

USTA Middle States Section New Jersey District 2021 Adult League Rules

These rules have full force and applicability at all levels of play in USTA Adult League Tennis in the USTA Middle States Section, New Jersey District (USTA MS/NJD). These rules apply to all age groups.

USTA MEMBERSHIP & TEAM REGISTRATION

- All league players must have a current USTA membership, be 18 years of age, and be in good standing before registering for a team. Membership must be valid through the end of the league season.
- Players can register the same day of competition but must be registered prior to the exchange of lineups. Final date to register a player for a team will be issued by the Coordinator at the onset of the season.
- To register, go to <http://tennislink.usta.com/leagues>. For any membership issues contact 800-990-8782.
- Players must have a computer rating or will be prompted to declare a self-rating. It is the captain's responsibility to be sure all team members are properly registered with the USTA and that their self-rating is as accurate as possible before the match is played.
- The 2021 team registration fee is \$27.00.

LEAGUE PARAMETERS

- At least fifty percent (50%) of rostered players for Adult 18 & Over and 40 & Over leagues must be at level. Captains are responsible for policing this rule.
- Once a schedule has been published, locations cannot be changed without a valid reason.
- Rosters can have no more than 25 players.
- Format is best 2 out of 3 sets with a third set tiebreaker (10 points, win by 2) in lieu of a full third set. Set tiebreaker is a 7-point tiebreaker, win by 2.
- Teams will switch sides on odd games, unless otherwise agreed prior to the start of play and must be unanimous.
- Scoring will use the Points Per Position (PPP) scoring format. In the event of a tie for first place, win will be based on head to head, least number of sets lost, least number of games lost. Points assignments are:
 - 5 courts: S1 = (5), S2 = (4), D1 = (5), D2 = (4), D3 = (3). Total of 21 points.
 - 4 courts: S1 = (4), D1 = (4), D2 = (3), D3 = (2). Total of 13 points.
 - 3 courts doubles only: D1 = (4), D2 = (3), D3 = (2). Total of 9 points.
 - 3 courts with singles: S1 = (3), D1 = (4), D2 = (2). Total of 9 points.

- All efforts must be made to complete matches. This means a majority of courts must be played to count as a **VALID MATCH** - for a three court match, 2 courts must be played, in a four and five court league 3 courts must be played.
- **If a team defaults an entire match they cannot advance to local championships and may be prohibited from participating in ANY local league the following year.** If a team receives a full match default and is the league winner, they must be in first place by more than the number of points received from the defaulted match. If not, the first place team must have a playoff with the second place team to determine the league winner.

LEAGUE PLAY

- Team captains will simultaneously exchange player lineups 5 minutes before the scheduled match time. Teams failing to have all players present at match time should move players up to fill Doubles 1, Doubles 2 and Singles 1. The missing player (s) will be placed in Singles 2 or Doubles 3 when they arrive. Line-ups can be altered to accommodate this change. The match should not be put out with any player(s) missing at Doubles 1, Doubles 2, or Singles 1, unless contact has been made by cell phone, and the missing player(s) can guarantee their arrival before the default time. ***Warm up is never forfeited because of lateness.*** A late player is allotted a 5-minute warm up.
- Match results **MUST** be reported within 48 hours of completion by the HOME Captain in TennisLink. The VISITING Captain must verify the scores within 48 hours or forfeit the right to appeal them. If there is an error in score reporting (score, player, etc.) send an email to League Coordinator and the other captain for correction.
- In leagues with staggered start times, S1 and/or D1 will start with the earlier times, followed by D2 and D3. Captains must agree and or adjust in advance (in writing/email) on start time for each individual court. The host captain has the final say if no agreement can be reached about the order of courts and start times. The first courts begin at the set start time and when finished, the remaining courts must start directly after unless mutually agreed by both captains. There should be no empty courts while players are waiting.
- All matches must be played on the scheduled match date. If a match is not completed for any reason, it must be completed at a later date, or one team must default. If a match is postponed, please contact the Coordinator within 72 hours of the originally scheduled match date, with the new, agreed upon date and time. If captains cannot agree on a date the Coordinator will assign a makeup date and time.

Rules for Timed Matches

Your coordinator will determine on a league by league basis if matches are to be timed. Once that decision is made, all matches **MUST** adhere to timed match rules. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Timed matches begin at scheduled start times and include a 10 minute warm-up.

In any league where there is a time limit (90 minutes or 2 hours), one of the following will be used to determine a winner.

Time will be determined by one clock or cell phone ON EACH COURT, chosen and agreed upon prior to the start of the match. Recommendation is to use a cell phone alarm with the phone on mute.

