



SOUTHWEST

2021 Section League Regulations

Final as of 12/5/2020

Changes/Updates in RED

USTA NATIONAL LEAGUE REGULATIONS shall apply to all USTA Leagues played in the USTA Southwest Section (SWS); the Friend at Court shall apply to all matches played in USTA Leagues; and in all matches played without officials, the USTA official publication, THE CODE, shall be observed. The USTA Point Penalty System shall be used at all championship levels.

In addition to, and as allowed by USTA National League Regulations, the USTA Southwest Section has adopted the following SWS League Regulations, for all league matches played in the Southwest Section.

I. USTA ADULT AND MIXED LEAGUE DIVISIONS

Applies to Adult 18 & over, Adult 40 & Over, Adult 55 & Over, Mixed 18 & over, and Mixed 40 & Over NOTE: USTA Southwest League regulations shall apply to all matches played in the Southwest Section and shall take precedence over Local League Regulations. At all levels, the National League Regulations shall take precedence over the Southwest USTA League Regulations and/or Local League Regulations. Teams/Players participating in championships and local leagues should be familiar with USTA National League Regulations, Southwest Section Regulations and their Local League Regulations.

A. NTRP RATINGS

- 1. Participation in USTA Leagues:** All players registering for a USTA League team must enter with a valid NTRP Rating or by completing the Self Rate Questionnaire in compliance with USTA National League Regulations. The Section strongly encourages players participating at their current NTRP level to ensure competitive match play. Players "playing up" are advised that by doing so, their NTRP year-end rating and those of their opponents may be inappropriately affected.
- 2. 2.01A(1) Changing NTRP Levels of Play.** a. National Championships in the Adult 18 & over Age Group will be held at the 2.5 Women, 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5, & 5.0 Level. Championships below National Championships, and Local Leagues, will be held at the 5.0 Level and May be held at the Open Level (5.0 & higher). (In 2021 there will be no Plus Level League for the 5.0 Division) b. National Championships in the Adult 40 & Over Age Group will be held at the 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, & 4.5 Level. Championships below National Championships, and Local Leagues, will be held at the 4.5 Level and May be held at the 5.0 Level. (In 2021 there will be no Plus Level League for the 4.5 Division.)
- 3. 2.03A(3)b Sections shall have the option to require, for eligibility to progress to championship level competition below National Championships, Self-Rated and Valid Computer Rated Appealed players to play up to four matches, on the same team at the same NTRP level in the same Age Group during its local league season and**

is otherwise eligible, with no defaults counting. The Southwest Section DOES exercise this option to require all Self-rated and Appealed players to play in 4 matches, on the same team, at the same level, to be eligible to advance to any District or Section Championships, (This does not include Local League Flight Play-offs).

