



## 2020 Tri-Level League Regulations & Frequently Asked Questions

8.22.19 V1.2

### 1. General Overview - What is a Tri-Level league?

Tri-Level is a format which consists of three doubles positions, each at a different NTRP level to form the 'Team' (ex: 3.5, 4.0, and 4.5). Each doubles position is single gender for men and women and players compete against the same ability & gender. USTA New England (along with other participating Sectionals) is represented at the Open Tri-Level Championships using the Tri-Level 'Team' format. The local area has the option to offer either Tri-Level 'Team' or Tri-Level 'By NTRP Level'.

**1.1. Tri-Level – 'Team':** a 'Team' is comprised of a doubles team (2 or more) at each of the following levels: 3.5, 4.0, and 4.5. A player can only play in one position for each team match (no repeats). This format allows players to form a team with their friends whose NTRP ratings are at different levels. Some local areas may not have many players at the higher level (4.5) or lower level (3.0) which could restrict the overall number of teams that can be fielded. Currently advancement opportunities for the 3.0 & 5.0 levels are not offered at the Open Tri-level Championships, however if a local area has interest at these levels, the Tri-Level format can be offered for local play only.

**1.2. Tri-Level – 'By NTRP Level':** a team is comprised of a doubles team (2 or more players) at a single NTRP level and gender. 'By NTRP Level' requires fewer players to create a **'Team'** and if court availability is a concern, this format requires one court for match play per 'single level team'.

### 2. Eligibility:

- 2.1 To be eligible to play for a team, each player must be a USTA member and such Membership must extend through the end of the local season.
- 2.2 Minimum Age Requirement: Players must turn 18 within the current calendar year.
- 2.3 Registration & score reporting is managed by TennisLink. Each player must be registered on their team roster on TennisLink before playing a match.
- 2.4. Each player must use their most recent valid computer NTRP Year End (YE) Rating or must self-rate. A player cannot self-rate if they have a valid YE rating. Dynamic ratings for Tri-level self-rated players will be reviewed by the New England Sectional NTRP Committee prior to any playoffs and the player may be subject to removal from the team roster if his dynamic rating or current championship Year End rating is not within an approved NTRP range for the level of play. The rating as recorded on the Early Start League roster is valid through all Tri Level championship levels except for self rated players who do not meet eligibility requirements following an NTRP review.
- 2.5. Individual doubles teams consist of 2 or more players that are single gender for men & women.
- 2.6. Championship levels of play are 3.5, 4.0 & 4.5 with no repeats.
- 2.7. The 3.0W level will be reviewed annually for inclusion at Sectional Championships only.
- 2.8. Each doubles team will compete against same ability & gender.
- 2.9. A player may play .5 above the player's current NTRP level.
- 2.10. Each player must play 2 matches (1 default counts) to advance.
- 2.11. Local areas may field a **'Team'** with all 3 levels or use the **'By NTRP level'** doubles format. The USTA New England team who advances to the BNP Paribas Open Tri-Level Championships in Indian Wells will be a 'Tri-Level' team representing individual Sectional Champion doubles teams at each of the 3 levels and both genders.

### 3. Tri-Level League Season Timeline:

- 3.1. September - December 31, of the calendar year: The season includes Local Play & Local Playoffs if a local area has more than one flight.

- 3.2. October 15 – Team registration deadline.
- 3.3. January 17-19, 2020 (and Jan 20 if needed to accommodate scheduling) - USTA League Tri Level Sectional Championships are played in the Springfield MA area - One winner (Tri-Level 'Team' or the individual 'By NTRP Level' team) from the local area advances to a Sectional Playoff.
- 3.4. March 15-16, 2020 - BNP Paribas Open Tri-Level Championship at Indian Wells Tennis Garden in Indian Wells, California.

#### **4. Match Format and Schedule:**

- 4.1. Best 2 of 3 sets with a 3rd set match tie-break if sets are split.
- 4.2. Rules concerning registration fees, method to determine the flight winner & match ending rules are governed by local regulations.
- 4.3. The local area will generate a match schedule.
- 4.4. For two and three team leagues, 4 matches are required.
- 4.5. Four or more team leagues can play a single Round Robin (RR) to meet the minimum 4 match requirement.
- 4.6. **Defaults:**
  - 4.6.1. A Tri-Level Team comprised of 3 NTRP levels must field a minimum of 2 positions to win the team match. One position may be a default. A team who defaults frequently during a local season will be reviewed for future participation by the Local League.
  - 4.6.2. No Defaults are allowed for a Tri-Level "by NTRP Level" team comprised of one doubles team (one position). A doubles team who defaults will be reviewed for future participation by the Local League and all matches played will be reversed 60,60 should any teams in that flight be in contention for advancement.

