



Western NC USTA 2025 Local League Regulations

Western NC USTA Local League Regulations are subject to the governing bodies of the United States Tennis Association, Southern Tennis Association, North Carolina Tennis Association, and the local Western NC CTA (Mountain League CTA). The local League Coordinator(s), in conjunction with the North Carolina Director of Adult League Tennis, have the authority to interpret the Western NC USTA League Regulations.

1.0 GENERAL

USTA League programs are team competitions for men and women with NTRP levels of 2.0 to 5.5. Winning local teams advance to the NC State Championships when applicable. Winners of the NC State Championships advance to the Southern Sectional Championships when applicable). Spring Adult, Mixed Doubles, and Southern Combo Leagues are organized into four age divisions: 18 & Over, 40 & Over, 55 & Over, and 65 & Over. The NCTA Singles League features three age divisions: 18 & Over, 40 & Over, and 55 & Over, and Southern Tri-Level League is offered in Western NC in two age divisions: 18 & Over and 55 & Over.

- A. **USTA Membership:** All USTA league team players must be current members of the USTA. Renewals are not allowed during the local league season. If a team progresses to a championship, players are required to have current USTA memberships through the championship.
- B. **Local League Definition** A local league must consist of at least two (2) teams at a specific level of competition. Participation in a local league or qualifying event is required to advance to a state championship, except for divisions or age groups that are allowed to advance directly to the state championships. Each NTRP level in a local league will use a round-robin format, ensuring that each team competes against every other team at least once. If an additional round cannot be played in full, extra matches may be scheduled randomly to ensure a complete season. When the number of teams makes a full round-robin impractical, a partial round-robin format or multiple flights may be used, meaning not all teams will face each other. If teams do not play the same opponents the same number of times, a local playoff will decide the league champion.
- C. **Age Requirement:** All players must be 18 years or older. Players must reach the minimum age requirement for their respective league (18, 40, 55, or 65 & Over) on or before December 31 of the calendar year in which they play their first match. For example, a player turning 40 in October is eligible to participate in the 40 & Over division during the spring or summer, even if they are still 39 at the time. IMPORTANT EXCEPTION - Players in the 18 & over division must be 18 years old *prior to registration*.
- D. **Player agreement:** All players participating in the USTA League, as a condition of said participation, agree to abide and be bound by the USTA Constitution and Bylaws; the USTA LEAGUE REGULATIONS; the FRIEND AT COURT (The USTA Handbook of Tennis Rules and Regulations which includes THE CODE); and the standards of good conduct, fair play, and good sportsmanship.
- E. **Waiver of Claims:** Players participating in the USTA League acknowledge the risks associated with playing competitive tennis, accept those risks voluntarily, and in consideration of their acceptance in the USTA League Program, assume all risks for bodily injury, waive all claims for injury and property damage and release and hold harmless the USTA and the host facility, their officials, employees and

agents with respect to any injury or loss caused by negligence or otherwise to the fullest extent permitted by law.

- F. **League Fee:** The local league fee is \$27 per player and is paid on TennisLink when registering. The fee includes a \$6 NC USTA head tax, a \$3.15 TennisLink user fee, and a \$17.85 local league fee.
- G. **TennisLink:** TennisLink will be used to register teams online, view schedules, report scores, and view results and standings. The TennisLink \$3.15 user fee is non-refundable for all registrations. **All players must be registered on TennisLink prior to playing their first match. If a non-registered player participates in a match, that match will be ruled a default.**

2.0 NTRP RATINGS

The National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) is the official system of rating levels for USTA leagues. Players without a valid NTRP rating, or who never received an NTRP rating are required to self-rate per NTRP guidelines shown on TennisLink. Mixed Exclusive (M) ratings are valid for future Mixed Doubles play. Players who receive a Mixed Exclusive rating are required to self-rate when signing up for any league other than Mixed Doubles.

- A. **NTRP LEVEL PLAYED** A player may compete at their current NTRP level or one level higher ('play up' 0.5) but cannot play below their current NTRP rating. For example, a player with a 3.5 rating is eligible to play in the 3.5 or 4.0 divisions but cannot participate in the 4.5 or 3.0 divisions. **Exceptions:** The Southern Combo Doubles league uses a combined NTRP level that allows players to compete with partners and opponents that may have more than 0.5 NTRP point difference in rating.
- B. **SOUTHERN COMBO DOUBLES NTRP** Players are not required to have a minimum NTRP rating, but there is a maximum allowable rating. In Combo Doubles, the combined NTRP ratings of a doubles pair cannot exceed the team's designated level. Players may play UP to any level combo team but players may NOT play down below stated level below

Combo Combined Level	Highest Rating a Player May Have
5.0	2.5
5.5	3.0
6.5	3.5
7.5	4.0
8.5	5.0
9.5	5.5
10.5	6.0