4. **Year-End ratings/Automatic Appeals:** Captains and players are responsible for checking Tennislink for final Year-End Ratings, on or around December **each year**. Except for participants in National League Championships, players who have been moved up or down may appeal by using the automated process in Tennislink Leagues.
5. **2.05E (3) All Players age 70 or over will automatically be granted an appeal (A Rating type) of their current rationing to the next lower level, subject to 2.05E (4). NTRP Dynamic Disqualification procedures as outlined in 2.04B(3) apply.**
6. **Self-Rate Dynamic Disqualification:**
 - a) **NTRP Disqualification Occurring During Local League Competition:** Self-Rated players who are promoted as a result of the NTRP Dynamic Disqualification will immediately be required to participate at their new **NTRP level in all USTA League Programs and NTRP Tournaments**. Self-Rated players may be disqualified from playing at their registered skill level if their dynamic NTRP rating exceeds the level established by the national NTRP Committee (the strike level) three times using the championship year. **Scoring Procedure Option:** In the event of a player receiving an NTRP Dynamic Disqualification, per USTA National Regulations, the Southwest Section **will reverse the last match that the Dynamically Disqualified Player earned the third strike and any subsequent matches that produced strikes in the disqualified level will be deemed wins for the opposing player and team**. **Additionally, that player becomes ineligible for future play at that level for the remainder of the championship year and the succeeding championship year. Appeals are only considered with a data entry error occurrence. Computer Rated Players are not subject to Dynamic Disqualification.**
 - b) **NTRP DQ Notification:** DQ Reports are monitored by the Section League Manager daily, Monday through Friday, except holidays. Self-Rated players receiving a Dynamic Disqualification will be notified before their next scheduled match, except in the case of a self-rated player participating in multiple matches on weekends or holidays. Such players should be aware that they may be disqualified upon receiving a “third Strike” at any time, and the possibility of multiple strikes exists when playing multiple matches on weekends or holidays. **(Example: Self-rated player X plays in a league match on Saturday and receives his 3rd strike, not aware of the DQ, he plays again the following day in a Sunday league match. The match on Saturday and Sunday would be reversed and deemed wins for the opponents.)**
 - c) **NTRP Disqualification Occurring During District Championship and Section Championship Competition Option:** The Southwest Section, in accordance with the USTA National League Regulations, has chosen OPTION 2.04B(2)b: Run Dynamic Calculations following the conclusion of the championship and disqualify those players who meet the criteria for the NTRP Dynamic Disqualification. Matches played will stand. All points earned by the Dynamically Disqualified players at Championship will stand but the disqualified player(s) will not be eligible to continue or advance if their team won. Their rating would be changed immediately and may only compete in the higher level in any other Adult or Mixed Leagues for the remainder of the season as well as the next championship year.
7. **Early Start Leagues/Year End Rating Changes OPTION:** per USTA National League Regulations 2.05B(3), Players participating in Early Start Leagues

who are found to have valid computer ratings, after the appeal process, that place them above the NTRP level at which they are competing may continue their participation at the lower NTRP level through the conclusion of their Local League Season. However, these players shall not be permitted to advance to any post season play, including District and Section League Championships, at the lower NTRP level.

8. **Tournament (T) Exclusive NTRP Ratings:** Any "T" rated player who wished to participate in any Southwest Section USTA Adult Leagues must complete the Self-Rate Questionnaire before registering for their adult league team.
9. **NTRP Tournament Matches will be included in the 2021 Year End Rating Calculations and Publication.** Any NTRP Tournament Matches played after the deadline for Year End Ratings Calculations will be included in the next year's ratings calculations.
10. **NTRP GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS:** a filing fee of **\$50.00** will be charged for all league grievances submitted to the USTA Southwest Section League Grievance Committee. The fee will be refunded if the grievance is upheld or at the discretion of the Southwest Section League Grievance Committee. The filing fee must accompany the grievance at its time of submission. All League Grievances will be processed in compliance with the USTA National League Regulations.
 - a) **NTRP Grievances:** All NTRP Grievances and Appeals apply only to self-rated players (S), and must be filed in compliance with USTA Regulation 3.03E & 3.04A
<https://www.usta.com/en/home/organize/program-resources/national/resources---tools.html> Note: In addition to an inappropriately self-rated player, Captains or others who condone inappropriate self-rating may be subject to possible sanctions and/or penalties, including disqualification, removal from a team, or suspensions.
 - (1) **Medical Appeals:** All Medical Appeals must be filed in compliance with the USTA National League Regulations;
https://www.usta.com/content/dam/usta/pdfs/usta_league_medical_appeals_6_22_15.pdf
 - (2) **Reciprocity:** Upon discovery, the USTA Southwest Section will uphold and honor a valid sanction imposed upon a player from another USTA Section playing in USTA Southwest Leagues and/or Tournaments.
 - (3) **Creating a new USTA Account** - A player who creates a new USTA account, while having a previous USTA account, in sole purpose of completing the NTRP Self-Rate Form to secure a new NTRP Rating Level, different from their previous NTRP Rating level is subject to an NTRP Grievance being filed.
 - (4) **Pickleball Lines:** The USTA Southwest Section will allow USTA League Matches to be played on courts with Pickleball Lines.

