

USTA MIDDLE STATES

2024 USTA Middle States Section Regulations

The USTA League Program in **2024** is as follows. It is composed of two Divisions: Adult and Mixed. The age groups for play at the national include 18, 40 & 55 & Over for the Adult division and 18 & 40 & Over for Mixed Doubles division. USTA Middle States will also offer Adult 65 & Over, Tri Level, and Mixed 55 & Over.

USTA League Tennis National and Section Regulations have full force and applicability at all levels of play in USTA League Tennis in the USTA Middle States Section (USTA MS) and there is no authorization to modify, amplify or change them by local or area league coordinators, or Grievance or Grievance Appeals Committees. These rules apply to all age groups.

The Middle States League Manager, in conjunction with USTA Middle States Section League-Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman, shall have the authority to interpret the USTA Middle States Section Regulations.

USTA League Regulations (National and Middle States) are available on the USTA Web site

<https://www.usta.com/en/home/play/adult-tennis/programs/middlestates/usta-middle-states-league-tennis.html>

It is expected that captains and players will treat coordinators with respect when communicating with them – either in person or in e-mail. Respectful treatment of each other will add to an enjoyable league experience. Consequences such as suspension from league play will result if players deviate from this expectation.

GENERAL

OFFICIAL LEAGUE REGISTRATION: Each district shall establish deadlines and procedures for registering teams/players on TennisLink. All leagues (including those that will be played at section championship) must have the minimum number of players registered by **December 1 for Tri Level 4.5, January 1 for Tri Level 4.0**, April 1 for **Mixed 18, 40, & 55 & Over**, July 1 for Adult 18 & Over, and August 1 for Adult 40 & Over and for Adult 55 & 65 & Over.

All players must register through TennisLink before playing in a team match. If a player has difficulty registering before a match, he/she must notify the coordinator in writing – email or text - before match play for the match to count. A player may transfer to a different team up to the final date for registration provided that individual has not played a match or received credit for a default.

Players who submit an appeal to their self-rating through the TennisLink system before their local league deadline to register players will be permitted to register if the appeal is granted.

OFFICIAL SCORE REPORTING AND STANDINGS SYSTEM: All scheduled matches must be completed and scores reported in TennisLink within 48 hours of the completed team match. TennisLink will automatically confirm scores 48 hours after the team match is initially reported in TennisLink if not confirmed by opposing captain. Both captains are responsible to report or confirm match scores.

All matches must be completed and scores reported by the deadline established by district rules unless coordinator approves a later date. Teams that do not comply with this requirement may not advance to any championship level.

AMENDMENTS These USTA MS Section Regulations may be amended by the Section League Committee.

LEAGUE COMMITTEE: The USTA MS section league program shall be governed by the USTA MS League Committee appointed by the president of the USTA MS section and subject to the control and direction of the USTA MS section Board of Directors. All coordinators (Area and Local) shall receive their direction from the League Manager

General

Roster Limit 25

Scoring in Local League. All 2024 leagues will use Points Per Position.

Points Per Position (PPP) is a USTA League scoring format whereby individual courts of a team match played are awarded points based on position played. (No team point would be awarded in this format, and points accumulate throughout the competition. The point assignments are as follows:

- For 5-court Adult Leagues the points will be: 5, 4, 5, 4, 3 for 2 singles and 3 doubles; for 1 singles and 4 doubles it will be 5, 6, 5, 4, 3.
- For 3-court Adult and Mixed Doubles Leagues – all doubles - the points will be: 4, 3, 2. For 2.5 and 5.0, the points will be 3, 4, 2.
- For 4-court Adult Leagues – 1 singles and 3 doubles, the points will be 5, 5, 4, 3.
- For 4-court Mixed Doubles Leagues, the points will be 5, 4, 3, 3.

Flight winners will be determined by the total number of individual match points won.