- C. **9.0 TEAMS** (55 & over only) may consist of 4.0's, 4.5's and 5.0's. A 4.5 and 5.0 may pair with a 4.0, or two 4.5's may play together. No pairs may be more than 1.0 point apart in rating and their combined ratings may not exceed 9.0 on any court. The 5.0's may play on any of the three courts. There is no limit to how many 5.0's may be on the roster of a 9.0 team. 9.0 level teams are exempt from the 40% Rule for NTRP for two-team leagues.
- D. **10.0 MIXED DOUBLES** Teams may consist of players with NTRP levels of 4.5's, 5.0's and 5.5's. The combined NTRP rating levels of partners may not exceed 10.0 on any court and no pairs may be more than 1.0 point apart in rating. 10.0 level teams are exempt from the 40% Rule for NTRP for two-team leagues.
- E. **PROMOTED PLAYERS** participating in the Adult Division who are promoted/disqualified due to NTRP dynamic disqualification will be immediately required to participate at their new NTRP level in all USTA League Programs unless excepted under state regulations.

1. A promoted player during local league play may request moving to another team providing a team is available and time permits. If that team is full, the promoted player may request a waiver regarding the number of players on a roster. The NC Director of Adult League Tennis must approve this waiver.
2. Teams losing a player to NTRP promotion may be provided an exception to allow for adding a player to their roster if registration has closed and/or the team had the maximum number of players on the roster. The player may not be self-rated.
3. For all leagues, if a player is already registered for a team and the player self-rates (as required) to register for another league, and receives a higher rating, they may continue to play at the lower rating for the team on which they previously registered.

F. **LEAGUES IMPACTING NTRP YEAR-END RATING** Matches played in these leagues may be used in the calculation of NTRP ratings as follows:

USTA LEAGUE	Results used to calculate NTRP rating?
Spring Adult League	Yes, except 18 & over 5.5 and 40 & over 2.5, 5.0
Mixed Doubles League	Only when a player does not play USTA Spring Adult or Southern Tri-Level AND does not have a previous year-end computer (C) rating that is still valid Not used for 55 & over and 65 & over
NCTA Singles	No
Southern Tri-Level	Yes
Southern Combo Doubles	No
USTA Sanctioned NTRP Tournaments	Yes

G. **NTRP GRIEVANCES Important: The Local League Coordinator does not handle NTRP grievances.** NTRP grievances should be forwarded to the State League Coordinator. **IMPORTANT:** Players who omit information regarding a player's tennis history may **SUBJECT** the player, the captain and/or others who condoned inaccurate self-rating to sanctions and/or disqualification.

3.0 FACILITY SCHEDULING AND CANCELLATION

- A. **HOME & AWAY BALANCE** Players and facilities should be aware that multiple teams in certain flight levels that play on the same day and time may be subject to limited courts at their facility. Teams may or may not have equal home/away matches due to scheduling issues. **Teams and facilities are required to plan arrangements for the use of optional courts or other facilities for more equitable home/away matches if the home facility is unavailable.**
- B. **CANCELLATION OF COURT REQUIREMENT** Teams are **required** to give proper notice to facilities of your cancellation of a scheduled match. It is noted that inclement weather does not fall under this cancellation regulation. Proper Notice is defined as and includes ALL OF THE FOLLOWING: eight (8) hours in advance, a phone call and email notifying the facility of said cancellation, and receipt of confirmation from the facility. In the event a team does not give proper notification of cancellation of a match reservation, a facility manager/director/owner may request a grievance be filed against a team or captain by the LLC or Assistant LLC with the WNC USTA Grievance Committee.

4.0 USTA WESTERN NC LOCAL LEAGUES

A. **LOCAL LEAGUES** shall consist of a minimum of two (2) teams at a specific level of competition.

USTA League	Age Group	NTRP Levels	Local Format
Spring Adult	18 & Over	2.5*, 5.0, 5.5 3.0 - 4.5	1 Singles/2 Doubles 2 Singles/3 Doubles
	40 & Over	2.5 (W), 3.0 - 5.0	3 Doubles**
	55 & Over	3.0 - 4.0, 9.0	3 Doubles
	65 & Over	3.0 - 4.0	3 Doubles
Mixed Doubles	18 & Over	2.5 - 4.5, 10.0	3 Doubles
	40 & Over, 55 & Over	3.0 - 4.5	
	65 & Over	3.0 - 4.0	
Southern Tri-Level	18 & Over	3.5 / 3.0 / 2.5 (W) 4.0 / 3.5 / 3.0 4.5 / 4.0 / 3.5 5.0 / 4.5 / 4.0	3 Doubles
	55 & Over	4.0 / 3.5 / 3.0 4.5 / 4.0 / 3.5	
NCTA Singles	18 & Over	2.5 - 5.0	3 Singles
	40 & Over	3.0 - 4.5	
	55 & Over	3.0 - 4.0	
Southern Combo Doubles	18 & Over	2.5 (W), 5.5, 6.5, 7.5, 8.5, 9.5, 10.5	3 Doubles
	40 & Over	5.5, 6.5, 7.5, 8.5, 9.5	
	55 & Over	6.5, 7.5, 8.5	
	65 & Over	6.5, 7.5	

***2.5 Men will be offered at State only if 4+ local areas have teams**

****State championship format for Spring Adult 40 & Over is 1 singles/4 doubles for 3.0, 3.5, & 4.0**

B. **TEAM REGISTRATION DEADLINES** All teams must be registered with the minimum required players on TennisLink by the deadlines outlined below to participate in local play. **Teams with no local play** - Refer to the section on **Teams With No Local Play** for additional information.

