2.06 **Rosters.** Tri-Level teams may have up to 15 players on roster. All other leagues may have up to 22 players on roster. Teams participating in straight level leagues must meet 60% at level NTRP requirements. Exception may be granted by League Coordinator.
- 2.07 **Flighting.** A local league may be split into more than one flight. The distribution of teams may be random or geographically based.

ADVANCING CAPTAINS' DUTIES

- 3.01 **Regulations.** All captains and co-captains must read, understand, and stay up-to-date with all regulations that govern USTA leagues. This includes: USTA Phoenix regulations, USTA Southwest Section league regulations, USTA National league regulations, and Friend at Court (including “The Code.”)
- 3.02 **Line up.** The captain, or a designee (“acting captain,”) shall be present for each match to exchange line ups and perform captain’s duties accordance with National League Regulation 2.01C(5). Teams must play the majority of the individual matches for all league team matches. If both teams present a line up that would result in fewer than the majority of individual matches being played, each team must re-do their line up to ensure that the majority of courts are played. i.e.: in a 4-court format (1 singles & 3 doubles): team A defaults the singles court and Team B defaults doubles court #3. This would result in only 2 courts out of 4 being played. BOTH teams must re-do their line up to ensure at least 3 courts are played. Line ups shall be exchanged once all players have arrived. When staggered start times are designated, and the combination of unknown and/or known defaults result in the majority of the matches not being played, the League Coordinator may mandate an individual match (or matches) be played to make the match valid and avoid a total team default. **Also See Section 4.08 Defaults and Late Players.**
- 3.03 **Conduct.** Captains must provide a welcoming environment for visiting players. The Code in “Friend at Court” shall be followed by all. Teammates, spectators, and captains shall not volunteer advice regarding line calls, scoring, or on the conduct players. The home host Captains (or acting captains) are responsible for home facility spectator conduct. Violators are subject to grievance and/or penalties.
- 3.04 **Scores.** Winning captain shall promptly enter scores into tennislinc within 24 hours following the match start time. The opposing captain may also enter scores. The scores may be confirmed or disputed. Any dispute must be made in writing to the Local League Coordinator within 48 hours of the initial entry of the scores in accordance with National League Regulation 1.04C(2). Individual recipients of defaulted individual matches may not be changed after 48 hours of the initial entry of the scores.

MATCHES

- 4.01 **Home Courts.** Each team shall designate a facility for all scheduled home matches. Team Captains must have permission to play home matches at the designated facility. Home teams may use a reasonable alternative facility for a home match if necessary.
- 4.02 **Court Fees.** The home team shall pay any court fee and any guest fee for visiting players.
- 4.03 **Balls.** The home team shall provide an un-opened pressurized can of USTA approved yellow tennis balls for each court.
- 4.04 **Start Times.** The preferred match start time for weekday evening matches is between 7pm and 8pm. Friday evening matches may begin as early as 6:30pm. Home team captains may change start times if permitted by these regulations and the hosting facility. All match start times must be updated 2 or more weeks in advance, unless otherwise agreed to by both captains.
- 4.05 **Staggered Matches.**
- A. If a facility cannot make all required courts available at the same time, staggered match start times may be used. Monday through Thursday evenings: (1) No individual match shall be scheduled prior to 6pm or later than 9pm, unless both captains agree otherwise. (2) No more than two individual matches for a 4 or 5 court league and one individual match for a 3 court league shall be scheduled prior to 7pm or later than 8pm, unless both captains agree otherwise.

- B. In the event of staggered matches, the visiting captain shall have the option of designating which lines (i.e.: #1 singles, #2 doubles) play at which staggered match start times. The visiting captains shall notify the home captain, in writing 48 hours or more in advance of the first start time. If this notice is not given at least 48 hours in advance, the home captain make such designations.

