

# **2021 USTA North Carolina League Tennis Regulations**

**Southern Combo Doubles, Tri-Level and NCTA Singles Leagues.**

*Only the NC State League Coordinator, in conjunction with the USTA North Carolina Adult League Committee Chair and Vice Chair, shall have the authority to interpret these Regulations.*

DRAFT

## I. GENERAL

- A. The United States Tennis Association (USTA), Southern Tennis Association (STA) and/or the North Carolina Tennis Association (NCTA) are the governing bodies of these **League** programs.
- B. Play is governed by THE RULES OF TENNIS in **The Friend at Court**, **The Code**, the USTA League Tennis National Regulations, STA Regulations and these NCTA Regulations.
- C. **USTA League programs are** team competitions for men and women with NTRP levels of 2.5 to 5.5. Winning local teams advance to the NC State Championship. Winners of the NC State Championship advance to the Southern Sectional Championships (except in the case of the NC Singles League and the 65 & Over division of Combo Doubles). With the exception of the Tri-Level League, teams are formed in four divisions: 18 & over, 40 & over, 55 & over and 65 & over.
- D. To play in the following divisions, players must reach the minimum age for those divisions by December 31, 2020 **with the exception of the 18 & Over division, in which players must reach the minimum age prior to registration:**

Age Division	Minimum Age
18 & over	18
40 & over	40
55 & over	55
65 & over	65

- E. All players must be current members of the USTA through the respective league seasons. **No renewals are allowed during the local league season.**
- F. Players participating in any USTA North Carolina League Program acknowledge the risks associated with playing competitive tennis, accept those risks voluntarily and, in consideration of their acceptance in the USTA North Carolina League Programs, assume all risks for bodily injury, waive all claims for injury and property damage and release and hold harmless the USTA and the host facility, their officials, employees and agents with respect to any injury or loss caused by negligence or otherwise to the fullest extent permitted by law.
- G. The National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) is the official system of rating levels of competition in these programs. A player under age 60 with a 2017, 2018 or 2019 computer rating must use that rating or above to participate in these leagues. A player age 60 or above with a 2018 or 2019 computer rating must use that rating or above to participate in these leagues. Players who do not have a valid NTRP rating or have never had an NTRP Rating are required to self-rate according to the NTRP Guidelines.
- H. Mixed Exclusive (M) ratings are only valid for future Mixed Doubles play. In the USTA League Mixed Division, an NTRP level will be calculated for participants who play in that Division. Year-end Mixed Exclusive ratings will be based on the final dynamic rating generated from local league and championship level competition. If a player has a valid computer (C) rating from a previous year, then a player will not receive a Mixed Exclusive rating.

- I. Matches played in these leagues may be used in the calculation of NTRP Ratings as follows:

League	Results used to Calculate Rating?
NCTA Singles League	No
Southern Tri-Level	No
Southern Combo Doubles	No

## II. TEAM REQUIREMENTS

- A. Roster Requirements for each league:

League	Season	Minimum number	Maximum Number
NCTA Singles League	Varies	3	9
Southern Tri-Level	Varies	6	15
Southern Combo Doubles	Fall	6	15

- B. NTRP Levels of Play

DIVISION	LEAGUE TYPE	LOCAL LEAGUES
Combo	18 & Over	2.5, 5.5, 6.5, 7.5, 8.5, 9.5, 10.5
	40 & Over	5.5, 6.5, 7.5, 8.5, 9.5
	55 & Over	6.5, 7.5, 8.5
	65 & Over	6.5, 7.5, 8.5
Singles	18 & Over	2.5, 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5, 5.0
	40 & Over	3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5
	55 & Over	3.0, 3.5, 4.0
Tri-Level	18 & Over	Men 3.0/3.5/4.0, 3.5/4.0/4.5 and 4.0/4.5/5.0
		Women: 2.5/3.0/3.5; 3.0/3.5/4.0, 3.5/4.0/4.5 and 4.0/4.5/5.0

- C. In the NC Singles and Tri-Level Leagues, a player may play only one level above his or her current NTRP Rating (For example, a 3.5 player can play up on a 4.0 team, but cannot play up on a 4.5 team).

- D. A local league shall consist of a minimum of 2 teams at a specific level of competition. Advancement to a State Championship is not permitted if this requirement is not met, except for the following:

League	Levels permitted to advance to State Championships if they are the only local team
Southern Combo Doubles	All 55 & over and 65 & over teams, 18 & over 2.5, 5.5, 9.5 and 10.5 teams, 40 & Over 5.5 and 9.5 teams
NCTA Singles League	All Levels
Tri-Level	All Levels

- E. Teams that may advance directly to a State Championship must be added to TennisLink and have the minimum number of players required to form a team registered no later than the dates in the chart below. If the team is not added prior to the Initial Roster Deadline of the Local League, the LLC must contact the SLC to notify that a team has been added. Failure to notify the SLC may result in the team not being added to the State Championship schedule.