USTA LOCAL LEAGUES	Initial Roster Deadline
Spring Adult 18 & Over	Feb 28
Spring Adult 40 & Over	Feb 28
Spring Adult 55 & Over	Feb 28
Spring Adult 65 & Over	Feb 28
Mixed Doubles League	May 14
Southern Tri-Level	May 14
NCTA Singles	June 8
Southern Combo Doubles 5.0, 6.5, 8.5	July 30
Southern Combo Doubles 5.5, 7.5, 9.5	July 30

- C. **LAST DAY TO ADD PLAYERS** Players can be added to a team roster at any point during the regular season, however, players must have played in the minimum number of regular season matches required to advance to any local playoff or State Championship. **Exception: Teams with no local competition must have their roster complete by the deadline to add a team advancing to the State Championship.**

5.0 TEAM CREATION

- A. **ROSTER NUMBER REQUIREMENTS** for each league:

USTA League	Minimum Number	Maximum Number
Spring Adult 18 & Over (3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5)	8	15
Spring Adult 18 & Over (2.5, 5.0, 5.5)	5	15
Spring Adult 40 & Over (3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5)	9	17
Spring Adult 40 & Over (2.5, 5.0)	6	15
Spring Adult League 55 & Over (ALL) and 65 & Over (ALL)	6	15
Mixed Doubles League (ALL)	6*	15
NCTA Singles (ALL)	3	9
Southern Tri-Level (ALL)	6*	15
Southern Combo Doubles (ALL)	6*	15
*The 6 players must be able to combine to form 3 eligible doubles lines		

B. TEAM COMPOSITION RULES

1. **40% NTRP Rule** If a level of USTA League Adult 18 & over, 40 & over, or 55 & over consists of only two teams in a level of play, each team must maintain its roster with at least 40 percent of its players at the designated NTRP level of play. This rule does not apply to the Adult 55 & over 9.0 league. Teams that advance directly to a State Championship OR are participating in a qualifying event are required to maintain their rosters with at least 40% of players at the designated NTRP level of play. Leagues (and levels) that utilize combined ratings, for example, Mixed Doubles or Adult League 55 & Over 9.0, and Southern Tri-Level League teams are excluded.
 2. **Residency** Teams with no local play in Western NC (both direct advance or those participating in a qualifying event) must maintain their roster on TennisLink with a majority of players (greater than 50%) from within the Western NC league area. For example, a roster of 15 players must have a minimum of 8 players residing within the league boundaries.
- C. **TEAM NAMES** All USTA and social league teams will be titled in the computer system using the following format: (1st) WNC (for area), (2nd) first initial of captain's name and last name, (3rd) the home facility in parenthesis. Example: Joe Jones' team playing out of Asheville Racquet Club South would be WNCJ Jones (ARCS).
- D. **PLAYING ON MULTIPLE TEAMS** Players may compete on more than one team except if the teams are on the same level, in the same age division, AND in the same local league. However, no scheduling provisions will be made for these players in local league or state championships or beyond.

6.0 ADVANCING TO LOCAL AND STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS (Playoffs)

- A. **WINNERS** For flights with Full Round Robins, the League Champion will be determined by the team with the best record. In the event of ties in the flight championship, the ties will be broken as follows:
- (1st) winner of the most individual matches
 - (2nd) head-to-head winner
 - (3rd) loser of the fewest number of sets
 - (4th) loser of the fewest number of games
 - (5th) highest percentage (%) of games won vs. games played
 - (6th) method TBD.
- B. **FULL TEAM DEFAULTS & STANDINGS**
1. **Teams may not benefit from a full team default.**
 2. **ONE Team Default:** Standings will be evaluated at the end of the season to see if the full team default influenced the final standings. If the final standings were affected, all the matches of the defaulting team will be removed from the standings (only the affected round, if more than one round robin), and the final standing will be recalculated. The final standings will stand if neither team in contention receives a full team default. If the teams in contention have an unequal number of matches due to the full team default, winners will be decided by the following tiebreak procedure: (1) least number of TEAM LOSSES, (2) highest percentage of individual matches won versus individual matches played, (3) Head-to-Head winner, or (4) coin toss. The defaulting team may be subject to a grievance.
 3. **TWO Team Defaults:** If a team defaults two full team matches, all their matches played or to be played will be null and void. Matches played will count for player NTRP ratings and player advancement purposes but will not be used to determine the final standings. **A grievance may be filed. Teams with 2 team defaults will not be eligible for advancement.**
- C. **LOCAL PLAYOFFS** In local league flights where teams do not play an equal number of matches against every other team, a playoff will determine the local champion. In flights that complete a full round-robin schedule with additional matches to extend the season, the top two teams will advance to a single-elimination playoff. If an NTRP level has too many teams for a full round-robin, the teams will be divided into two or more flights, and the winners of each flight will compete in a single-elimination playoff to decide the champion. The following procedures will apply to all WNC Local League flight playoffs:
- a. **Format, Scoring, and Rules** Matches will use the same match format, scoring, and rules used during the regular season unless altered by the LLC.
 - b. **Location** Playoffs will be scheduled at a neutral site by the LLC unless both teams agree to play at one team's home facility (if available). Facility costs will be covered by the MLCTA.
 - c. **Player Requirements** All players in the playoff match must be current USTA members and listed on the original roster on TennisLink. All players in the playoff match must have played the minimum number of matches required to be eligible for the state championship prior to the local championship playoff.
 - d. **Balls** Both teams will bring USTA approved balls to the match, the winning team will keep the unopened can of balls
 - e. **Scorecard Exchange** shall follow the same guidelines as used during the regular season.
 - f. **Inclement Weather** In the event of inclement weather and the playoff is postponed following the exchange of lineups, only the lineups for courts that have begun play (first