B. LOCAL LEAGUE/PLAYER PARTICIPATION

1. **Format:** The competition format for local league play shall be round robin as required by the District/Local League in compliance with USTA National League Regulation 2.01C(1).
 - a) **Adult 55 & Over, Mixed 40 & Over** are authorized by USTA to utilize "straight NTRP" or "Combined NTRP levels in local and Section Championships. The **Southwest Section** exercises its OPTION to utilize combined NTRP Levels.
 - b) **Players must be 18 years of age prior to participating in the USTA League program. Any 17 year old, who turns 18 within the calendar year must wait until their 18th birthday to actually play any USTA Adult League Matches. They are legally a minor until their 18 birthday.**
 - c) **Format for the Adult 40 & Over Sectional and National Championships** will be 1 court of singles and 3 courts of Doubles. In the event of a tie in the standings that can not be broken by

Tennislink, the percentage of games won will be the tie breaker. If percentage of games won is tied, the tie shall be broken by the winner of the # 1 doubles court.

- d) **Match Scoring:** All League matches shall be the best of two tie-break sets with a match tie-break in lieu of the third set. The Coman Tie Break will be used in all tie-breaks. Use of any other match scoring method in a local league must be approved by the Section League Manager in advance of the start date of the league.
2. **Team Captains/Responsibilities:** USTA Regulation 1.04B(5) requires that each team shall appoint a team captain to handle administrative affairs and to represent the team in USTA League matters. In addition, USTA Southwest describes the Captain's duties as: The Captain, or their designee should make themselves familiar with the league regulations, and must be present at all team matches to oversee team conduct and management, including, but not limited to, filling out and exchanging scorecard, recording scores at completion of matches, and entering or confirming scores in TennisLink.
3. **Court Surface:** Each Captain must declare to the Local league Coordinator in advance of the start of the season the court surface their team will play on for home team matches. All matches for that league season must be played on the surface declared for home matches, unless agreed upon by both captains at least 24 hours prior to the start of the match.
4. **Playing on Multiple Team: Multiple Team Participation in the same NTRP Level:** A player is prohibited from playing on more than one team in a NTRP level within a division in the same local league during the same season. USTA Reg. 1.04G9(2).
5. **Multiple Team Participation in different NTRP Levels:** USTA National League Regulations authorize sections to deny or accept participation in more than one NTRP Level within a division in the **same** local league during the **same** season. USTA Reg. 1.04G(3) Southwest Section exercises its **option to allow players** to register on multiple teams within a division (i.e. Mixed or Adult) provided they are in **DIFFERENT NTRP** levels. Players may play up one NTRP Level only, but not down.
 - a) **In the event that a player is rostered on multiple teams who qualify for championship level play, schedule exceptions will not be considered by the Southwest Section. Once the Sectional Schedule is approved by the tournament director, Championship Referee and the SWS League Committee Chair, the schedule will not be changed for any reason other than weather issues or teams dropping out of the event last minute.**
 - b) **If a player is eligible to compete at a Section level championship from two teams advancing out of two different Areas or Regions they must declare one team for which they will compete.** They may not compete for both teams in the same division and NTRP level.
6. **Flighted play within a division and NTRP level in a local league:** In a local league where NTRP levels are divided into flights, players are prohibited from playing in more than one flight.
7. **Scheduling:** Each Local League shall determine dates for their local league seasons which must fall within Section and National League Calendars. See Section Championship (Section III) for deadlines for completion of Local league types. There will be no scheduled USTA League Play in a Region that is running concurrent USTA Southwest Section L1 Adult Tournaments. Local League matches must be played according to the schedule published by the Local League Coordinator in Tennislink or on an earlier date under mutual agreement of both captains.
8. **Rescheduling of matches:** Unless specified in each Local League regulations, matches should only be rescheduled under the following circumstances: Inclement Weather; Teams with players participating in Southwest Section Championships; Teams with players participating in USTA National League Championships; other circumstances specifically defined in the Local League Regulations.

