

USTA / HOA TENNIS LEAGUES



MISSOURI VALLEY
HEART OF AMERICA

18&Over – 40&Over –
55&Over – 65&Over
Mixed 18&Over - Mixed 40&Over
2017 Leagues

GENERAL LEAGUE RULES

www.heartofamerica.usta.com

1. OFFICIAL LEAGUE RATING PROGRAM

The National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) is the official system for rating levels of competition for the USTA/HOA Tennis League Program.

2. ELIGIBILITY FOR PLAYERS

- A. All players shall have reached the respective age designation of each league (18, 40, 55, 65 and Over) prior to or during the calendar year in which they play their first match.
- B. All participating players must have valid USTA memberships through the individual League season in which they are participating. Any non-USTA league member participating in a USTA league match will forfeit all matches played as a non-member.
- C. All players must be registered on line in TennisLink prior to playing a match or be subject to default. League fees must be paid on line.
- D. Any player registering as a self-rated player must complete a player profile form – “on-line”. This form will pop up automatically when a player without a valid computer rating starts the registration process. The player completes this form “on-line” and submits. TennisLink will then assign a self-rating to the new player. If the player disagrees with the assigned self-rating, he/she has the option to appeal this rating on-line. The USTA/MV Section Appeals Committee will review the appeal and issue a decision to grant or deny.
- E. Players may be added to rosters prior to two (2) weeks before the final regularly scheduled match. (Please note that players must play two matches to qualify for post season play, so “two weeks before the final regularly scheduled match” assumes two matches are left to play.)

- F. Players wishing to participate in the 2017 Early Start League (season begins prior to Year End Ratings Publication) will compete at their year-end rating issued 12/31/2015. **Players in the 18&Over Fall/Winter early start league who get bumped UP when year-end ratings are published in early December, may finish the Fall/Winter session with that team, but cannot advance to any post season play (i.e., District, Sectional and National Championships) with that team (New MV Sectional and National rules). If their year-end rating reaches the DQ level, they must play at that new NTRP level effective immediately.**

Any player who gets bumped DOWN when year-end ratings are published in early December, can finish the 18&Over Fall/Winter session with that team and it will not affect the team's 40% at level standing. They may also choose to register for a Fall/Winter team at the lower level IF there are at least 2 matches left in the season.

Please note that as of January 1, 2017, the player must register with his new year-end computer rating for any new leagues, i.e., ratings issued 12/31/16.

- G. A player receiving three strikes, anytime during the 2017 season (18&Over, 40&Over, 55&Over, 65&Over, 70&Over), will be immediately promoted to the next higher level. As a result of this promotion, the player cannot play at the current level. If the player is a self-rated player, the 3 matches that caused the "promotion" will be forfeited. As of the 2009 league season, there will not be any dynamic disqualification of Year-end Computer players.
- H. Captains and players are responsible for checking NTRP ratings and ensuring that all players for each match are eligible to play. An ineligible player results in disqualification for that individual court. The District will provide a "National Player" report so that captains can check the status of players who may be counted as a "National Player".

3. TEAM COMPOSITION

- A. A team shall consist of a minimum of eight (8) players for a specific USTA/HOA League level of competition. (For 5.0 leagues, the minimum is six (6) players.) At least 40% of the players must have a rating equal to the level of play - does not apply to combo leagues.

- 18&Over Team 18 Players
- 40&Over Team 18 Players
- 55 &Over 15 Players*
- 65&Over 12 Players
- 70&Over 12 Players
- Mixed Team 18& Over 15 Players*
- Mixed Team 40&Over 15 Players*

***Roster limit of 15 for these leagues are approved for the 2017 season.**

Teams at their player limit may replace players who have not played a match if they have either been injured or have a personal circumstance that prevented them from playing.

- B. 2017 Move Up/Split-Up Rule - For a detailed explanation of this ruling, please see Attachment A.
- C. A team may have no more than two players from outside the HOA District.
- D. Team members may have an individual NTRP rating below, but never higher than the NTRP rating of the league, e.g. a player with a 4.5 NTRP rating may be on a 4.5 and/or 5.0 USTA League. A player cannot “play up” more than one level, e.g., a 3.5 NTRP player can compete on a 4.0 team, but not a 4.5 or higher team. At least 40% of the players on a team must have a rating equal to the level of play. (This requirement does not apply to “Combo” teams.)
- E. 18&Over teams at the 5.0 NTRP level may have no more than 2 players on their roster with a NTRP rating of 5.5. No more than one (1) 5.5 NTRP player shall be allowed to play in any team match, and shall be required to play in the #1 position, either singles or doubles. A violation of player placement will result in a default of that court.
- F. 40&Over teams at the 4.5+ NTRP level may have no more than 3 players on their roster with a NTRP rating of 5.0. No more than 2 players at the 5.0 NTRP rating may play in any one team match. 5.0 players must play in the #1 position in team matches, either in singles or doubles. A violation of player placement will result in a default of that court.
- G. If a division league consists of only 2 teams in a level of play, each team must maintain its roster with at least 40% of its players at the designated NTRP level of play. (Nat’l 1.04D5).