service attempt) will stand. Any other court, including defaulted courts and courts in warm-up only, may be changed.

- g. **Incomplete Match** In the event of inclement weather that prevents the completion of the playoff match before the end of the local season and an alternate facility is unavailable, the winner of each individual court will be determined by the total number of games won. Incomplete games will not be included in the total. Should the number of games won by each team in an individual match be equal, the winner will be determined by coin toss.
- h. **Unplayed Playoff** Should inclement weather or other circumstances prevent the playoffs from occurring, the local winner will be determined by regular season play as follows:
 - (1st) head-to-head winner
 - (2nd) winner of the most individual matches
 - (3rd) loser of the fewest number of sets
 - (4th) loser of the fewest number of games
 - (5th) highest percentage (%) of games won vs. games played
 - (6th) method TBD by LLC.

- D. **QUALIFYING EVENTS** If a team is the only team in a flight, but is not eligible for Direct Advance, they may participate in a qualifying event to meet the requirements for advancement to the State Championship. Teams that are participating in qualifying events must have the minimum number of players registered on TennisLink no later than their league's Initial Roster Deadline. An exception may be made if a team needs to be added to provide competition for a single state team.
- E. **WILDCARDS** Wildcards will be offered, if needed, to local leagues. Wildcards for the year are drawn in January by the state office and the order of selection for each flight's wildcards is posted on the NC Tennis website for the USTA league year. If a winning team and the second-place team from their area are both unable to attend the state championships, the State League Coordinator will contact the local league coordinators to confirm a wildcard team is available to accept the invitation. Teams should be aware of state championship dates and decide at the start of the season if they are able to attend with the required number of players (if they win, or are offered 2nd place attendance, or receive a wildcard invitation).
- F. **PLAYER ELIGIBILITY - MINIMUM REQUIRED MATCHES** Players must play in a minimum number of matches to be eligible to advance to the State Championships (players on teams advancing directly to the State Championships are exempt from the following):

USTA LEAGUE	Ages	Minimum Required Matches Played	# of defaults that may count as a match played
Spring Adult	18+, 40+, 55+ <i>Except those in Adult - Other</i>	2	1
Spring Adult - Other	18+ 2.5 (Men) and 5.5 40+ 2.5 (Women) and 5.0 65+	1	1
Mixed Doubles League	18+, 40+	2	1
Mixed Doubles League	55+, 65+	1	1
NCTA Singles	ALL	1	1
Southern Tri-Level	ALL	1	1
Southern Combo Doubles	ALL	1	1

- G. **TEAMS WITH NO LOCAL PLAY** If a team is the only local team in a division and wishes to attend a State Championship they must participate in a qualifying event unless they are eligible for Direct Advance as indicated below.

USTA LEAGUE	Direct Advance Eligible (no qualifying event required)
Spring Adult League	18 & over 2.5 Men 18 & over 5.5 40 & over 2.5W, 5.0 All 65 & over teams
Mixed Doubles League	All 55 & over AND 65 & over teams
NCTA Singles	All Levels
Southern Tri-Level	All levels
Southern Combo Doubles	18 & over 2.5, 5.5, 9.5, 10.5 40 & over 5.5, 9.5 All 55 & over AND 65 & over teams

1. **Deadline to Add a Team with No Local Play:** Teams must be added to TennisLink with the minimum number of registered players required to form a team by the initial roster deadline for the league.
2. **Roster Finalization Deadline:** Additional players may be added to the TennisLink roster until the deadline below. After that, no changes may be made to the TennisLink roster.

USTA LEAGUE	Deadline to add a team with no local play to the State Championship (with ROSTER Complete)
Spring Adult League	April 15
Mixed Doubles League	July 15
Southern Tri-Level	August 15
NCTA Singles	August 15
Southern Combo Doubles 5.0, 6.5, 8.5	September 15
Southern Combo Doubles 5.5, 7.5, 9.5	September 15

3. **Qualifying Event Deadline:** Players must be qualified by the State reporting deadline for the league. The LLC will work to coordinate a qualifying event date before the deadline to add a team shown above. Teams needing to qualify may choose to play their qualifying event after this deadline, however, no additional players can be added to the roster and no refunds can be made for players who fail to qualify.