9. **Definition of a Local League for Two-Team Leagues:** Southwest Section expands the definition of a local league to include players from different Areas in the SWS playing together as a team to make the two-team minimum at an NTRP level for league play. Regions may combine to form a local league when necessary.
 10. **Team Match:** (USTA League Regulation 2.01C(2)) Each team match in a local league shall consist of such number of individual matches of singles, doubles or any combination thereof as determined by the local league. For each team match, a majority of the individual matches must actually be played to constitute a valid team match. Each Sectional Association shall establish a procedure to determine the actions to take when the combination of individual match defaults given by the two teams in the team match results, or would result, in a situation where the majority of the individual matches would not be played. SWS requires that when both teams in a match have defaults resulting in less than the minimum number of matches being played to constitute a "Team Match" they must, FIRST, attempt to re-do their line-ups using the players available on site and play the match as scheduled, or, only if unable to do so, they must agree on a reschedule the match, in whole or in part, and notify the LLC (unless District Regulations prohibit rescheduling of matches).
 11. **Total Team Defaults:** If a team defaults an entire team match for any reason during round robin play, then all matches of that team played, or to be played, shall be null and void when determining standings. If all teams in contention for the championships have already played the defaulting team in good faith, those matches stand as played. The Section may impose further penalties on said team. USTA Southwest Section states that Local Leagues have the option to approve waivers for extenuating circumstances.
- C. **Local Grievance Procedures:** **Local Grievance complaints shall be administered in compliance with USTA League Regulations 3.03. All League Grievances shall be submitted and processed by the SWS League Grievance Committee.**
 - D. **NTRP League Grievances:** NTRP League Grievances shall be submitted to the Southwest Section League Grievance Committee for processing. **Any NTRP League Grievance that is submitted during a Regional or Section level championship, will be held and submitted to the SWS League Grievance Committee at the conclusion of the event, for processing for consistency.**
 - E. **Refund Policy:** Each Local League shall determine their Local League refund policy.
 - F. **Local league Regulations:** In addition to USTA and Southwest Section League Regulations, Local Leagues are authorized to adopt local league regulations which are not in conflict with USTA or SWS Regulations.

II. SOUTHWEST SECTION LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIPS

- A. **Progression:**
 1. The method of Progression to Section Championships shall be determined in compliance with the USTA National League Regulations 2.02B (1) and 2.02B (2).
 2. Region Championships to determine qualifying teams are at the discretion of the Local League in compliance with the SWS League Regulations.
 3. USTA Southwest authorizes Flight or Area Championships when determined necessary.
 4. If a Local League team who qualifies to advance to Section Championships is unable or unwilling to participate, the second-place team in that same division, in the same local league will be invited to participate. This would be the region advancing team and not a Wildcard team.
- B. **Local League Deadlines to Advance Teams to Section Championships:** Each Local League shall determine dates for their local league seasons which must fall within the sectional and National League Calendars. Deadlines for completion of Local League types are:
 1. **Adult 18 & Over, Adult 40 & Over, Adult 55 & Over, Adult 65 & Over, Mixed 18 & Over and Mixed 40 & Over – 4 weeks prior to Section**

Championships, including any local or District Championships. No teams will advance if they are not in compliance with these dates of completion.