4.06 Timed Matches

- A. It is the Home Captain's responsibility to confirm the amount of time that is allotted for a team match. Some facilities limit court time during the day and have hard closing time in the evenings. The Home Captain must inform the visiting captain prior to line-up exchange how much time has been allotted for the match to be played.
- B. If the facility closes at a predetermined time or if a match has a "hard stop," *either captain* may declare to use timed match rules.
- C. Timed match rules must be declared at time-of or prior-to line up exchange, (before warm-up.) Either captain may elect to use timed match rules for any or all courts in a team match if facility has a hard closing time. If timed match rules are utilized for a team match with staggered start time, then the earlier courts' hard finish time shall be half-way point between first courts' start time and the facility's hard closing time UNLESS otherwise agreed to by both team captains or acting captains. For example: first courts begin at 6pm and the facility closes at 9:30, the hard finish time for the first courts shall be 7:45pm with the 15 minute warning at 7:30pm (giving 1 hour and 45 minutes to complete 6pm matches.) The 2nd start time matches shall start at 7:45 (if not earlier) and hard finish at 9:30pm with 15 minute warning at 9:15pm (giving 1 hour and 45 minutes to complete 7:45pm matches.)
- D. If neither captain elects to use timed match rules, the visiting players will travel to finish incomplete matches if any. (Retirements are permitted.)
- E. If home captain (or designee) fails to inform visiting captain of closing time and timed match rules are not used, then the visiting team will choose the facility location to complete any incomplete matches.
- F. Timed Match Rules: "warning time" shall be 15 minutes prior to hard closing time.
- G. Once the "warning time" has been reached the following shall apply:
 - 1) If the match is complete, the scores shall be reported normally.
 - 2) If the first set has not been completed, the match shall be suspended and rescheduled.
 - 3) If a third set 10 point tie-break has already begun, complete the tie-break.
 - 4) If the second set has not been completed, complete any game or tie-break in which the first point has already been played, then:
 - a. If the second set is tied, play a 7 point tie-break for the set.
 - b. If a team is ahead by two games or more, declare that team the winner of the second set.
 - c. If a team is ahead by one game, play one additional game, then:
 - i. If a team is ahead by two games or more, declare that team the winner of the second set.
 - ii. If the second set score is tied, play a 7-point tie break for the set.
 - iii. Upon completion of the second set, should the set score be tied, play a third set 10-point tie-break.
- H. Should the match time expire, and the match remains incomplete under these rules, the match will be considered suspended and rescheduled.

- I. Scoring for any match completed under these “Timed Match” rules shall be entered on the score card with “Timed Match” designation. Only the actual games played shall be entered.
 - J. Any second set determined by a 7-point tie-break shall be entered with the tie-break counting as one game.
 - K. A third set determined by a 10-point tie-break shall be entered as 1-0 in favor of the winning team/player.
 - L. A second set awarded by virtue of being ahead by two games or more shall be entered with the actual game score
- 4.07 **Warm Up.** Warm up is limited to ten minutes, including all practice serves. Warm up begins at match start time and lasts for no more than 10 minutes including serves. Players who arrive 10 to 15 minutes late forfeit a warmup. Line Up exchange shall not be done if either team is missing players. Line Up must be exchanged no later than 15 minutes after designated match time. A two-minute break may be taken after the second set.
- 4.08. **Late Players and Unknown Default.** Each individual court is entitled to a 15-minute grace period after the scheduled match time before a default may be declared. If an individual default is declared at or prior to match start time, then the defaulted match shall not be played; matches played shall stand regardless of start time or a previous default agreement. If an individual default is declared after lineups have been exchanged and no other individual matches have begun play (for that same start time,) a new lineup shall be exchanged. Defaults are to be listed on the lowest numbered court. “Penalties for lateness” as defined in **Friend at Court** beginning on page 110 are NOT applicable in local un-officiated matches. All USTA league matches throughout flight playoffs are un-officiated. Only District, Sectional, and National Championship matches are officiated. IF both teams have the minimum number of players available to play, but the combination of individual defaults by the two teams would result in the majority of individual matches not being played, the teams must re-do and re-exchange their line-up to best fill as many courts as possible to ensure the majority (not half) of the courts are played and the match is valid. This shall be the first step before beginning any matches at all – even staggered start matches. Players may not refuse to play singles in such a situation.
- 4.09 **Coaching.** Coaching is not permitted for any league match.
- 4.10 **Ringing Cell Phone.** A ringing cell phone is a deliberate hindrance; if an opponent’s cell phone rings during a point, the player may immediately stop and claim the point. A player may not return the ball, lose the point, and then claim a hindrance.
- 4.11 **Total Team Default. (TTD)** Should a team not play the minimum number of courts as defined by USTA National Regulation 2.03I-2.03L, in any local league match, the Local League Coordinator may impose penalties on captains or players. Further, the Local League Coordinator may file a grievance (pursuant to the procedures set forth in USTA National Regulation §§ 3.00) against the captain and the players of the team defaulting. The SW Section League Grievance Committee may impose suspension points against any party to the team default.
- A. **TTD Notification.** A captain from either or both teams must notify the League Coordinator in the event of a TTD before entering scores for a team default. TTD occurs when 2 out of 3 positions, 2 out of 4 positions, or 3 out of 5 positions are not played (retirements count.) The League Coordinator may require the team match to be played.
 - B. **Multiple Round Robins or Incomplete Round Robins.** If a full team default occurs in a complete round robin (all teams played the defaulting team during that round), only the scores from the complete round robin with the full team default will be removed from the standings if