7.0 MATCH PLAY

- A. **REGULATIONS** Match play is governed by USTA League Regulations, Southern Tennis Association Regulations, North Carolina Tennis Association Regulations, "The Code" and the Western NC Local League Regulations.
- B. **CAPTAINS PRESENT** Each team must have a captain or acting captain present at every match. In the event of rescheduled matches where individual player(s) are playing a scheduled make-up match for their respective line only, and the match scorecards have already been exchanged

between the captains, these lines may be played without a captain or acting captain present at the match.

- C. **RESCHEDULING MATCHES (not due to inclement weather or championship conflict)** If BOTH captains agree in advance to reschedule a match they may do so if the match is completed, and scores are entered in TennisLink **BEFORE OR BY THE ORIGINAL MATCH DATE**. Captains are responsible for canceling the originally scheduled courts and for reserving courts for the rescheduled time. Any matches played after the original match date (unless due to inclement weather or championship conflict) will be scored as double defaults. IT IS HEREBY NOTED that in matches not affected by inclement weather issues or championship conflicts, captains DO NOT have to agree to reschedule individual lines or matches ahead of the scheduled match date.
- D. **STAGGERED MATCH FORMAT** A staggered match may be scheduled by the Local League Coordinator if all courts are not available at the same time. Staggered matches will have the following format:

5 court matches: Lines #1 and #2 singles and Line #1 doubles play first, then when court(s) become available, the #2 doubles and #3 doubles play.

3 court matches: (3 doubles format) Line #1 doubles and #2 doubles play first, then line #3 doubles when a court becomes available. (Note - 18 & Over 2.5 & 5.0 format) Line #1 singles and #1 doubles play first, then line #2 doubles when a court becomes available.

The entire team must be present before an individual match may begin, EVEN IN STAGGERED MATCHES. The only exception allowed would be mutual joint agreement by both team captains 24 hours in advance in written email or text form allowing the following formats: 5 court matches would allow #2 and #3 doubles lines to arrive one (1) hour later; 3 court matches would allow #3 line to arrive one (1) hour later.

- F. **MATCH SCHEDULES - TRAVEL DISTANCE** Travel distances for teams in the Western NC league may be up to approximately 75 miles, depending on the participating teams in the flight. Captains in flights with team facilities more than 50 miles from each other should report to the league coordinator the status of their team's ability to drive to away matches. Coordinator will check with captains in flights with more than 50 miles to drive for matches and may offer the teams the following options:

Option (1): In flights with a minimum of six (6) teams in the flight, the league coordinator may choose to divide the flight into two sections if the number of teams allows for equitable distribution of teams. However, each section must contain the minimum of three (3) teams to be a valid section. Flights with less than six (6) teams may be offered Option 2 below. Section One shall consist of teams located in Rutherford, Polk, Henderson and Transylvania Counties and Section Two shall consist of teams located in Buncombe, Haywood, and McDowell Counties. If Option 1 is used, a playoff between the champions of each section will determine the flight championship.

Option (2): Captains who have matches scheduled more than 50 miles from each team facility during the week may reschedule said matches to a weekend date of mutual agreement prior to the original match date or to a weekend date of mutual agreement up to two weeks after the original match. Said captains may also agree to play said match at a neutral location if desired. Said neutral location will be obtained and reserved by the captains.

- G. **LINE DEFAULTS** Defaults will be "from the bottom up", defaulting to the lowest positions first. The chart below shows which courts are to be defaulted first in the different match types.

Match Format	Courts to be Defaulted First
2 Singles, 3 Doubles	#2 Singles or #3 Doubles
1 Singles, 2 Doubles	#1 Singles or #2 Doubles
3 Doubles	#3 Doubles

1. **A team must be able to field enough courts to win the match** (field 3 courts for a 5-court match: field 2 courts for a 3-court match). If a team fails to do so, the entire match (all courts) is deemed defaulted.
2. 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 matches not being played (valid team match), the teams must follow the procedure below:
 - a. The first course of action would be for both captains to agree on what individual matches, based on the number of players present, or to be present, can be played to constitute a valid team match. Once that is determined, both captains will re-exchange scorecards.
 - b. If both captains cannot come to an agreement on what lines will be played to constitute a valid team match, based on the number of players present, or to be present, then the following individual matches will be assigned in sequential order to be played:

Format	Required Matches in Sequential Order	Minimum # of Players Required for EACH TEAM in Valid Team Match
2 Singles, 3 Doubles	#1 and #2 Singles, and #1 Doubles (priority); #2 Doubles if enough players present	4
1 Singles, 2 Doubles	#1 Singles and #1 Doubles	3
3 Doubles	#1 and #2 Doubles	4

3. If these procedures are not followed and the resulting scorecard shows an invalid team match, both teams will be charged a full team default.
4. If a team shows up without the minimum number of players required for the team match based on the number of players present, or to be present, it will be a full team default in favor of the opponents. Please refer to the National Regulations on team default procedures.