2. Tri-Level – 3 weeks prior to Section Invitational

- C. **Minimum Roster Requirements:** Teams qualifying to advance to Section Championships must be able to field a complete roster for all matches scheduled in order to participate. If a team is not able to do so, the section shall invite the 2nd place team in one division from the District. **No waivers to this rule will be accepted by the Section League Manager for consideration. Any additional teams invited to attend Section championships as Wildcard teams, must also be able to field an entire team for all matches scheduled in that championship. If they can not do so, they will not be invited to attend and Wildcard will be passed to the next team in line or to the next Region.**
- D. **Team Registration:** Team members are required to register online, individually, to be eligible for participation in the Southwest Section Championships. In addition, a **Team Entry Form** must be completed by the team Captain, or their designee, and submitted by the established registration deadline, to be eligible for their team to participate in the Southwest Section League Championships. **Team Entry Form includes: a team level description, captain contact information and a \$100.00 Deposit.**
- E. **Team deposit:** All teams advancing to Section Championships shall be required to submit a fully refundable \$100.00 security deposit (in the form of a check or credit card) with the team Entry Form. Security deposits shall be fully refunded to teams who complete all Section Championship Matches immediately following the conclusion of the championship. (Monday morning) **Teams that withdraw (14) days or more in advance of the start of the tournament will be reimbursed their full security deposit and entry fees. Teams that withdraw within thirteen (13) days of the start of the tournament and/or posting of the draw will forfeit their security deposit and entry fees and are subject to a grievance filed by the Section League Manager.**
- F. **Participation on more than one team at Section Championships:** Players who qualify to advance to Section Championships on more than one team may participate on both teams, as long as they are in different divisions or NTRP levels. **No special consideration will be given to scheduling. No requests from captains to accommodate teams will be considered. Team sharing players should discuss them with other captains and formulate a plan before accepting the berth to section championships. Captains who are sharing players with other teams at a single event should make sure they can field enough players they do NOT share to fill courts for each match.** Defaulted courts, during a Section championship by teams sharing players, may be subject to grievances filed by the Section League Manager.
- G. **2.03A(3)b Self-Rated & Computer Rated Appealed Players: All Self-Rated and Valid Computer Rated Appealed players are eligible to progress to Regional and/or Section Championship competition if that player has played on the same team in at least four matches at the same NTRP level in the same Age Group during its local league season and is otherwise eligible. No defaults received by the player during local league or championship competition shall count for advancing.**
- H. **Format:** All SWS League Championships will be run over a three day period. Round Robin format will be utilized. 4-6 teams attending, in a single division, will play 1 full round robin (3 to 5) matches; 3 teams attending in any one division, will play a Double Round Robin (4 matches) and 2 Teams in any one division will play a Triple Round Robin (3 matches). **All Team Players should be ready to play Section championship matches Friday Morning (7:30 AM) until Sunday afternoon (12.30 PM) for the last round.**
- I. **Match Scoring:** Southwest Section League Championship matches shall be best of two Tie-break sets with a Match Tie-break in lieu of the third set. The Coman Tie-break method will be used in all tie-break sets. The rest period between the 2nd and 3rd set Match Tie-break is 2 minutes.
- J. **Event of a Team Match Tie:** USTA Regulations 2.03H. In the event of a tie, whether in a round robin or single elimination completion, the tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures that do so: 2.03H (1) Individual Matches: Winner of the most individual matches in the entire competition. 2.03H (2) Head-to-head. Winner of Head-to-head match-up 2.03H (3) Sets. Loser of the fewest number of sets. 2.03H (4) Games. Loser of the fewest number of games. 2.03H (5) Percentage. Percentage of

games won vs games played.

- K. **Coaching:** Coaching is NOT permitted at any time during league matches using a Match Tie-break in lieu of the 3rd set.
- L. **Failure to Sign a Scorecard:** If a team Captain or their designee fails to sign a completed scorecard and can not be located to do so within 1 hour, the scorecard will be automatically confirmed.
- M. **Point Penalty System:** Will be utilized for all matches at Southwest Section League Championships.
- N. **Weather Delays:** In the event of a delay caused by rain or unplayable conditions at Section Championships, the Tournament Director may authorize tournament start times to be extended to **12:30 PM on the final day of play**. If by 12:30 the Tournament Director determines that matches can not be completed, all matches and results previously played will stand and final championship results will be determined by those standings.
- O. **Conduct:** Players, teammates, spectators or coaches who interfere and/or are disruptive at matches or the tournament desk are considered to have violated the standards of good conduct, fair play and good sportsmanship required by "THE CODE". This includes conduct before, during and after the completion of a match. Teammates, spectators, or coaches may not volunteer advice on line calls, scoring, on the conduct of the match, or the running of a tournament (at desk). It is the responsibility of the teams to control their spectators' and/or players at all matches. Violators are subject to grievances and/or penalties imposed by an Official and/or Championship Tournament Grievance Committee.
- P. **Total Team Defaults: The Southwest Section Championships (and the local leagues)** shall adhere to the National League Regulations regarding Total Team Defaults (2.03L): If a team defaults an entire team match for any reason during round robin play, then all matches of that team played, or to be played, shall be null and void when determining standings. If all teams in contention for the championships have already played the defaulting team in good faith, those matches stand as played. The Section may impose further penalties on said team.
- Q. **Leaving Before Completion of Championship:** Teams leaving before completion of the Section Championship MUST obtain permission from the tournament director. Teams leaving without permission will forfeit their security deposit and are subject to a grievance, which may result in sanctions up to, but not including 12 months suspensions. (Sanctions shall be determined by the SWS League Grievance Committee).
- R. **Photo ID Requirement:** All participants at Southwest Section Championships are required to provide their photo identification when called for their individual court and to meet their opponents for their first match. Whether their first match is on Friday or Sunday. Players who fail to do so, must show their identification before their next match or will not be allowed to compete for the rest of the championship.
- S. **Wildcard Opportunities at Championships:** The following Wildcard Procedures will be followed, with discretion, by the Local League Coordinators in partnership with the SW Section League Manager:
 - 1. **At the Southwest Section Championship events, a Wildcard team may be invited from qualified local league teams when there are 3, 5, or 7 teams in any Adult 18 & over, Adult 40 & Over, Adult 55 & Over and Adult 65 & Over. Any Wildcard team must be composed of a minimum % of rostered participants at level and approved by the local league coordinator to be offered a wildcard invitational. If a Wildcard team does not meet this requirement, they must defer the Wildcard to the next Region in the rotation.**
 - 2. **Wildcard teams must be able to field enough players to fill all courts for all matches at the championship event. They must confirm and accept or defer the invitation, by contacting their league coordinator within 48 hours of being invited. If a Region accepts a Wildcard, they will move to the bottom of the Wildcard Rotation Schedule in that division and level only.**
 - 3. **In the event that a team withdraws from the Sectional Championships ten (10) days prior or less from the start of championship play, the Wildcard**

