

2027 USTA Northern Illinois - District League Rules and Procedures

Current USTA League Regulations, USTA/Midwest Section Standing Orders, The Code, Friend at Court, and Local League Rules and Procedures apply to all Adult Leagues. The USTA Suspension Point System will be applied to all matters of conduct. Rules and procedures can be found on USTA, Midwest Section, and NITA Websites. Rule references if applicable are listed. Interpretation of the NITA USTA League Rules is within the authority of the NITA District League Coordinator and the NITA USTA League Committee.

Note: Items in red reflect changes to 2027 Rules.

Seasons- Midwest Reg. 1.04D(3)

The start date and end dates of each league season is determined by the NITA USTA League Committee. These dates can be found in the NITA League Calendar posted on the website.

NITA League Tennis seasons include the following:

- Winter- January through April
- Summer- May through late July
- ESL/Fall- September through December
- Daytime, Other and Non Progressing leagues may play at any time that has been approved by NITA

Winter and ESL/Fall leagues are indoor. Weekend league matches are Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Summer matches may be outdoor and weeknight matches are an option. Seasons may be extended by the NITA USTA League Committee.

Match Start Times

- All seasons-weeknight indoor and outdoor-no earlier than 6:30pm and no later than 8:00pm*
- All seasons-weekend indoor or outdoor-no earlier than 9:00am and no later than 8:00pm*
- Summer-outdoor matches must start by 7:00pm or be played at lighted facilities

Minimum Number of Players 1.04D(4)

Each league season will have a deadline set for teams to ensure the minimum number of players are registered. The minimum number of players required that are registered for Adult 18&Over and Adult 40&Over **must be at level. 40% of all players must be at level.** Failure to comply with the deadline could result in team withdrawals.

Registration Deadline Midwest Reg 1.04D(3)d

Registration for players with rating types other than computer rated "C" will close two weeks prior to the end of the season. Players with Computer Ratings may register up until the last day of the season, but must contact the DLC for registration assistance during the last two weeks of the season as registration is locked.

Team Withdrawals

- If a team withdraws from the league, it is the responsibility of the DLC to notify each captain at the affected level.
- It is the responsibility of each Captain to notify their club regarding court cancellations.
- It is the responsibility of each Captain to notify their players of the withdrawal.
- Teams withdrawing after the local league schedule has been published on TennisLink may be subject to disciplinary action by the NITA/USTA Adult League Committee.

Competition Format

In general, all NITA teams/leagues will play a round robin competition.

- Local league matches will be the best of three, tiebreak sets with a match tiebreak (first to 10 by margin of 2) played in lieu of a third set (see Appendix A- Time Restriction Rules).
- Sub-flight playoffs and District Championship matches will be the best of three, tiebreak sets with a match tiebreak (first to 10 by margin of 2) played in lieu of a third set.

Team Match Length and Court Format

Team matches will be scheduled for two hours.

Teams must have the majority of courts available to play per USTA Section Standing Order 2.01C(3)a or the entire match will be defaulted or double defaulted.

- **Adult 18 & Over-** all seasons
Women - 1 Singles and 3 Doubles**
Men - 2 Singles and 3 Doubles
- **Adult 40 & Over-** all seasons
Women and Men - 1 Singles and 3 Doubles** (leagues may vote to play the championship format)
- **Adult 55 & Over, Adult 65 & Over, Mixed Divisions, Combo, and Tri Level** - all seasons
Women and Men - 3 Doubles Daytime and other non-progressing leagues may choose their format which must be approved by the NITA Committee.

**Advancing teams must be prepared to fill all positions required for Championship Format play per USTA League Regulation 1.04A.

Court Format may be changed by majority vote of Captains/Teams in each league.

Standings

TennisLink is the official system for reporting scores and providing standings for USTA Leagues and will be used to determine NITA League winners. Please be aware of these special cases:

- In the case of a Perfect Tie (occurs when both teams participating in a match win/lose the same number of individual courts, sets, and games), the match win will be awarded to the winner of Court 1 Doubles. **Please notify DLC of Tie** - See Appendix A Note 2
- Scoring of Retirements - see USTA League Regulation 2.03N
- Entire Team Defaults will count as a win for the team receiving the default*. In the event that less than the majority of courts have been played, those individual matches actually played will be defaulted and will count only for NTRP ratings and advancement per USTA League Regulation 2.01C(3). Those matches can NOT count towards standings.