H. MATCH BALLS & HOME COURT

1. **Balls** The home team will supply new balls, labeled USTA approved.
2. **Court Surface** If a home team has several court surfaces for play, the home and visiting captain MUST AGREE IN ADVANCE of the start of the match on the court surfaces to be used. The home captain must notify the visiting captain, prior to the exchange of lineup, which court surfaces are available, and a mutual decision will be made prior to the exchange of scorecards for each line to be played on which court surface. **If indoor courts are used as part of the regularly scheduled courts for a match regardless of weather, it is the**

responsibility of the home team to pay for the indoor courts. The home captain should notify the visiting captain in writing, one week in advance of the match, which positions will be played indoors.

3. **Court changes made by facility** IT IS NOTED that facilities, at their discretion, may change the location of matches (for example, dual facilities may move a match from one location to the other to provide available courts). Notification of change of location should be made at least eight (8) hours ahead of the scheduled match(es) time. IT IS FURTHER NOTED that facilities, at their discretion, may move matches from clay courts to hard courts or vice versa, as needed.
 4. **Hard Courts for 55+ and 65+** For age divisions 55 and 65 & over, if a match is moved to hard courts due to facility demand, teams may choose to use an alternate site, or reschedule within two weeks of the originally scheduled match (within the league season). The reschedule option applies only to matches moved by the facility.
 5. **Court lines** The use of tennis-related blended lines is permissible on courts used for local league matches. The use of other lines for another sport, such as Pickleball, is not permitted for local league matches.
- I. **ORDER OF STRENGTH** Teams are not required to field players in leagues with a single NTRP (straight or combined) in order of strength. Only in Southern Tri-Level, where the three lines are different NTRP levels, is the match played in order of strength. Southern Tri-Level players must play on the appropriate line for their NTRP.
 - J. **MATCH SCORES** Captains should print and use a TennisLink scorecard for recording scores at USTA league matches. The match point will be awarded to the team winning the most positions within the match.
 1. **When a line finishes** Players should immediately report the results of their match to their captains.
 2. **Confirmation** After completion of the team match, the captains should confirm the player names and scores with each other and sign each other's scorecard to avoid disputed player or score reporting.
 3. **Entering Scores** Winning captains should enter scores in the TennisLink system **within 48 hours** after the completion of the match. If lines are played individually, scores should be entered when all lines are completed (within 48 hours of completion of the last line). Losing captains should check the entry of scores and confirm the match in TennisLink. *Note* - if scores are not posted/confirmed within 48 hours, the Local League Coordinator may determine a league winner, based on the information reported.
 4. **Name changes and score changes** Any disputes and notifications of errors must be made known immediately via email to the Local League Coordinator, copying the opposing team's captain. Changes will only be made for true errors agreed upon by all parties that impact a player's rating. Players' names entered for forfeited lines may not be changed after 48 hours.
 5. **Final league match of the season** score must be entered **within 24 hours** of that match's completion and confirmed.
 - K. **MATCH FORMAT** Unless otherwise approved by the Local League Coordinator, all lines will play as the best 2-out-of-3 sets, with a tiebreak to 10 points in lieu of the third set.
 - L. **TIEBREAKS** All tiebreakers played will use the Coman format where players shall change ends after the first point and thereafter after every four points. 1st and 2nd set tie-breaks will follow the Coman format and are the first team to 7 points, win by 2. In lieu of the 3rd set, a first team to 10 points, win by 2 points, Coman tie-break will be played.

- M. **COACHING / SPECTATORS** No coaching is allowed. Spectators may not aid in line calls or in determining the correct score.
- N. **BREAKS** There will be a two (2) minute break between sets. A restroom break is permissible at any time, but preferably should take place on an odd game changeover, or between sets.
- O. **CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES** Cell phones are not permitted to be turned on during play. As per 2016 Friend at Court, the USTA Handbook of Tennis Rules & Regulations, The Code, page 40, item 36 states: "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." There is no penalty stated for a vibrating phone.
- P. **SCORECARD EXCHANGE**
1. **Prior to Match:** Captain or acting captain, should print out a scorecard for use at the match. Captains or acting captains should print scorecards for matches from their USTA TennisLink program.
 2. **On Court Exchange:** Scorecards are to be exchanged no later than the scheduled match time. Captains should mutually agree on the lineup at the time of exchange (scorecards are exchanged and filled in at the same time by the captains) and court assignments for each line of the match should be agreed upon before players are assigned to courts. Once the scorecard is exchanged, NO PLAYERS may be changed on the card unless due to injury or sudden illness during the warm-up. It is suggested that captains always bring two (2) copies of the scorecard to the match to be used in the event the opposing captain does not bring a printed scorecard.
 3. **Player not on site** At the scheduled match time, if a player is not on site, the captains have 3 options to proceed with the scorecard exchange:
 - Option 1: Wait until the missing player is on-site and ready to play (prior to the 15-minute default time). At the default time, if the player is still not on site and ready to play, the missing player and their opponent(s) would be moved to a defaultable court (see chart above), and play would begin. OR
 - Option 2: Captains can agree to exchange scorecards and begin play with the lineups as-is. Default rules will apply (See National Reg. 2.03 K and Q&A). OR
 - Option 3: Substitute a missing player with an eligible player that is on-site and ready to play but is not listed on the original scorecard. Substitutions must be made prior to the 15-minute default time and can only be exchanged for the missing player in the original lineup.
 4. **Confirmation/Signing of Scorecard** After completion of the team match, the captains should confirm the player names and scores with each other and sign each other's scorecard to avoid disputed player or score reporting.
 5. **Individual Line Scorecard Exchange:** If all lines are not played on the same day and time, the scorecard (players' names) for each line will be exchanged at the start of the individual line match. Communication to establish the date, time, and location of the line match should be done in writing (email or text) and agreed to by both teams. Disclosure of players' names prior to the individual line match start time is not required or recommended. However, if in good faith players' names are exchanged in advance and a player is not on site, substitutions may be made following Player not on Site, Option 3, as noted above, with a player(s) who is available to play and was not already designated to play on another line.