Section Crossover Rule

CROSSOVER RULE DEFINITIONS:

Seasons: Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall

Districts: Allegheny Mountain, Central Pennsylvania, Delaware, Eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Philadelphia Area.

Crossover Player: A player that is registered on more than one Middle States Adult League team at the same NTRP and age levels.

Crossover Rule: Regulations pertaining to Crossover Players allowed to participate on a team during any Middle States Adult League Championships.

Crossover Limit: The maximum number of Crossover Players allowed on a team at the same NTRP and age levels.

- No more than 4 Crossover Players in a 4 or 5-court USTA National League Program, or
- No more than 3 Crossover Players in a 3-court USTA National League Program

Crossover Players in Violation: Crossover Players exceeding the applicable Crossover Limit. i.e., 3-court league, 4- or 5-court league.

Player Registration: ALL players MUST register for the team they are playing for at any Middle States Adult League Championship. Registration will be in the form of the District Championship Registration JotForm. A player can only register and play for one team at the same NTRP and age per District at a single Championship (e.g. a player cannot play for two Adult 18 and Over 3.0 teams at EPD Districts).

Declaration of Intent: Crossover Players in Violation MUST declare which team they will play for at any Middle States Adult League Championship. The Player Registration will be used as a Declaration of Intent.

APPLICATION OF CROSSOVER RULE

Same Season, Different Districts

Players may play in various districts in the same season at the same NTRP level and age level in accordance with district regulations. Crossover Players in Violation (i.e. more than 4 players in a 4 or 5-court USTA National League Program, or 3 players in a 3 court USTA National League Program) may NOT play together on the same teams in more than one district. This rule only applies to teams playing in Middle States. Penalties may include player disqualification for those teams in violation of this crossover rule.

The League Manager will notify the captains of teams with Crossover Players in Violation and allow them to choose which player(s) will be ineligible. In the absence of agreement, the most recent player(s) to register will be ineligible.

Same District, Different Seasons

Players may play in leagues at the same NTRP and age levels that are offered in different seasons and within the same district. If 2 or more teams with the same captain / co-captain win their Local League; exceed the Crossover Limit, and play in a different season, only one team may advance. The captain/players choose which team advances and must guarantee a minimum number of players committed for championships (8 or 9 for the 5 court teams, 5 or 6 for 3-court teams).

If the two or more teams have different captains, the Player Registration for District Championships will be used for each Crossover Player in Violation as a written Declaration of Intent. After the Declaration of Intent, if one team does not have enough players to field a team at District Championships (8 or 9 for the 5 court teams, 5 or 6 for 3 court teams), the second-place team from that local league will advance. Crossover Players in Violation may play for another team for which they are qualified and go through the Player Registration process if the initially declared team does not advance. There may be a local league playoff among flight winners to determine representatives to districts.

Different Districts; Different Seasons

Crossover Players may exceed the Crossover Limit on teams in more than one district at the same NTRP and age levels within different seasons and in the same championship year.

However, if there are Crossover Players in Violation, in more than one district, at the same NTRP and age levels in different seasons, and those teams have won a local league, the Player Registration for District Championships will be used for each Crossover Player in Violation as a written Declaration of Intent.

After the Declaration of Intent, if one team does not have enough players to field a team at districts (8 or 9 for the 5 court teams and 5 or 6 for 3 court teams), the second-place team from that local league will advance. If the declared team does not advance past District Championships, the player may play for another team for which they are qualified and go through the same Player Registration process.

If there is no District Championship

If there is no district championship for a particular level or district and a winning team is in violation of the Crossover Rule with a district that has a district championship, the Player Registration for District Championships will be used for each Crossover Player in Violation as a written Declaration of Intent. If either team does not have enough players to advance to championship level, the second-place team in the local league will advance.

Electronic Devices

During the playing of a match (including during changeovers), the use of cell phones or other electronic devices (including smart watches) is prohibited. This includes cell phone ringing, texting, or answering. Any violation will be penalized as follows: 1st Offense....1 Point 2nd Offense....1 Game 3rd Offense....Default. Any wearable devices must be put on Do Not Disturb mode.