55&Over leagues with only 2 teams in a level will be exempted from the 40% rule if combined NTRP rating levels are used as the rule cannot be applied when using combined levels. (Nat’l 1.04D(6)).
- H. Team standing is determined in descending order, and reflected in TennisLink standings, by:
 - 1. Winner of most team matches
 - 2. Individual match wins
 - 3. Winner of head-to-head matches
 - 4. Fewest sets lost
 - 5. Fewest games lost

4. COMPETITION

- A. Round Robin: Local League play will consist of a round robin competition.

B. Team Match: Each team match will consist of:

- Fall/Winter 18&Over League 3 Doubles Matches
- Spring 40&Over League 2 Singles & 3 Doubles Matches
- Spring/Summer 55&Over League 3 Doubles Matches
- Summer 18&Over League 2 Singles & 3 Doubles
- 65&Over and 70&Over 3 Doubles Matches
- Mixed Doubles – 18&Over 3 Doubles Matches
- Mixed Doubles – 40&Over 3 Doubles Matches

C. Individual Match: An individual match is any singles match or doubles match played as part of a team match.

D. Team captains for each team shall exchange their team score sheets simultaneously prior to the scheduled starting time of the team match, and may wait to exchange line-ups for staggered matches until just prior to the matches. (See Q&A6 in Attachment D). No substitution may be made in an individual match after the lineup has been presented except for injury to, illness of or disqualification of a player, prior to the start of such match. The first serve which starts the first point of the match is considered the start of the match. The MVTA / HOA authorize no further circumstances for substitution. The forfeit principles outlined in the USTA League Regulations are applicable with no modifications.

E. Order of Strength

Teams are not required to field players in order of strength (except that the 18&Over and 40&Over leagues using 2 players above level must play in the #1 position – see “Team Composition D&E”).

F. Player Participation: A player may play on only one team per level but can play in two levels as long as it is only one level apart.

G. No individual player is eligible to play in the HOA District Championships or the USTA/MV Sectional Championships or in any playoffs unless he/she has played on the same championship team in at least two matches during its local league season--one of which can be a default. In order to progress to the National Championships, a player must play in 3 matches through the Sectionals, **one of which may be a default (National rule change for 2017). (See Exhibit A).**

- H. Play is continuous and no coaching is allowed. Players are allowed 20 seconds between points.

- I. No individual or team matches can be rescheduled. The schedule as posted on TennisLink will stand. (See Rules of Play 5.M. on page 6 for inclement weather rules.) Matches rescheduled for reasons other than Inclement Weather (see M.) will result in a double default.

5. RULES OF PLAY

- A. The Home team shall be listed first on the schedule. For all indoor Leagues, the Clubs will provide the balls. For outdoor Leagues the Home Team shall provide the balls. Home captains/designees should check with their clubs at least 24 hours prior to all matches to be sure courts have been reserved.

- B. ALLOTTED MATCH TIME: **Absolute maximum is two (2) hours, unless circumstances like finishing a super tiebreak take more time.** A 5-minute break may be taken after the 2nd set before the 10 point match tie-breaker.

- C. No coaching will be allowed at any time during a match.

- D. A timing device at the home facility shall be designated as the official clock. Both Captains should agree before the match as to the official time and who may call time.

- E. WARM UP: Maximum warm-up is ten (10) minutes (includes serves).
 - 1. Late arrivals are limited to the remainder of the 10 minute warm-up.
 - 2. Individual match is a forfeit at 15 minutes past the scheduled match time.

F. SCORESHEETS

- 1. Team captains shall simultaneously exchange line-ups using the TennisLink score sheet before the starting time. **Score sheets can be exchanged just-in-time for split match times.**

- 2. Each team must have a captain or acting captain present at every match.

- 3. Upon completion of the match, both captains should verify scores and players and sign the score sheets.