Q. **INCLEMENT WEATHER** is defined as rain, snow, sleet, severe storms, extreme heat (defined as a heat index of 100 degrees or greater), or extreme cold (defined as 20 degrees or lower) that may cause the courts to be unplayable.

1. **Communication** It is the responsibility of the home team captain to **TELEPHONE (not email or text)** the opposing captain when there is an inclement weather issue. If telephone contact is not made between the home and opposing team captains, **both teams must show up at the match site ready to play. Matches should not be called off until both captains are certain and agree that the courts will be unplayable at match time.**
2. **Defaults reinstated if play has not started** If teams are present at the match site, scorecards are exchanged and the scheduled match is then completely rained out (play has not started on any court), any defaults on the scorecard are reinstated, and may be made up.
3. **Defaults after play has started** If one line of the match has started play (defined as first service attempt) and the match is interrupted due to inclement weather, all defaults stand and cannot be made up.
4. **Decision to postpone:** Teams may postpone a match the day of the match if both captains agree that the weather predicted is going to prevent play. If a date, time, and location have been determined for a team match (or individual match line) rescheduled due to inclement weather or another allowable circumstance, i.e., State Championship conflict, the match can only be suspended again due to inclement weather. Any team that cannot make the rescheduled match time will default any affected courts.

R. **MAKE-UP MATCHES**

1. **Matches canceled due to inclement weather BEFORE any individual matches started:** Captains may mutually agree to either of the following ways to play the match:
 - (a) Set one make-up date for the whole match. If the original match never began, a player who was not on the original scorecard may be substituted into the lineup.
 - (b) Arrange a location for each line/court without exchanging player names. Captains may exchange the line that will play, (for example: #1 singles, or #2 doubles), but will not exchange player names, they will be exchanged at the date, time, and location of the rescheduled match as outlined in Individual Line Scorecard Exchange in the section on Scorecard Exchange.
2. **Once the Match has started:** If it begins raining once a team match is underway (defined as any match line started, first service attempt) and either captain feels that conditions merit stopping play, then the match should be stopped. Players should remain on site for thirty (30) minutes to confirm the match cannot be restarted due to weather conditions. If conditions allow, the match should be resumed from the point, game, and set score existing when the match was stopped. The players must remain the same on each line for the completion of the match. No substitutions of players may be made. If, due to inclement weather, the match will not be completed as started, for any court that has started play (defined as first service attempt), the lineups will stand. For any court that did not start play (still in warm-ups), teams may substitute players if the substitutions are not listed on the original scorecard.
3. **Timeframe for Make-up** Incomplete or postponed matches must be completed within 14 days or the end of the season, whichever comes first.
4. **Setting the Make-up Date** Within four (4) days of the postponed match, the two captains need to determine a mutually agreeable time within the reschedule window. As soon as possible, the home captain should provide a minimum of two make-up date options based on the home facility availability.