LOCAL LEAGUE SEASON: All local leagues shall obtain approval of the League Manager for the dates of the local league season(s) within the Middle States section. The Area/Local League Coordinator shall establish match schedules. In case of staggered matches, team captains must agree in advance (in writing – e-mail) on start time for each individual match. The host captain has the final say if no agreement can be reached about the order of courts. 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. Generally, two (2) hours should be allotted for each court match.

Early Start Leagues: 2.05B3(b) Players 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 any Early Start League in progress or until such other date or championship level as determined by the Section. They shall not be permitted to advance to any National Championship at the lower NTRP level. Prior team matches played are valid. Players whose year-end rating is “clearly above level” must move up immediately. In Middle States, players must move up not later than January 1, 2024. Players may not advance to championships with the rostered rating if they are moved up.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES: Grievance forms are available on the Middle States Web site. All districts will have a grievance and a grievance appeal committee in place. The section shall approve all League Grievance and Grievance Appeal Committees. Sanctions imposed by grievance decisions will be applicable to all divisions (Adult and Mixed) in the USTA section league program. For example, if a player is suspended in the adult division, he/she cannot play in the mixed division sponsored by USTA. All grievances must be sent to the Area League Coordinator for each district.

An updated list of the Suspension Point rules as well as the Suspension Point Calculation Table can be found [HERE](#).

NTRP GRIEVANCES. The USTA MS section will administer NTRP Grievances. Complaints should be first delivered to the manager of leagues, who will forward to the Middle States NTRP Grievance Committee Chairman. This committee will have jurisdiction over grievances filed against any player and/or captain who enters or condones entering at one level when their actual skill level is at the top of the next NTRP level or higher. NTRP Grievances filed within two weeks of the start date of the player’s and/or captain’s District or Section Championships will be administered after the event unless the section authorizes the administration of the grievance prior to that time. If the grievance is not administered until after the event, points won by players will stand. Disqualified players and/or captains that are suspended will not be eligible to advance to the next level of championship. NTRP Grievance Protocol is available on- line.

MATCH PROCEDURES

SCORING. Each district may determine the match format for local league competition.

Point Penalty System (PPS)

1. The USTA Point Penalty System for lateness will be in effect unless amended in district rules.
2. The PPS will be in effect at all championships starting with Area/District.

Penalties for Lateness (*Friend at Court*)

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:** Default

Warm-up: Warm-up including serves must be taken before the match begins. Warm-up should be no longer than 10 minutes. Warm-up is never forfeited because of lateness.

Team Match and Scoring: 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. **Any team that defaults an entire team match may not advance to championship level.** Teams forfeiting an entire team match may receive further penalties.

If a team is knocked out of championships because of invalid matches or full-team defaults, a playoff will be scheduled between the teams affected.

For each team match, a majority of the individual matches must actually be played by the 2 teams to constitute a valid team match. In accordance with National Regulation 2.01C: If the majority of courts in team matches are not played, the results entered will not count for determining standings- for example: 2 courts in a 3-court match and 3 courts in a 4 or 5 court match. Coordinators will remind captains that the minimum number of matches must be played and assist in rescheduling if asked. Teams will be required to make up defaulted courts when teams have played fewer than the minimum number of courts to comply with these regulations. **For purposes of standings, invalid matches will be treated as full team defaults.**

Team Lineups: Team captains shall exchange lineups simultaneously PRIOR to the scheduled start time of a team match. An individual match is started when the first ball is put in play (first serve attempt). After the start of an individual match, if injury to, illness of, or disqualification of a player occurs, the opponents will be awarded a default for that individual match only.