*If an entire team default, retirement, etc. occurs during any season that affects the league standings at the end of the season, the NITA USTA Adult League Committee has the right to review the impact on those standings and make justifiable changes. One entire team default received by the first place team in the final season standings will not be subject to review. **Captains are expected to make reasonable efforts to avoid a total team default whenever possible.**

Tie Break Procedure for Standings:

- 2.03H(2)a Individual Matches: Winner of the most individual matches in the entire competition.
- 2.03H(2)b Head-to-Head: Winner of head-to-head match only if all tied teams have played each other and one team defeated all the teams that are tied.
- 2.03H(2)c Sets: Loser of the fewest number of sets.
- 2.03H(2)d Games: Loser of the fewest number of games.
- 2.03H(2)e Game Winning Percentage: Total games won divided by total games played.
- 2.03H(2)f A Method to be Determined by the Championships Committee.

Team Captain

Each Team must have a Captain and may have a Co-Captain.

Captain Responsibilities

- Register their teams and input scores on TennisLink
- Provide DLC with a current email address and phone number
- Club pros may be team captains but should consider a co-captain that is on the team

Captain Pre Match Responsibilities

- Home Captain must contact Opposing Captain 5 days prior to the match to confirm
 1. confirm match date/time**

2. notify if regular timed match or hard stop
3. notify if there will be an acting captain
4. notify if there will be a court default - captains may work together past this point to ensure full lineups.

**If matches are not confirmed, captains should assume they will be played as scheduled.

Distance Between Facilities

Matches that are scheduled between teams where facilities are greater than 50 miles apart may have start times on Saturday or Sunday between 10:00am and 5:00pm or be moved to a location between the two facilities unless the visiting captain agrees to play the match as scheduled.

Match Fees, Balls, Court Surfaces

- Match Fees will be the responsibility of both Captains. **The 2027 maximum fee for each player is \$28.**
- The Captain of any team using outdoor courts must provide the player fee on the team application. One can of balls is included in the match fee and will be provided by the home facility. Balls for outdoor matches will be provided by the home team at their expense.
- If a match is played at a facility with different surfaces, (ex. Hard and Clay), the visiting team captain will decide the placement of the teams on the courts.

Warm Ups and Default Times

Warm ups will be 10 minutes.

A team not having all players present by the end of the 10 minute warm up must default matches according to USTA League Regulation 2.03K

Scoring

Scorecards/Lineups will be used as a backup for the TennisLink scoring system. Both team captains will be responsible for providing the official TennisLink scorecards and providing all required information. League match scores, including defaulted courts and matches, must be recorded within 48 hours of the match completion. The home team captain is responsible for making sure the scores are entered. Captains will be notified of unreported match scores. Any scores, including defaulted courts and entire team defaults that remain unreported for more than one week may result in double default.

Any player on the scorecard for a match that was defaulted may be changed to another player up until the end of the open registration period provided that the player receiving the default was registered on the team at the date/time of the match default. Both Captains are responsible for signing and maintaining a copy of the scorecard for future reference (disputes, rating appeals, etc.) If a match is disputed, please write this on both team scorecards, enter the match as disputed in TennisLink, and immediately notify the DLC by email. **Lineups must be exchanged between each captain or acting**

captain before the players begin their matches, no screenshots are allowed. Each scoresheet must be signed by the captain or acting captain before leaving the match.

Defaults

Notification of defaults shall be made by the defaulting team captain directly to the opposing team captain no later than 48 hours prior to the match. The defaulting team, including the captain and all registered players, will be responsible for paying any court fees incurred for late notice defaults. Any team that owes fees may be prohibited from participating in future league seasons and District Championships until all fees are paid.