G. LATE ARRIVALS

USTA penalties required for lateness before a match or resumption of a suspended match will apply. **THE CLOCK STARTS AT MATCH TIME.** (2015 USTA Friend at Court IV.D Table 15A)

5:00 Minutes or less	Loss of toss plus one game
5:01 – 10:00 Minutes	Loss of toss plus two games
10:01 – 15:00 Minutes	Loss of toss plus three games
More than 15:00 Minutes	Default

H. SCORING

1. Regular scoring

- a) Best two out of three sets (10 pt match tie-breaker in lieu of 3rd set **using Coman procedures**).
- b) 12-point tie-breaker (first player to 7) used at 6-6 in the 1st and/or 2nd sets.
- c) Tie-break counts as a game.

2. One (1) team point shall be awarded to the team winning the majority of the individual matches.

3. Time will be called after **1 Hour, 45 Minutes** from the designated match time. All games in progress shall be completed (a game is in progress after the first service ball is struck). Any team ahead by two games shall be awarded the win for that set.

a) If teams are in the second set and tied, or a team is not ahead by 2 games, a set tiebreak (first to 7 by 2) shall be played using the Coman procedures.

b) If sets are split, a match tiebreak (first to 10 by 2), **using Coman procedures**, shall be played in lieu of a third set.

Coman Procedures: Change sides after the first point, and then after every four points. Switch sides at the conclusion of a set tiebreak.

4. At the end of the match, both captains (or their designees) will complete and sign the score sheets.

NO MATCH WILL END IN A TIE.

5. Verifying, entering, and confirming or disputing scores is a shared responsibility.

- a. **Both captains** (or their designees) must verify and initial all score sheets prior to leaving the match. Penalties as determined by the Grievance Committee will be assessed for falsifying or knowingly signing a falsified score sheet.

- b. Either the winning *or* losing captain** should enter the scores on TennisLink within **48 hours**.
 - c. Scores must be confirmed or disputed within 96 hours from the time of the scheduled match.** After 96 hours, the scores and players will stand. There will be no changes.
 - d. If either captain does not enter match scores within 96 hours,** the matches may be entered as a Double Default on each court. Captains should notify their Level Coordinators of any extenuating circumstances.
6. All electronic communication devices (cell phones, pagers, etc.) must be OFF while on court. Players are forewarned about cell phones ringing on the court via league rules. Once a match begins and an electronic communication device rings, there will be a point penalty. The player should immediately turn off the electronic communication.

I. DEFAULTS

1. **PLAYER DEFAULTS** - In case of a default, the non-defaulting party shall be credited with such number of additional games as would have been won if the match was completed and the non-defaulting party won every subsequent game. If a default occurs, write the names of all players of the non-defaulting team on the scorecard. Do not list the players of the defaulting team. Defaulting players do not receive credit for a match played.

2. **TEAM DEFAULT** -

If at the conclusion of local league play, if a team has defaulted an entire team match, that team is ineligible to continue **in post-season play**. All matches of the defaulting team already played shall be null and void when determining standings but will be used for rating and advancement purposes. Only matches within an incomplete round are considered null and void. Matches within a completed round are counted.

- a. If all teams with a mathematical chance to advance have played the defaulting team in good faith, those matches shall stand as played when determining standings. Complete rounds are considered valid; incomplete rounds are counted if all teams with a mathematical chance of advancement played the defaulting team.
- b. District (and district league coordinators) may adopt further rules, procedures and penalties to maximize team play and minimize entire team defaults.

For the summer session, all teams will send a \$50.00 check to their Level Coordinator as a deposit (the check will be held at the District office and not cashed unless a team default occurs). If a Team defaults an entire match, the \$50.00 deposit will be forfeited. In addition, that Team will be asked to issue an additional \$50.00 deposit before they will be allowed to play their next match.

At the end of the summer season, all \$50.00 deposit checks will be shredded, unless cashed due to team default.

3. CANCELLING COURTS DUE TO DEFAULT- Any team defaulting a court(s) is responsible for calling the applicable Club to cancel the court. This cancellation must be done at least 48 hours in advance.

J. FORFEITS

1. To avoid forfeiting an entire match, the match must be “legal”, that is, players must be eligible team members, registered in TennisLink, and present for play in at least 3 of 5 courts or 2 of 3 courts, depending on league/level format.
2. Order of Forfeit
 - a. If a late player is the cause of a resulting forfeit, the forfeit should be recorded to the court to which that player was assigned at the time of the line-up exchange, i.e., if the late player is assigned to Court #1, the win is to the opposing team on Court #1. It is not necessary to “move up” players from Court #2 to Court #1 and from Court #3 to Court #2. Once players have been assigned courts and started warm-up, they should continue to play on their assigned court.
 - b. If a Captain is aware ahead of match time that there will be a forfeit on one court, the forfeit should be recorded on the line-up card on Court #3.
4. If an ineligible player plays on a court, that court will be considered a default.