1. When a match is postponed to another day and an individual match has not started (as defined above) a captain may change the lineup for any such match. **Announced defaults may be reinstated.**
2. In the event of rain, completed individual matches will stand as played. Incomplete matches must be continued by the same players and resumed at the exact score as they stood when halted (any point played is always counted and never replayed). If teams have assembled to play and the beginning of the match is delayed by rain or wet courts, teams must wait no longer than one hour past the originally scheduled time for the start of the first match to determine if the courts are playable. If courts are still not playable after one hour has elapsed, teams are free to leave and reschedule unless BOTH captains agree to wait longer.
3. Postponements: Matches may be rescheduled for the following reasons only:
 - *Adverse weather conditions
 - *Unexpected court availability issues
 - *USTA league playoff matches. Local league matches will be rescheduled upon request if a team has 4 players in a 4 or 5 court program, 3 players in a 3-court program involved in a district, section, or national championship. Teams should play as many courts as possible on the scheduled day. The players in question must be representing Middle States or a district within Middle States. Four day's notice in writing (email) to the opposing captain is required.
5. Two doubles players will play together in the higher position when both of their partners do not arrive in time in order to avoid two defaults.

A player may play on more than one team at the same NTRP level, if they are playing in different districts. Areas are responsible for establishing and imposing penalties upon those players who violate area rules. Players who qualify may play at more than one level at any championship. The schedule will not be written to accommodate playing at more than one level. If eligible players do not participate at the district championships, they may participate in the section and/or national championships.

DETERMINING LOCAL LEAGUE WINNERS

When all matches in a flight have been entered into TennisLink, the number one team will advance to championships. TennisLink uses National Rule: 2.03H "Procedures in the Event of a Tie" in the national rulebook to break ties. If two teams are tied in points at season's end, the winner will be the team that scored more points in head-to-head matches. If three teams are tied, the team with the most points against each other will advance. TennisLink standings are final.

CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Coman Tie-break Procedure will be used at all championship levels for both the set tiebreak and the match tiebreak. Teams must be able to play all courts in a championship. A waiver may be granted if you apply to the championships committee.

For championships, see 2:03H in the national rulebook to determine the Procedures in the Event of a Tie: Overall matches won, courts won, head-to-head. If 3 teams are tied in matches and courts won, sets lost and games lost will come into play.

The format for winning teams to progress from local league competition to Section League Championships is as follows:

DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIPS: The district shall determine the progression from local league to Section Championship. This process – including the structure for any playoffs or championships (flight, area, for example) - shall be distributed in writing to team captains prior to the start of the local league season.

SECTION CHAMPIONSHIPS: Section Championship format shall be round robin in all levels of competition. Each team shall play every other team in its flight and the team with the most team points shall be champion in its flight. In the event of a tie in team points, the winner shall be decided by using 2.03H in the national rulebook. Each team shall be scheduled for a minimum of three (3) matches in either a championship or a local league played during championships. Any level with 2 or 3 teams at Sectionals will play at least 2 matches. For the 2-team levels, if these matches are not won by the same team, a third match will be played.

WILD CARD PROCEDURE: If a team pulls out of the championship after the schedule is published, we will name a wild card to take that opening as follows. If there is an opening at more than one level, this process will be repeated for each level of play.

1. Ask second place team if that team does not accept.
2. Pull a district name at random and invite the 2nd place team from that district and proceed alphabetically until all districts have responded or until a team accepts (If we pull Delaware and they cannot send a team, we will ask Eastern Penn, etc.).
3. We will not invite all teams in a local league flight **in a two-team league.**

LEAGUE NTRP DISQUALIFICATION AND REVIEW PROCEDURES

LOCAL LEAGUE PROCEDURES: Disqualified players may register on a higher-level team if a team agrees and there is time to register prior to the end of local round robin competition. District regulations for deadlines and roster limits would be waived if a team is found and time permits.

SCORING PROCEDURES

During Local League: If a player (rating type A, S, M, T) is disqualified for that particular level of play, the match that caused the disqualification will be reversed. (e.g. If a player is disqualified at 3.0 and the last strike happened in a 3.5 match, no matches will be reversed. If the strike occurs while playing on a 3.0 team, that match will be reversed.)