Spot will be offered as per the Wildcard Rotation Schedule and the invited team will have 48 hours to accept or decline the invitation. If they decline, a Wildcard team may be invited by the Section League Manager from the section championship host Region. The Region in which the team who withdrew last minute will be moved to the bottom of the Wildcard Rotation schedule as a penalty.

4. **55 & Over Wildcard: For the Adult 55 & Over Section Championship ONLY**, for divisions with 4 teams, additional wildcard spots will be awarded if the following criteria is met: For the individual division, there must be at least two (2) Regions with Local League seasons with a minimum of four (4) teams that participated in a valid local league. In the event this requirement is met, two (2) second place teams from the Region with four (4) or more teams will be invited to attend the Section championships as wildcard teams. Teams will be added per the Wildcard Rotation Schedule, increasing the division from four (4) teams to six (6).
5. **Mixed Doubles:** No Wildcard teams will be offered for the Mixed Doubles Section Championships as long as the event includes both Mixed 18 & Over and Mixed 40 & Over league types.
6. **Section Championships Sites:** SWS League Championship dates and locations shall be determined by the SWS League Committee.
7. **First Aid:** The Section League Manager will try to obtain the services of Professional Trainers, 1 per site, at each of the 2021 Section League Championships and Invitationals to treat minor injuries and health concerns. In the order that they are not able to secure one's services an unmanned First Aid Station will be available for teams the participants use. Players should monitor their own general health during matches and alert the tournament staff in case of an injury or a serious health issue requiring EMS.
8. **Officials:** At least 1 Certified Official will be present at USTA Southwest Section League Championships, additional officials may be added to championships per the discretion of the USTA Southwest Section League Manager.
9. **Section Championship Grievance Policy:** A filing fee of **\$50.00** will be charged for all League Grievances filed at SW Section League Championships. The fee will be refunded if the grievance is upheld, and retained by the Section if the grievance is denied. All League Grievances filed at Section Championships will be processed in compliance with the USTA National League Regulations. Any NTRP League Grievance that is **submitted during a District or Section level championship, will be held and submitted to the SWS League Grievance Committee at the conclusion of the event, for processing for consistency.**

III. **SWS TRI-LEVEL LEAGUES**

Tri-Level Format is approved by the Southwest Section and is intended to provide an additional play opportunity for our members. Tri-Level Leagues are approved for all Regions, and are particularly suited to Regions, cities and facilities, with too few players to participate in regular USTA Leagues. If you want to play with friends at different NTRP levels or if you are having a hard time getting enough people together to form a USTA League team, Tri-Level is for you. This socially competitive league is a great way to enjoy the camaraderie of friends in the ultimate team experience.