5. **Captains can't agree on make-up date** If an agreement on when to play the make-up can not be reached, the match date will be set for the last Friday in the make-up window (that is before the season ends) at the original match time. If the home courts are not available on that Friday, captains are required to notify the local league coordinator who will assign a different location. If the assigned match is not completed, the match will be entered as a default for both teams.
 6. **End of season matches** - If an inclement weather/rainout occurs at the end of the season (the last two (2) scheduled matches of the league season), the reschedule rule for completion of all the match lines is changed to one week AND before the end of the season with notification of reschedule agreement due to the coordinator within two (2) days.
- S. **INDOOR COURTS** If indoor courts are available at the home facility or within a 20 minute drive of the home facility, and are available within 30 minutes of the original match time, teams are encouraged to play the match to avoid rescheduling and ensure a timely completion of the season. It is recommended, but not required, that both teams share the cost of indoor court rentals. Captains and teams may also opt to cover the full cost without assistance from the opposing team. If one team is willing to pay for indoor courts to avoid a reschedule due to inclement weather, both teams are required to play the match as scheduled unless hazardous road conditions make travel unsafe. In such cases, the match may be rescheduled per the inclement weather rules.
- T. **CHAMPIONSHIP AND LOCAL TOURNAMENT CONFLICTS**
1. **Number of Players Affected** Approval to reschedule match lines will be granted only if one-third or more of the total team roster is competing in or working at an approved event that conflicts with the scheduled match date. For example, a team with 15 players on its roster may reschedule if 5 or more players are participating in an approved event. Similarly, a team with 9 players on its roster may reschedule if 3 or more players are involved.
 2. **Number of Lines That May be Rescheduled** The number of lines eligible for rescheduling cannot exceed the number of players affected. For instance, if a team scheduled for a match with 3 singles lines has 3 players participating in an approved event, they may reschedule the entire match. whereas, a team playing a match with 3 doubles lines which has 3 players participating in an approved event, may only reschedule up to 2 of the 3 doubles lines.
 3. **Approved Championships Events:** all League Championships at either the North Carolina State, Southern Section or National Levels
 4. **Approved Western NC USTA Tournament Events:** the Asheville Open, Banana Open or Apple Open
 5. **Reschedule Guidelines**
 - Affected lines must be rescheduled within 14 days of the original match date or before the end of the season, whichever comes first.
 - The captain of the team with the conflict must notify the opposing team captain and LLC of the conflict no later than 1 week before the scheduled match
 - Both captains must collaborate to reschedule the affected lines within the specified time frame.
- U. **HOLIDAY SCHEDULE CONSIDERATIONS** While we strive to limit scheduling matches on holidays, certain factors, such as court availability and season length, may sometimes necessitate it. Teams slated for matches on Mother's Day, Father's Day, Easter, Memorial Day, July 4th, or Labor Day are encouraged to play on the designated date or, if possible, before it. To prevent defaults, captains can also reschedule matches or individual lines under inclement weather makeup rules, ensuring the makeup match falls within the league season dates. In case of a conflict, the captain of the team with the scheduling issue must promptly inform the opposing team captain in writing (via email or text) at least one week before the scheduled match. For any major holiday not explicitly mentioned,

if it significantly impacts a team, captains have a two-week window from the official season start date to contact the Local League Coordinator. This communication allows them to request the inclusion of the holiday to avoid defaults.

8.0 REFUND POLICY

All players requesting a refund of their USTA local league registration fee need to fill out and submit the "Player Refund Request" form located on the WNC website. Refunds are only considered for registration fees (minus the TennisLink fee). USTA Membership fees are non-refundable.

There will be no refunds given due to cancellation or suspension of League or Championship play due to acts of God, war, government regulation or order, pandemic (including, but not limited to, COVID-19), terrorism, natural disaster, or any other emergency beyond USTA NC's control, foreseeable or unforeseeable, which makes it illegal or impossible to offer or continue any USTA Adult League Tennis programming.

- A. **League with Local League Play:** Refund requests must be made before the team's first scheduled match. Requests must be made in writing through the online request form. The TennisLink fee is non-refundable. The Local League Coordinator will hold all requests and submit one list to the State League Coordinator by the refund deadline. One check will be sent to the LLC or CTA, who will issue individual checks to the players. It may take 6-8 weeks or longer after the request is made for checks to be received. Any team dropping out of a league after the **Initial Roster Deadline for that league** will forfeit any registration fees paid and a grievance may be filed.
- B. **Teams/players with No Local Play:** Refund requests for players or teams with no local play (which either require qualifying or are Direct Advance) must be made to the Local League Coordinator prior to the Deadline to Add a Team to the State Championship or the Qualifying Event date, whichever occurs first. Requests must be made in writing. The TennisLink fee is non-refundable. The Local League Coordinator will hold all requests and submit one list to the State League Coordinator by the refund deadline. One check will be sent to the LLC or CTA, who will issue individual checks to the players. **Exception:** If there is no competition at the State level, Direct Advance players will be eligible for a refund.
- C. **Championship Refunds:** Refund requests for registration fees to any USTA North Carolina State Championship must be made before 11:59 PM the night before the start of the State Championship. No refunds will be considered after that time.

9.0 GRIEVANCES

Procedures for filing a grievance are outlined in the 2025 USTA League Tennis Regulations. The Western NC USTA League Tennis Grievance Committee and the Grievance Appeal Committee members are selected from the following: (1) Western NC Adult League Committee, board members of the Mountain League CTA and at large members of the Western North Carolina applicable USTA Leagues as selected by the Local League Coordinators. Additional committee members can be selected as needed by the Local League Coordinators.

2025 WNC Grievance Committee: Kathy Wrenn (chair), Alex Diez, Kirk Brownfield .

2025 WNC Grievance Appeal Committee: Mindy Nelson (chair), Terrell West, Judy Eubanks.

Western NC Grievances may be filed by a captain, co-captain, or the local league coordinator. Grievance filings require a one hundred dollars (\$100) filing fee (cash or check only – checks should be written to Mountain League CTA) which is refunded if points are assessed (no filing fee is required for an NTRP Grievance).

Last revised Jan 17, 2025 , Approved by the State 1/23/25