In championship play, the section chooses National Regulation option **2.04B(2)a** for 2023. Run dynamic calculations and produce ratings throughout the championship. For those players that meet the criteria for NTRP dynamic disqualification, all matches will be reversed for disqualified players (2.04E(2)a). In single elimination formats only the

last match will be reversed (2.04E(2)b). Only players with the following rating types A, S, M, T or D are subject to disqualification. The deadline for filing a Request for Review of Dynamic DQ at championships is one hour from the time of notification.

2.06A– NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS TEAMS - MOVE -UP/SPLIT- UP RULE:

2.06A(1): Move-Up - Teams and team members that advanced to, or qualified for, any National Championship may play together as a team, in whole or in part, if they move up one NTRP team level.

2.06A(2): Split-Up - No more than three (3) players who were on the roster of any team that advanced to, or qualified for, any National Championship team the previous year may play together in the same Division, same Age Group and at the same NTRP team level as the National Championship team(s), if their NTRP rating allows. Split-Up requirements only apply to players who participated in three (3) or more matches for that team during the championship year.

Move-Up/Split-Up regulations are not applicable to the Adult 65&Over, 55&Over Mixed, or Tri Level Invitational Leagues.

YEAR-END NTRP COMPUTER RATINGS AND APPEAL PROCEDURES

Match results from tournaments will not be included in year-end calculation of ratings.

Players who want to appeal their self-rating must complete the on-line appeal form available on the last screen during the self-rate process. The NTRP Appeal Committee will investigate the information provided in the self-rate appeal form as soon as possible. Medical appeals shall be sent to **Evan Schreiner**, eschreiner@ms.usta.com, who will forward them to the Section Medical Appeals Committee.

October 16, 2023

2024

USTA Middle States League Committee: Chair: **Wilson Pipkin**

NTRP Appeal Committee: Jay Witmer, Jon Feinstein, Heather Gallagher

Other Middle States Committees are formed as necessary first utilizing members of the USTA MS League Committee and Subcommittees and then other committee members selected by the Middle States League Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Championship	Team Format (all Championships)	Matches required for districts/section	Matches required for Nationals	Location (Sectional)	Date (Sectional)
Mixed 18 & Over	3 doubles – combined rating (max 1.0 apart)	2 played, 1 may be received default*	3 matches, 1 default received**	Landisville, PA	May 31-June 2
Mixed 40 & Over	3 doubles – combined rating (max 1.0 apart)	2 played, 1 may be by received default*	3 matches, 1 default received**	Landisville, PA	June 7-9
Mixed 55 & Over	3 doubles – combined rating (max 1.0 apart)	2 played, 1 may be by received default	2 matches, 1 default received	Landisville, PA	May 31-June 2
Adult 18 & Over	3.0,3.5, 4.0,4.5: 2 singles, 3 doubles; 2.5, 5.0 - 1 singles 2 doubles	2 played, 1 may be received default*	3 matches, 1 default received**	Princeton, NJ	August 16-18
Adult 40 & Over	3.0,3.5, 4.0,4.5 - Format to be decided locally - 1 singles and 4 doubles for all championships	2 played, 1 may be received default*	3 matches, 1 default received**	Princeton, NJ	September 6-8
Adult 55 & Over	6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0 – 3 doubles	2 played, 1 may be by default received*	3 matches, 1 default received**	Landisville, PA	September 13-15
Adult 65 & Over	3 doubles – combined rating (max 1.0 apart)	2 played, 1 may be by default received	2 played, 1 may be by default received	Wilmington, DE	September 27-29

***Self-rated and computer- rated appealed players must have two played matches on the same team and no defaults received to play at championships within Middle States.**

****Self-rated and computer-rated appealed players must have 4 played matches on the same team and no defaults received to play at National Championships.**