necessary. If all teams with a mathematical possibility of winning the league have played the defaulting team, those matches shall stand. If a full team default occurs in an incomplete round robin, scores will be reversed in the incomplete round robin for all teams that played the defaulting team in that round. Scores will be reversed for all that team's other opponents in the first completed round robin. (USTA National League Regulations 2.03I-2.03L)

SUSPENDED AND RESCHEDULED MATCHES

- 5.01 **Home "Host" Facilities.** All team captains must reserve courts in advance for league matches.
- 5.02 **Inclement weather/court issues.** A match may be cancelled and rescheduled due to inclement weather or if a facility unexpectedly closes or courts become unavailable. If a match is started and then interrupted by rain, teams shall, if allowed by the facility, wait up to one hour to determine if courts become playable. Teams may agree to reschedule the match. Any captain or individual player may determine a court surface is unsafe for play. Should a team match be suspended due to weather or a facility issue:
- A. Completed matches shall stand as played.
 - B. Incomplete matches shall be rescheduled and resume with the same players at the exact set score, game score, point score, service and receiving sides, and rotation order as when it was suspended.
 - C. An individual match not started will have a new line up exchanged.

Excessive heat is expected. We ask and expect players to be understanding regarding the effects of heat during the hottest months of the year. However, heat and excessive heat is expected. A player who is vulnerable to the weather conditions shall not participate in those matches. Captains must have enough players on their roster to fill all courts throughout the season, eliminating or minimizing defaults.

- 5.03 **Rescheduling.** A captain may request that an opposing captain agree to postpone and/or reschedule an entire match for any reason. The opposing captain has the right to accept or reject the request. Rescheduling is considered a courtesy and captains are under no obligation to reschedule a match. This rule is intended for every scenario and/or reason the request is made. A Local League Coordinator may not reschedule an originally scheduled and published match without both captains' consent unless otherwise explicitly authorized by these Local League Rules. The Local League Coordinator may mandate the reschedule of a match at his/her discretion for public safety reasons or conflicting schedules for advancing teams.
- 5.04 **Reschedule Deadlines.** All rained out, cancelled, or suspended matches shall be rescheduled in tennislink within one week of the originally scheduled match date. The rescheduled match shall be played by the last match deadline determined by the Local League Coordinator. It is the responsibility of both captains to agree upon reschedule date(s) and then communicate the details via email to the League staff. A match is not deemed to be officially rescheduled until this has occurred and is verified by scheduling staff. Failure to convey this information to the Local League Coordinator within 7 days of original match date will result in the LLC setting a date, time, and location for the rescheduled match.

DETERMINATION OF SEASON WINNERS

- 6.01 **Scheduling and Playoffs**
- A. A single flight league in which the teams compete in one full round robin plus a partial round robin OR two or more round robins: the first placed team upon completion of the regular season

shall be declared the season winner. In the event of a tie in a league that does not use points per position, the tie shall be broken using the criteria set forth in USTA National League Regulation 2.03H. In a points per position league, the tie break procedure shall be:

1. Most points earned
2. Head-to-Head
3. Fewest Sets Lost
4. Fewest Games Lost
5. Game Winning Percentage
6. Winner of 1st Doubles Court (head-to-head)

B. Flights

1. A single flight league with 11 or fewer teams in which the teams have competed in a single round robin, upon completion of the round robin, the first place team shall play the second place team in a playoff to determine the session winner of the local league.
2. A single flight league with 12 or more teams whether using un-flighted random matches or a complete round robin, upon completion of the local league the 1st and 4th place and the teams finishing in 2nd and 3rd place shall play. Those winners shall play each other to determine the season winner.