Entire team defaults are detrimental to the standings, player qualifications, and ratings. Due to the increased number of entire team defaults, teams will be subject to possible penalties which may include, but are not limited to:

- Suspension of play in the current season
- Exclusion from play in future seasons
- Exclusion from team captain role in future seasons
- 2 or more entire team defaults before mid session may be reviewed by the Northern Illinois Committee

Reschedules

1. It is expected that all teams make the effort to play their matches as published in the original schedule. In the event that a reschedule is necessary, it is expected that both team captains will communicate with each other in a timely fashion and make every effort to cooperate and be reasonable in facilitating the reschedule process.
2. Any team may request a reschedule no later than 1 week prior to each league season start date. The opponent is not obligated to accommodate a reschedule request made after this time unless the reschedule is due to a club constraint, such as a scheduled event or natural disaster. The DLC must be notified of the reschedule request once both captains agree on a date. These requests must be done via email for record keeping purposes.
3. A minimum of three alternate dates which are not holidays or match dates already on the opponents schedule should be offered.
4. A new match date must be confirmed by both captains and the new match date must be received by the DLC within 7 days of the missed match. Failure to comply may result in default or double default.
5. Please include the following in the correspondence with the DLC:
 - Match number
 - Level of play (ex. 3.5W 40&O)
 - Original match date
 - New match date and time

6. If a reschedule request is not resolved as outlined above, the DLC may step in to aid in the resolution of the reschedule. Should it become necessary, the DLC has the jurisdiction to do any or all of the following:
 - Request a review by the NITA/USTA League Committee. This review will likely include requests for all communications between the captains involved so that the committee can determine what attempts were made to reschedule the match.
 - Choose a new match date, time and/or location
 - Default or double default the match

Match Splitting

All courts should be played per the original format on the originally scheduled date. Match splitting will only be allowed if all courts are scheduled to play on the same day. Teams that can not field the majority of the courts will need to default the entire match.

Unavailability of Facility and Match Relocation

If home courts become unavailable or unplayable due to circumstances beyond the home team's control (ex. weather) and the home team cannot provide a reasonable back up plan, the match can reasonably be moved to the visiting team facility if courts are available and time permits. If neither team can secure backup courts for the match, it is the responsibility of both captains to reschedule the match within one week of the original match date. In the event that a team has defaulted 1 or more courts (the match is still viable) and weather or some other unforeseen incident dictates the match needs to be rescheduled, the team receiving the default may at their discretion allow those defaulted courts to be played at the new date and time of the rescheduled match. Teams that play their matches on outdoor courts for the summer season must secure indoor backup courts for matches within the last two weeks of the season to avoid entire team defaults. If the temperature is **90 degrees or hotter at the anticipated time of an outdoor match, the match may be rescheduled. The heat rule states if the air temperature at the court location is 95° or higher, matches may be rescheduled. Management of the club must consider if severe weather is a factor. If a match is rescheduled due to weather, the default is waived and the full match will be played. For interrupted outdoor play, if a match needs to be continued after play has started, captains need to note scores, side/position of players so the lines can resume with the same players and the exact score from when play was halted. Lines that have not started play may opt to change players in the line-up. If players cannot agree on a reschedule date, apply the Timed Match Procedure to see if a winner can be determined, if teams agree. Lines may be played individually if it helps to coordinate the same players in the rescheduled match.**

Progression

District Championships

Each team that wins a specific NTRP level of local league competition shall be entitled to advance to the next level of competition. In the event that a league winner chooses to default, not compete in, or is unable to participate in the Sub-Flight or District Championship, the next team in line respectively in that season that is able to compete will be asked to participate in the Championship. The District reserves the right to invite a Wild Card Team (next in line for advancing from another season) in the event that a next in line advancing team has less than a 50 percent win record or there is not a viable team to advance from that season.

In the event that the same team wins multiple seasons in the same division, the captain **may** choose which season they are representing by submitting the Championship Entry Form when requested by the DLC. Players on multiple teams that are eligible to advance must submit the Decision Form of Player before the deadline of Monday 12pm prior to the Championship. Players may also be required to submit this form in situations where their teams have the opportunity to advance from a position other than first place. The DLC will contact the runner up team if needed to ensure a representative from each season. In the event that a replacement team cannot be found in the same season, teams from other seasons will be considered based on their winning percentage. Two team leagues with the same team winning all seasons will not have a championship match. A wild card team may be considered in three team leagues when necessary if the team has a 50 percent win record or better.