Timed Rules 90-Minute Matches:

Format is the best 2 out of 3 sets with a tiebreak in lieu of a third set. ALL tiebreaks for a 90 minute match will use a 9 point tiebreaker (first to 5, win by 1) - for both a set tiebreaker and third set. See below for procedure. If indoors, players may remain on the same side throughout the entire set and switch sides for the second set. Drink breaks are allowed on odd games except after the first game of each set.

Again, time will be determined by one clock or cell phone ON EACH COURT, chosen and agreed upon prior to the start of the match. Recommendation is to use a cell phone alarm with the phone on mute.

TWO alarms times must be set: for **10 minutes before end of match AND THE END TIME OF MATCH**. Example - match is from 9am-10:30am. Alarm 1 is for 10:20am, Alarm 2 is for 10:30am.

- a. If the server is in the middle of a game, they must complete their service game with **no ad scoring**. If score goes to deuce, next point wins the game, then either B or C applies:
- b. The team leading by one game wins the set.
- c. If the teams are tied in games in the second set, play a 9-point tiebreaker for the second set. If the second set has not started, play a 9-point tiebreaker for the second set.
- d. If the first and second sets are split, play a 9-point tiebreaker to determine match winner.

9 Point Tiebreak Procedure:

The person or team who is to serve next begins the tiebreaker. Each player serves two points in succession starting from the deuce court. The first team to score five points wins the tiebreaker. If the tiebreaker reaches 4-4, the person who served the eighth point serves the ninth (final) point. The receiving team has the choice of AD or DEUCE side. The winner of the ninth point is the winner of the set.

Timed Rules Two-Hour Matches:

The format is best 2 out of 3 sets, third set is tiebreak to 10, win by 2. HOWEVER, if there is 15 minutes left in the match, the match tiebreak is SHORTENED to a 7 point tiebreak, win by 2 (see below for procedure).

Time will be determined by one clock or cell phone ON EACH COURT, chosen and agreed upon prior to the start of the match. Recommendation is to use a cell phone alarm with the phone on mute.

TWO alarms times must be set: for 15 minutes before the end of the match AND THE END TIME OF MATCH. When first alarm goes off FINISH THE POINT IN PROGRESS:

- a. If the server is in the middle of a game, they must complete their service game with regular scoring
- b. If one team is ahead by two games or more, they win the set.
- c. If the teams are tied in a set, they play a Set Tiebreak (first to 7 win by 2). Players may switch every 6 points or use the Coman format.
- d. If one team is ahead by only one game, play one more game, and then either b or c will apply

WINNER DETERMINATION

If the winner of the first and second sets are the same, the match is over, regardless of any time remaining.

If sets are split, play a SEVEN POINT Tiebreak (first to 7 by 2) for the third set, because you are running out of time. Players may switch every 6 points or choose the Coman format.

SUDDEN DEATH

If you are in the middle of a Tiebreak, the TEAM AHEAD when time expires wins the tiebreak. When time is expired and there is a tie in a tiebreak, play ONE SUDDEN DEATH POINT to determine the winner of the tiebreak. Announce that the final point is the SUDDEN DEATH point.

IF ONLY ONE SET IS COMPLETED WITH 15 MINUTES TO GO

If only the first set is completed, play a 7 point tiebreaker to determine the second set. If sets are split play another 7 point tiebreaker to determine the third set. If time has run out and score is tied, play sudden death points until the winner is determined. Example: if score is 3-3 in the second set tiebreaker and time is up – play one sudden death point to determine that set. If sets are split – play one sudden death point to determine the third set.

PENALTIES

FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of cell phones or any electronic device is prohibited during a match (includes during changeovers). A player whose cell phone rings, is seen texting, or answers a call will be penalized as:

1st Offense – Loss of Point, 2nd Offense – Loss of Game, 3rd Offense – Full court default.

FOR LATENESS

All players are expected to be on time and ready to take the court at the scheduled match time. When a player is going to be late due to extenuating circumstances and has notified the facility or team captain via cell phone, we encourage the opposing team captain to display good sportsmanship before exercising lateness penalties.

Lateness penalties can be enforced from the beginning of match start time. Again, if a player arrives before 15 minutes after match start time, they are entitled to a 5 minute warm-up. Penalties for lateness:

5 minutes or less.....Loss of Toss + 1 Game
5.01 - 10 minutes.....Loss of Toss + 2 Games
10.01 - 15 minutes.....Loss of Toss + 3 Games
More than 15 minutes.....Match Default

RESCHEDULING

The Local League Coordinator will allow matches to be rescheduled for the following reasons:

- Rain or snow
- Courts not available unexpectedly
- Other USTA playoff matches. Local league matches will be rescheduled upon request if a team has 4 players in a 5-court program, 3 players in a 3-court program involved in a **USTA** District, Section or National championship. Captain must inform the opposing team at least 6 days in advance. As many courts must be played on the scheduled day as possible.