K. BREAKING A SEASON COMPETITION TIE

In the event of a tie at the end of the season, the tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures that does so:

1. Winner of most team matches
2. Individual match wins
3. Winner of head-to-head matches
4. Fewest sets lost
5. Fewest games lost

L. PLAYOFF FORMAT

In the 18&Over League, winners of the Fall/Winter and Summer sessions will advance to the District Championships. **Dates and place for the District Championships are on the HOA calendar on line.** No team may advance to the District Championships if that team does not include the minimum amount of players needed to fill all courts for each match

scheduled. If the winning team in the division cannot attend with the minimum amount of players needed, then the district will invite the # 2 team. If the # 2 team cannot fill all courts at every match, the # 3 team will be invited until a representative is found or the district declines to invite additional teams. The District will not invite a team at any level that does not have a winning record (i.e., **more match wins than losses**). See Attachment B for number of teams invited to playoffs.

M. GRIEVANCES

NTRP Grievance (fair play/self-rate): Players who enter the USTA League Tennis program by inappropriately self-rating at an NTRP level lower than their actual skill level are considered to have violated the standards of good conduct, fair play and good sportsmanship. These players are subjected to a NTRP Grievance. A player who inappropriately self-rates, and captains and others who condone inappropriate self-rating, may be subject to possible sanctions, including disqualification and suspension.

A player with a valid NTRP Computer or granted Automatic Appeal of a Computer rating is not subject to an NTRP grievance. Any other player is subject to a NTRP grievance.

Captains may file other grievances against an opposing team or player with the **Executive Director** accompanied by a \$10.00 fee. The fee will be refunded if the grievance is upheld. Local season grievances must be filed prior to the commencement of the next team match in that flight involving such individual or team, or within twenty-four hours after the local league play, whichever occurs first.

N. INCLEMENT WEATHER (Snow, Rain)

In case of inclement weather, the team captain or designee should:

1. Contact the opposing captain to determine if the match should be cancelled and decide whether or not to reschedule. This **weather-related** decisions should be made "just in time". (See Q&A #9 in Attachment D for guidelines.) If the match is rained out, or one or both captains believe the weather puts their players in peril, the match will be rescheduled.
2. The captains are responsible for **notifying their Level Coordinator and re-scheduling the cancelled match.**
3. Contact the site where the match was to be played to cancel the courts so no fee is charged.
4. Within 7 days, decide on a new match date and notify the Level Coordinator.
NOTE: If both captains cannot agree on a date, the Level Coordinator will set the date. Failure to play the match as scheduled will result in a default.
5. Reschedule the match at the site where the match was originally scheduled; and
6. Complete the match on the new date and notify the Level Coordinator of its completion.

EXTREME HEAT RULE

7. If the heat index reaches 115 degrees, the captains may agree to take the match indoors (at the cost of the players) or reschedule the match within one week. Captains need to notify the Level Coordinator of any rescheduling. Failure to agree on a date will result in the Level Coordinator re-scheduling the match, which must be played as scheduled under the penalty of default.

USTA LEAGUE REGULATIONS, DATED JANUARY 2017, WILL BE THE OFFICIAL BASIS FOR RULES NOT COVERED BY THESE USTA/HOA LEAGUE RULES. "THE CODE" SHALL BE USED FOR ALL MATCHES PLAYED WITHOUT OFFICIALS. "THE CODE" AND "FRIEND AT COURT" ARE AVAILABLE ON THE USTA NATIONAL WEBSITE.

DRAFT

ATTACHMENT A

2.06 MOVE-UP/SPLIT UP

2.06a National Championship Teams

2.06A(1): Adult Divisions: Teams and team members that advanced to, or qualified for, any Adult National Championship may play together as a team, in whole or in part, in any Age Group within the Adult Division if they move up one NTRP team level in accordance with the table below. These players may combine and play at any level for which they are eligible in the Mixed Division.

2.06A(2) Mixed Divisions:

Teams and team members that advanced to, or qualified for, any Mixed Division National Championship may play together as a team, in whole or in part, in any Age Group within the Mixed Division if they move up one NTRP team level in accordance with the table below. These players may combine and play at any level for which they are eligible in the Adult Division.