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### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **1. Can a team include a 2.5, 3.0 or a 5.0 doubles team?**

Yes, but these NTRP levels will play at the local level and not advance to Sectional Playoffs. Depending on local participation the section may decide to host a 3.0 Sectional Play Off. The BNP Paribas Open Tri-Level Championships do not offer advancement for the 3.0 level.

#### **2. What is the deadline for Team registrations at the local level?**

October 15<sup>th</sup>. After this date the Sectional will review the number of advancing teams and publish the Sectional Playoff date and location.

#### **3. Why is each doubles position made up of 2 or more players?**

Local League teams must roster a minimum of 2 players per NTRP level. The team that advances to the USTA League Sectional Championships and the Open Tri-Level Championships will be limited to a maximum of 4 eligible players at each NTRP level and gender and must declare their roster by the stated deadline as established by the Tournament Director prior to the start of each championship event.

**4. Can a player play at multiple NTRP Levels?** Yes, there is no regulation stating otherwise. In single NTRP Tri-Level leagues players who compete at multiple NTRP Levels will have to coordinate their match schedule to avoid defaulting an individual match due to their own scheduling conflicts. Refer to 4.6.2.

#### **5. Why are self rate players reviewed before advancing to a Play Off?**

The Open Tri-Level Championship does not have access to review self rated players and their stand is to ensure compatible tennis for participants. The Section's stand is to attract more people to tennis by allowing new players to participate in Tri-Level. Tri-Level would otherwise be another format offered to the existing audience of players.

#### **6. How do I register?**

Contact your local league coordinator or designated local contact for a team number.

## **7. Is a team captain/representative required?**

Yes.

## **8. What are the responsibilities of the captain?**

- 8.1 Adhere to registration deadlines.
- 8.2 Report and confirm scores.
- 8.3 Inform team players of the match schedule with times and locations.
- 8.4 Ensure players are aware of the regulations.
- 8.5 Responsible for communications to the team.
- 8.6 Communicate schedule changes in the event of a flex schedule.
- 8.7 Communicate and prepare for Championships should the team be invited to advance.

## **9. Will all levels play their matches at the same time in the local league?**

The local schedule will depend upon the local league needs. For example; **'By NTRP Level'** teams who want flexible scheduling; 1) a schedule is set up with the understanding that the team captains will work together to play at convenient times, 2) A schedule is generated and then the captains can agree to change the schedule. The captains must inform the local coordinator of any changes to match times and dates so that Tennis Link can be updated. Since **'By NTRP Level'** teams are comprised of one position and therefore require one court, the flexibility around scheduling should work for this league if the captains do a good job of communicating with each other. For specific schedules contact your local league coordinator.

## **10. How will the end of a match for a timed match be determined?**

The local match ending rule that applies to other leagues in your local area will be the same procedure used for Tri-Level unless otherwise noted.

## **11. How is the winner of a flight determined?**

At the local level, flights may consist of teams comprised of 3 NTRP positions or single NTRP level teams. Two ways to decide the local winner are 1) by team wins or 2) most individual position wins. Local league regulations apply. If a local area has multiple flights, a playoff between the flight winners will determine the top team that advances to the Sectional playoff. All local area playoff matches **must** be completed by December 31st. No extensions will be granted.

## **12. How will the teams that go to the Open Tri-Level Championships in Indian Wells be chosen?**

The winner of the local flight (or inter-flight playoffs) advances to the Sectional Playoff in January. The Sectional winner of each NTRP level/gender (3.5, 4.0, 4.5 men and women) will advance to Indian Wells to form the USTA New England Tri-Level team. The exact dates and location of the Sectional Playoff will be determined once participation in all local areas is accounted for.

## **13. Why is the Tri-Level league popular at the local level?**

The Tri-Level league is part of the 'Expanded Play Opportunities' for USTA League tennis in New England. The format offers possibilities that meet the needs and preferences of players. The 4.5 and 5.0 NTRP levels consist of a limited group of players and therefore it is sometimes difficult to field a team that requires a minimum of 8 players. By offering Tri-Level, the 4.5 and 5.0 players can form teams with 2 or more players and increase their chances to play more often and against different opponents. This league is an appealing way to attract new players who, once connected, become candidates for the USTA Adult and Mixed Leagues. Finally, the development of Tri-Level creates the base and foundation for other league opportunities to grow thus providing people with more venues to play tennis.

## **14. Can a player advance with two teams at different NTRP levels to the Sectional Championships?**

NO. A player can play for one team only at the Sectional Championships regardless of the NTRP level. Teams with shared players will not be accommodated.