A. REGULATIONS

1. **General Requirements**
 - a) **USTA Membership is required.**
 - b) **Participants must be 18 years of age or older to register and participate in this league.**
 - c) Each team must have a **Captain** who is responsible for their team management.
 - d) The USTA Rules of Tennis and the USTA National League Regulations, the Friend at Court, and THE CODE shall apply except as amended and/or clarified in these regulations.
2. **Local Leagues**
 - a) Local Leagues shall be **administered by the Local League**

Coordinator, must be set up in Tennislink and all match results must be posted on Tennislink.

- b) **Early Start Leagues are NOT approved for Tri-Level:** Early Start Leagues are not an option for Tri-Level. Local League Seasons scheduled in the fall shall be part of the current championship year and may not be scheduled as Early Start Leagues (rationale: the Section Championship and The National Invitational occur in the following year). **Players must use a current Year End Rating or be Self Rated to register for a local league Tri-Level team.**
- c) **All Matches in the Tri-Level Leagues will be included in Year End Ratings Calculations and Publication.** If matches are played after the current year match deadline for Year End Ratings Publication, those matches will be included in the next year's rating calculations.
- d) **Local League Format:** Local Leagues must consist of 2 or more teams in the Women's and/or Men's divisions in **any three (3) consecutive NTRP Levels. Ex: 2.5, 3.0 & 3.5. Or 3.0, 3.5, 4.0. The Leagues using the 3 levels of 3.5, 4.0, 4.5 will be invited to advance their winning teams in the women's and men's divisions to the SWS Tri-Level Invitational.** The local league may opt to play a traditional round robin league season; or may opt to play a team-based tournament format with the men's and women's teams competing in a single elimination or round robin tournament.
- e) **A Team:** shall consist of a minimum of 6 people of the same gender and should consist of a minimum of one doubles team in each of the designated NTRP levels. Players are allowed to "Play up" to form a doubles team, but may not "play down".
- f) **A Team Match:** will consist of 3 doubles matches played simultaneously (i.e. 3.5D, 4.0D, 4.5D). With the approval of the Section League Manager, Regions may opt to add an additional NTRP level to the local league format (i.e. add 3.0 and play 4 doubles courts), however, only the 3.5, 4.0 and 4.5 NTRP Divisions (3 doubles matches) will be invited to attend the Section Invitational.
- g) **No more than .5 differential in the NTRP rating of the players in each doubles team is allowed.**
- h) **Match Scoring:** will be the best of 2-Tie-Break Sets with a Match Tie-break in lieu of the third set. The Coman Tie-Break Procedure will be used in all Tie-Breaks.
- i) **A Team Win:** will be awarded to the team winning 2 out of 3 individual matches. (Regions who opt to include additional NTRP Divisions will determine winners by following the Tie-Break order as per National League Regulations 2.03H.)
- j) **Advancement to the SW Section Tri-Level Invitational:** Local League winners in the men's and women's divisions (3.5, 4.0, 4.5) will advance to the SWS Tri-Level Invitational. **Players are required to play a minimum of two matches during the local league season with their team and may have 1 default awarded to count as an eligible match.** Teams must have at least 1 doubles team in each of the NTRP designated levels able to attend the Section Tri-Level Championship in order to be invited to participate.

IV. SWS SECTION LEAGUE INVITATIONAL

- A. **Players must have a valid USTA Membership and a valid USTA Computer (C) rating by the end of the year in which they played their local league to be eligible to participate in the Section invitational.**
- B. **Section Invitational NTRP Requirements:**
 - 1. **Self-Rated Players:** who do not generate a Computer (C) rating at year end, are NOT eligible to advance to the SW Section Tri-Level Invitational.
 - 2. **NTRP Computer Rating Requirements:** Only Year End NTRP Computer (C) Rated Players may advance to the Section Tri-Level Invitational. Players may

use their current existing Computer Rating or the Computer Rating earned at year end.

- a. A 2019 Computer Rated 3.5 player who gets bumped up at year end to a 2021 computer rated 4.0 may play at the 3.5 level.
- b. 2. A 2019 computer rated 4.0 player who gets bumped down at year end 2021 to a 3.5, must play at the 4.0 level.
- c. A 2021 Self Rated Player (S), Mixed (M), or Appealed (A) who earns a year end 2021 Computer Rating must play at the NTRP level of their new 2021 Year End Rating.
- d. NO S, T, M, or A rated players will be eligible to advance to the SW Section Tri-Level Invitational. All players must have a Computer (C) Rating.