C. For a league in which there is more than one flight, the teams finishing in 1st place shall play each other in a playoff.

D. The Local League Coordinator shall schedule dates for playoff matches with reasonable notice provided to all Captains. These dates may be rescheduled by the League Coordinator if necessitated by end-of-session makeup matches or inclement weather.

E. The highest seed for a playoff match has the option to provide balls and host the playoff match or may defer to the opposing team. In a league with more than one flight with varying number of matches the highest seed is determined by using 1. Team match winning percentage, if tied 2. Individual match winning percentage, if tied 3. Lowest individual sets lost percentage, if tied 4. Lowest individual games lost percentage, if tied 5. Coin Flip.

6.02 Player Eligibility for Traditional Advancing Teams.

- A. **Rating Types C, M, T.** Computer rated (C,) Mixed Exclusive (M,) and Tournament (T) players must play in at least two regular season matches to be eligible to participate in Playoffs or District Championships. One default may count towards this two-match requirement.
- B. **Rating Types S, A.** Self-rated (S) and Computer Rated Appeal rated (A) players must play in at least 3 matches to participate in Playoffs or District Championships. No defaults count towards this three-match requirement.
- C. **Early Start Leagues** (begin play prior to the publishing of year end ratings) A player with a "C," or "M," rating who participates in an early start league and is "bumped up" one level at year end (without being designated as "clearly above level,") may continue to play on the early start team at the previous lower level throughout the early start season, but not in Flight Playoffs, District Championships, Sectional Championships, or beyond.) A player who receives notice of "Clearly Above Level" will immediately have their NTRP level adjusted up and will only be permitted to

play at the new higher level from that point forward. Clearly Above Level notices are sent out to those players within the first week of December each year.

- 1.) Players with Computer ratings during local league play who are moved up at year-end ratings (YERs) but granted an automatic NTRP Appeal down to their previous NTRP level may progress to championship level competition below National Championships based on the eligibility requirements for Computer Rated (C) players. All other "A" rated players are subject to the eligibility requirements of the Southwest Section Regulations for advancement to championship level competition below National Championships.
- 2) Players with Computer ratings (C) during local league play whose "C" rating expires after local play and do not generate a Year End Rating (YER) prior to championship level competition below National Championships are required to self-rate and are subject to the eligibility requirements of the Southwest Sectional Regulations for Computer rated "C" players as long as they do not reach the "clearly above level" rating and become disqualified.

D. **Seasons.** There are two different advancing seasons offered: 1) early start fall and second 2) spring. Only matches played on the same age, level, and league team (team number) within that season will count for eligibility purposes of players on advancing teams. Matches played during the fall early start season **DO NOT** count for eligibility purposes for spring teams. Likewise, matches played during the spring season do not count for players on advancing fall teams.

E. A player who is on two advancing teams at the same age and level in two different leagues (i.e.: 18+ 3.5 women's daytime and 18+ 3.5 women's nighttime,) may advance to the next level of play for any team for which he/she is eligible, if otherwise qualified. Such a player may play for either (not both) teams in the next level of playoff. A player may not switch playing for one to another within the same championship.

6.03 **Player Eligibility for Invitational Leagues.** Players on Tri Level, 65 & Over Adult, and 55 & Over Mixed league teams must play in at least 2 matches, regardless of rating type (one default received may count,) to advance to a District, Sectional, or National Invitational.

DETERMINATION OF LEAGUE WINNER - DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIPS

7.01 In leagues with an early start fall season and a spring season, the winning team of each season shall play each other in a District Championship to determine the team that will advance to the Sectional Championship. The location and date shall be set by the Local League Coordinator. Player eligibility is subject to Rule 6.02 and/or 6.03. Rescheduling of the District Championship after initial publication is subject to the rules herein.

7.02 If the same team wins both the fall and spring league (same age AND level) there shall be no District Championship. In that event, the captain will choose which team shall advance. If the two teams have two different captains and they do not agree as to the team that shall advance, the team with the most qualified players eligible to advance shall be the advancing team. If the two winning teams at the same age and level have at least 51% of the same players- the two winning teams shall be considered "the same team."