- Each team that wins a level of a sub-flight playoff shall be entitled to advance to sub-flight playoffs and the winner is eligible to advance to NITA District Championship.
- Each team that wins their flight will be responsible for the applicable NITA District Championship team fee. This fee will be billed to any winning team choosing not to advance if a replacement team cannot be found. Teams with unpaid fees will be ineligible for NITA league play.
- Upon completion of the Winter Season, all captains who have teams eligible to advance in the same division for both ESL and Winter seasons (combo and tri level do not apply) will be required to submit the Championship Team Entry Form declaring their team's intention to advance. Teams that have chosen to advance with either an ESL or Winter team will also be entitled to advance for Summer in the event they win that season.
- Upon completion of the Summer Season, **all divisions** (including Combo and Tri Level) must submit an entry form declaring their team participation for the District Championship. Teams that have chosen to advance with an ESL or Winter team for Adult and Mixed leagues will be entitled to advance from the summer season in the event they win the season.

- Each team that wins their division at the District Championship will be responsible for the applicable Illinois State Championship fee. This fee will be billed to any winning team choosing not to advance representing Northern Illinois at the State Championship level if a replacement team can not be found. Teams with unpaid fees will be ineligible for NITA league play.
- If a defaulted court occurs during District Championships, the defaulting team is responsible for the payment of the defaulted court fee for both teams.
- Unless approved by NITA/USTA League Committee, there will be no special accommodations made to Championship schedules for teams/players that have won in multiple age divisions, levels of play, or divisions in multiple districts.

In the event that the same team wins multiple seasons in the same division and chooses to bring multiple teams to the District Championship, the same team parameter applies. To be considered, the same team must meet any of the following criteria: the **same team** is reasonably accepted to be the same division/age group/level and the same facility (but NOT necessarily) and the same Captain (but NOT necessarily) and consisting of the same players on both teams equal to the **minimum number of players requirement**. National Rules pg 10 minimum number requirement

****** If the same team competes at the District Championship, the following must be met:

1. The team may not participate in the District Championship unless they have a full complement of players from each team for their lineups, no defaults.
2. If a team is unable to compete or field a full team, a reasonable effort will be made to replace this team with the second-place team. This applies to 5 court leagues and 3 court leagues.
3. The teams must play each other for the first match.

Illinois State USTA League Championships

Each team that wins the NITA District Championships of a specific NTRP level shall be considered the NITA District Champion and entitled to advance to the Illinois State Championships (if applicable).

Midwest Section USTA League Championships

Each NITA team that wins the Illinois State Championship of a specific NTRP level shall be considered the Illinois State Champion and entitled to advance to the USTA/Midwest Sectional Championship (if applicable). NITA will pay the Midwest Section team entry fee for advancing teams.

National USTA League Championships

Each NITA team that wins the USTA Midwest Section Championship of a specific division/NTRP level and/or gender shall be considered the Midwest Section Champion and entitled to advance to the National USTA League Championships. The team winning the National Championship in each level of competition shall be the USTA League National Champion.

Grievance and NTRP Grievance Procedures

1. Grievance and Grievance Appeals may be time sensitive. A \$50 fee must accompany all grievance and grievance appeals. If the NITA/USTA League Grievance or Grievance Appeal Committee rules in favor of the team filing the grievance, this fee will be refunded. All grievances alleging a violation of USTA regulations must be sent to the NITA District League Coordinator and shall be filed in writing with the NITA/USTA League Grievance Committee. All administrative grievances will be sent to the USTA/Midwest Section League Grievance Committee. The fee for filing grievances will be \$50
2. **NTRP Grievances** must be sent to the USTA Midwest Section USTA League Coordinator. A \$100 fee must accompany each grievance, payable by credit card only. If the grievance is upheld with the player in question, the fee will be refunded and match(es) played by the ineligible player will be considered losses per USTA League Regulations and Midwest Section Standing Orders.
3. 3.03B(1) Any grievance alleging a violation by an individual or team during local league competition shall be filed in writing with the Local or District/Area League Coordinator or designee having jurisdiction. The grievance must be filed prior to the commencement of whichever occurs first: (a) the involved team's next match in that flight, whether or not the involved player participates or (b) within 24 hours after the end of the local league season, except for Administrative Grievances (See Reg. 3.03A(2), Eligibility Grievances (See Reg. 3.03B(3), and NTRP Grievances (See Reg. 3.03E(3)).