C. Date and Location: Southwest Section Tri-Level Invitational shall be held in January of the following year in which the local leagues were played. Location is determined by the Section League Manager. The event will be run over a maximum of three (3) days.

D. Wildcards: will only be offered if a division has 3 or fewer teams advancing and/or a winning team withdraws within 14 days of the invitational.

E. Format: The Southwest Section Invitational is played in a round robin format.

F. Advancement Opportunity: National Tri-Level Invitational In March of 2022.

G. Move-up/Split-up Rules: Move-up/Split-up will not apply to the Tri-Level Championship Teams.

V. SWS 65 & OVER LEAGUE

A. REGULATIONS

1. The USTA Friend at Court, Rules and Regulations of Tennis including THE CODE, and the USTA League Regulations shall apply except as amended and/or clarified by these regulations.
2. **USTA Membership** required.
3. **Valid NTRP computer or self-rating** is required with TennisLink.
4. The matches must be set up through TennisLink and all results posted there.
5. Each team must have a **captain** who is responsible for their team registration on TennisLink.
6. Participants must **be 65 years or older** prior to or during the calendar year in which such player competes in his/her first local league match.
7. **A team** shall consist of a minimum of 6 people of the same gender.
8. **The format** will be "Combo NTRP" format (doubles teams of combined NTRP levels of 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, etc. with no more than 1 point spread between partners).
9. **A team match** shall consist of 3 doubles matches.
10. **Match format** will be best 2-out-of-3 tiebreak sets with a Match 10 point tie-break in lieu of the 3rd set. Coman Tiebreak Procedure will be used in all tie-breaks.
11. A **Local League** must consist of 2 or more teams in a division and shall be administered by the Local League Coordinator.
12. Each division within a local league shall play a traditional **round robin** wherein every team plays every other team. Divisions may be divided into flights and each team shall play every other team in its flight, and flight winners may enter a playoff structure determined by the Region.
13. Players must have played a minimum of two matches with one default being allowed to count toward qualification.
14. The Southwest Section exercises its option that Sectional Championship winners will NOT be required to **move up or split up** as required by the USTA League Rules and Regulations for 18 Over, 40 & Over, 55 & Over and Mixed.

VI. SWS SECTION LEAGUE INVITATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP REGULATIONS

- A. At such times that there are more than 2 local leagues qualifying teams to advance, the Southwest Section will offer Section Championships.
- B. **Section Invitational Championship. Regions that run a local league will be eligible to send the winner of their local league as their regions Advancing Team to participate in the Section Invitational. Regions that are unable to run a local league**

will be eligible to send 1 team, from each NTRP Level even if they have not had a local League.. (Note: To be considered for the event, a team must be able to field all courts within .5 of the playing level. Ex. For a 7.0 league, all qualifying combos must be at least 6.5) Wildcard Teams may be invited, as per the 65 & Over Wildcard Rotation Schedule, to invite up to 6 teams to fill each division for the invitational. Regions who did not have local league play in each division will not be eligible to send Wildcard teams. To be eligible to participate at the USTA Southwest 65 and Over Section League Invitational Championship all players must have a valid USTA membership, a current NTRP rating and must meet the minimum match requirement.

1. Players must have played a minimum of two matches with one default being allowed to count toward qualification. Teams and/or players who do not meet the minimum match requirements may submit a waiver for consideration to the Section Waiver Committee.
2. Teams must have a minimum of six players eligible and available to participate in all scheduled matches of the Championship.
3. The championship will be run over a maximum of three days.
4. Location of the championship is to be determined, and may be held in conjunction with an existing League Championship event or in December 2021.
5. The event will be conducted similar to existing Section championships, but with a more social atmosphere.
6. Section League Coordinator will run the section championship event with the assistance of the Local League Coordinators fielding teams to the Sectional Championships.
7. A player registration entry fee will be charged to help defray costs.
8. Round Robin format. Section Championship winners shall be eligible to advance to the National League 65+ Invitational event held in the first quarter of the following year.