2.06A(3) All Divisions:

No more than 3 players (2 for Adult 2.5 and 5.0+) who were on the roster of any team or combination of teams, that advanced to, or qualified for, any National Championship the previous year may play together in any age group within the same Division and NTRP level or lower NTRP level as the National Championship team, if their NTRP rating allows. Move p/Split Up requirements only apply to players who participated in three (3) or more matches (excluding all defaults) for that team during the championship year. If a Section has a regulation that limits the number of players on a roster that are at a specific level, the Section must suspend that regulation for one year for any team that advanced to, or qualified for, any National Championship the previous year and chooses to move up one NTRP team level

When a player or team plays at this National Championship team level	Maximum number of players who can combine to play together at that same NTRP level	Adult 18&Over Move-up Level	Adult 40&Over Move up Level if Eligible	Adult 55&Over Move up Level if Eligible	Mixed 18&Over Move up Level	Mixed 40&Over Move up Level if eligible
Adult 18&Over 2.5	2	3.0	3.0	6.0	*	*
Adult 18&Over 3.0	3	3.5	3.5	7.0	*	*
Adult 18&Over 3.5	3	4.0	4.0	8.0	*	*
Adult 18&Over 4.0	3	4.5	4.5+	9.0	*	*
Adult 18&Over 4.5	3	5.0+			*	*
Adult 18&Over 5.0+	3				*	*
Adult 40&Over 3.0	3	3.5	3.5	7.0	*	*
Adult 40&Over 3.5	3	4.0	4.0	8.0	*	*
Adult 40&Over 4.0	3	4.5	4.5+	9.0	*	*
Adult 40&Over 4.5+	3	5.0+			*	*
Adult 55&Over 6.0 or 3.0	3	3.5	3.5	7.0	*	*
Adult 55&Over 7.0 or 3.5	3	4.0	4.0	8.0	*	*
Adult 55&Over 8.0 or 4.0	3	4.5	4.5+	9.0	*	*
Adult 55&Over 9.0 or 4.5	3	5.0+			*	*
Mixed 18&Over 2.5	3	**	**	**	6.0	6.0
Mixed 18&Over 6.0	3	**	**	**	7.0	7.0
Mixed 18&Over 7.0	3	**	**	**	8.0	8.0
Mixed 18&Over 8.0	3	**	**	**	9.0	9.0
Mixed 18&Over 9.0	3	**	**	**	10.0	
Mixed 18&Over 10.0	3	**	**	**		
Mixed 40&Over 6.0	3	**	**	**	7.0	7.0
Mixed 40&Over 7.0	3	**	**	**	8.0	8.0
Mixed 40&Over 8.0	3	**	**	**	9.0	9.0
Mixed 40&Over 9.0	3	**	**	**	10.0	

*Adult Division players may play in the Mixed Division with no restrictions

**Mixed Division players may play in the Adult Division with no restrictions

ATTACHMENT B

Heart of America District

USTA LEAGUE TENNIS

District Championship Teams for the **Fall/Winter** & Summer Sessions
Based on Number of Teams Participating at Each Level

# of Teams Participating at Each Level	# of Teams Advancing to District Playoffs
5 & Below	1
6 – 12	2
13 & Above	3

Please note the following:

- This chart for District Championships applies to 18&Over Weekend *and* Weekday leagues due to the growth in numbers in the Weekday leagues.

(Note: For the Women's single session 40&Over, there will be one representative from the Weekend and Weekday in the Playoffs. If the winner is the same in both, the next in line with a winning record in the respective league will be invited.)

- Teams advancing to the District Championships and/or Playoffs must have a winning record, i.e., more wins than losses (at issue when session winners cannot field a team to advance).
- The HOA Adult League Council reserves the right to amend the rules and/or regulations should any unforeseen circumstances arise that may affect the playoff format.

ATTACHMENT C

RESOURCES

1. Heart of America District Regulations – 2017 Season

- Heartofamerica.usta.com
- USTA Leagues
- HOA Leagues – Rules & Regulations

http://www.heartofamerica.usta.com/USTA_League_Tennis/usta_league_rules/

2. Missouri Valley Section Regulations – 2017 Season

- Missourivalley.usta.com
- Adult tennis
- USTA League
- Regulations

http://www.missourivalley.usta.com/USA-League-Tennis-pages/2251_Regulations/?intloc=headernavsub2

3. USTA National Regulations

- Usta.com
- Adult Tennis
- Rules & Regulations
- 2017 USTA League Regulations

https://assets-ssl.usta.com/assets/1/15/2015_usta_league_regulations_6_4_14.pdf