Captains must mutually agree on make-up date, location and time.

RAIN and MAKE-UPS

In the event of impending rain, home captain must contact opposing captain with as much forewarning as possible and inform them of the possible scenarios:

- a) they will wait up until match start time (latest) to decide if match can be played outside
- b) they will try to get indoor courts IF both captains agree. Indoor match cost will be shared. If both agree, a partial match can be played if not enough courts are available. The indoor match start time cannot be later than one hour from scheduled match time and no more than a 30 minute drive farther from original match location.
- c) If both captains agree to reschedule - a mutually agreed upon date, time and location must be decided within 3 days and communicated to the Local League Coordinator. If captains cannot agree, the Coordinator will choose the date, time and location. Make-up matches are recommended to be played within 2 weeks of the original date.

Lineups can be changed for any match that has been postponed, even if lineups were exchanged but play never began (first serve in). This includes announced defaults.

Matches in play, but suspended due to weather must continue with the same players. Play will resume at the exact score when play was called (i.e, 5-2, first set, 30-15, Team A serving).

ADVANCING COMPETITION

For Players

- Players may play on multiple teams in Middle States districts (Allegheny Mountain, Central PA, Eastern PA, Delaware and Philadelphia) at the same age and NTRP level;

however, they may not violate the cross-over rule (see below) that pertains to multiple players on a given team.

- A player may NOT play in the same season at the same age and level in New Jersey regardless of area (i.e., Central, South, Shore).
- Players may play for any Middle States team that advances to District, Sectional and/or National Championships if they are eligible.
 - To be eligible for District or Sectional Championships a **computer-rated (C)** player must have played in two local league matches, one of which can be a received-default. A **self-rated (S)** player or a **computer-appealed (A)** player must have 2 played matches, no defaults.
 - To be eligible for National Championships for all league types and age groups, a **computer-rated (C)** player must have played 3 matches, one of which can be a received-default. A **self-rated (S)** player or a **computer-appealed (A)** player must have 4 played matches, no defaults.

For Teams

- Section Cross-Over Rule: For a team to play in more than one Middle States district at the same age and NTRP level, they cannot have more than 4 players (in a 5 court league) or 3 players (in a 4 or 3 court league) in common.
- District Cross-Over Rule: NJ teams may play in leagues that are offered in different seasons. If a captain or club has teams in more than one season, the team or club will have to choose which team will advance. If no more than 4 players are common to both teams, both teams can advance. Teams must guarantee a minimum number of players committed for championships (8 for 5 court leagues, 7 for 4 court leagues and 5 for 3 court leagues). There may be a local league playoff among flight winners to determine representatives to districts.
- In order for a team to qualify for a wildcard or for a second place team to advance (in lieu of the first place team) to championship or playoff, a team must have accumulated at least 50% of the available points.

COURT CONDUCT

All matches should be conducted according to USTA Code of Conduct rules. Any violation of these rules may be grounds for filing a grievance. Please remind your players of the following rules to avoid the most common on-court arguments:

- Announce the score before beginning each point.
- When unsure of a line call, the ball is **GOOD**.
- Players may NOT enlist the aid of spectators when making line calls.
- Coaching is not allowed.
- Gamesmanship or abusive language is prohibited.

GRIEVANCES

All Captains should read the 2021 USTA National Regulations and the USTA/Middle States Section 2021 Regulations for rules and grievance procedures. When in doubt about a rule or procedure, contact your

local league coordinator. If you find it necessary to file a formal complaint regarding any matter, please be sure to follow the exact procedures spelled out in the 2021 USTA League Tennis Regulations on-line. All grievances must be filed in writing prior to the protesting team's next match and emailed **to your local league coordinator**. Grievance Appeal Committee will be chosen as needed.

2021 New Jersey District and Middle States Championship Calendar

New Jersey DISTRICT Championships	Dates
NJD Tri-Level 4.0 Playoff	March 6
Middle States in NJ Tri-Level 4.0	March 27-29
MXD 18	May 15
MXD 40	May 22
MXD 55	TBD
A18+	Aug 6-8
A55+	Aug 13-15
A40 & 65+	Aug 27-29
Middle States SECTIONAL Championships	Dates
Tri-Level 4.5	Jan 15-17
MXD18/55	June 4-6
MXD40	June 11-13
A18+	Aug 20-22
A40+	Sept 10-12
A55+	Sept 17-19
A65+	Sept 24-26

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