Appendix A

Timed Match Procedures

These rules apply to all regular season league matches. All matches must be scheduled for 2 hours in length. The timed match procedure will begin 20 minutes prior to the end of the match. All time restricted matches will consist of best of three sets with a 10 point tiebreak in lieu of a third set.

There are two types of Timed Matches - Hard Stop and Soft Timed. Both types of matches have the Timed Procedures beginning at 20 minutes before the designated end time. A Hard Stop match ends immediately at the designated time and/or sound of the buzzer (point in progress to be completed). A Soft Timed match follows the Timed Match Procedures, however, any tiebreaks should be played to completion. Prior to the start of the match, the home captain should advise the visiting captain and all participants if the match will be Hard stop or Soft Timed. If Hard Stop, the home captain should advise the official time clock that signifies the end of the match.

The home team clock can be a clock, timer or cell phone. Devices with alarms are recommended. It is the responsibility of both captains to let their players know the official time clock. All courts must use the same time clock.

Hard Stop Timed Match - If time should run out and/or buzzer sounds signaling that it is time to leave the court during any tiebreak, the team ahead by 2 points or more shall win the set. If the tiebreak score is tied or there is only a one point advantage, the set shall end in a tie. Please note that once you have entered into the last 20 minutes of the match, ALL tiebreaks in progress should be completed unless time runs out and/or the buzzer sounds to leave the court.

In order to keep the match moving:

- Play shall be continuous.
- Warm ups should not exceed 10 minutes.
- Time between points and games is 25 seconds. At the completion of a game, if there is any time left, the players must begin another game (prior to Timed Rules).
- A 90 second break will be allowed when changing sides.
- If play is indoors, you may agree to change only after the completion of a set. This should be agreed by both teams prior to the start of the match.
- Coman Tiebreaks will be used during Championships, however standard tiebreak procedures (change ends when score equals a multiple of 6) may save time. All players must agree to the type of tiebreak to be used prior to the match.

CONTINUED

IF MATCH IS IN THE **FIRST SET** AT 20 MINUTES BEFORE MATCH END:

- A game in progress should be completed using no-ad scoring (See Note 1 below).
- Team with a two game lead wins the first set.
- If games are tied, play a set tiebreak (first to 7 by margin of 2). Winner of the tiebreak wins the first set.
- If neither team is ahead by two games (a team is only ahead by 1 game), play 1 additional game using no-ad scoring. If after this additional game is played and both teams are tied, play a set tiebreak to determine the first set winner.
- Play a set tiebreak for the second set winner.
- Upon completion of the second set tiebreak, if each team has won a set, play a Match Tiebreak (first to 10 by margin of 2) to determine the match winner.

IF MATCH IS IN THE **SECOND SET** AT 20 AT 20 MINUTES BEFORE MATCH END:

- A game in progress should be completed using no-ad scoring (see Note 1 below).
- Team with a two game lead wins the second set.
- If games are tied, play a set tiebreak (first to 7 by margin of 2). Winner of the tiebreak wins the second set.
- If neither team is ahead by two games, play one additional game with no-ad scoring. If after this additional game a team is ahead by two games, they win the set. If both teams are tied, play a set tiebreak to determine the second set winner.
- If the result should be that each team has won a set, play a Match Tiebreak (first to 10 by margin of 2) to determine the match winner.

Note 1: If either team already has the ad point when the Timed Match Procedure goes into effect, an additional point will be played. After that point is played, if the result is deuce, a deciding point will be played to determine the winner of that game.

Note 2: If teams on an individual court are tied following the Timed Match Procedure, mark the visiting team as the winner and record the scores from the visiting teams perspective. The visiting team is initially awarded the win only because TennisLink requires that a winner be chosen. When entering the scores for an incomplete 3rd set Match Tiebreak (meaning neither team is ahead by 2 points), do NOT enter a score for the 3rd set (match tiebreak). Mark the visiting team as the winner. NOTIFY YOUR DLC OF THE TIE for both tie scenarios providing the match number and court that tied. In the event that ties should impact division standings at the end of the season, the USTA Adult League Committee members will review those matches and standings will be adjusted accordingly.