League	Deadline to add a team advancing directly to State Championship
Tri-Level	July 15
USTA-NC Singles League	August 15
Southern Combo Doubles	September 15

Teams that are participating in 1-Team Events must have the minimum number of players registered on TennisLink no later than their **league's Initial Roster Deadline**. An exception can be made if a team needs to be added to provide competition for a single state team.

- F. Teams that advance directly to a State Championship OR are participating in a 1-Team Event must maintain their roster on TennisLink with a majority of players from within the league area that they are representing. For example, a roster of 15 players must have a minimum of 8 players residing within the league boundaries. An exception can be made if a team is formed by the State League Coordinator to qualify a team.
- G. Teams that advance directly to a State Championship OR are participating in a 1-Team Event must maintain their rosters with at least 40% of players at the designated NTRP level of play. Leagues (and levels) that utilize combined ratings, (for example Combo Doubles, and Tri-Level League teams) are excluded.
- H. In levels where a team is advancing directly to the state championships as provided for in Rule II. E., additional players may be added to the TennisLink roster until 2 weeks prior to the start of that League's State Championship. After that, no changes may be made to the TennisLink roster.
- I. In Southern Combo Doubles, the combined levels of each doubles pair cannot exceed the team level.

- J. In the Southern Combo Doubles League, players in each level cannot exceed the maximum rating allowed for that level. See chart below:

Combo Combined Level	Highest Rating a Player May Have
2.5	2.5
5.5	3.0
6.5	3.5
7.5	4.0
8.5	5.0
9.5	5.5
10.5	6.0

### III. PROMOTED PLAYERS

- A. If a self-rated player is promoted from a level of play, all matches played by that individual player (in the level that the player is being promoted from) shall stand. All players who have computer rated appeals (A) or Dynamic Ratings (D) who are subject to promotion, will not be subject to match reversal if promoted. Players not promoted by the conclusion of local league round robin play will be eligible to compete in the entire local playoff. Dynamic ratings will be calculated at the end of the local playoff to inform any promoted players that they may not advance to the state championships. Points earned by the promoted players in the local playoffs will stand.
- B. A promoted player during local league play may request moving to another team providing there is a team available and time permits. If that team is full, the promoted player may request a waiver regarding number of players on a roster. The NC Director of Adult League Tennis must approve this waiver.
- C. Teams losing a player to NTRP Promotion may be provided an exception to allow for adding a player to their roster in the following cases:
- If Registration has closed
  - Their team had the maximum number of players allowed on the roster
  - The player may not be a self rated player.

#### IV. LEAGUE PLAY

- A. A round robin format shall be played where each team will play every other team at least once. When any NTRP level consists of only two teams, each team is required to play a minimum of three team matches which is a triple round robin. When any NTRP level consists of only three teams, each team is required to play a minimum of four team matches which is a double round robin. Any NTRP level may be divided into flights and each team shall play every other team in its flight. The flight winners may enter a playoff structure to establish a local league champion for that NTRP level.

After one round of the round robin is complete the following may be scheduled:

- additional matches, selected randomly, within a flight.
  - additional cross-flight matches in which each team in one flight plays an equal number of matches in the other flight, selected randomly if not a full round robin.
  - top teams in a flight to play an additional round robin to determine advancement, and the teams without a mathematical chance to advance may play an additional round robin.
- B. The Local League Coordinator will determine the schedules.
- C. If multiple flights in an NTRP level exist, at least 1 team from each flight will advance to a playoff to determine the winner of that level. This rule does not prohibit a playoff for single flight leagues.
- D. The Local League Coordinator will determine the playoff format.
- E. A team's lineup **does not** have to be listed in order of strength, except in the Tri-Level Leagues, where the highest NTRP level must play on the #1 court, the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest NTRP level must play on the #2 court and the lowest NTRP level must play on the #3 court. Example: in the 2.5/3.0/3.5 leagues, the 3.5 rated players play on the #1 court, the 3.0 players on the #2 court and the 2.5 players on the #3 court.
- F. The scoring format for all leagues will be best 2 out of 3 sets with a 10-point match tiebreaker used in lieu of the third set. An exception may be requested for 2-team leagues. Exception requests must be made in writing to the NC Director of Adult Leagues prior to the beginning of league play for approval.
- G. The Coman Tiebreak format will be used for all tiebreakers.
- H. Coaching is not permitted at any point during a match.
- I. Defaults will be "from the bottom up," defaulting the lowest positions first. The chart below shows which courts are to be defaulted first in the different match types. For Tri-Level matches, you would default whichever court could not be fielded.

League	Courts to be Defaulted First
Singles	#3 Singles
Combo	# 3 Doubles

- J. Scorecards are to be exchanged when all players are on site and ready to play. At the scheduled match time, if a player is not on site, the captains have 3 options to proceed with the scorecard exchange:
- Wait until the missing player is on site and ready to play (prior to the 15 minute default time), exchange scorecards and play the match. At the default time, if the player is still not on site and ready to play, the missing player would be moved to a defaultable court (see chart in I.), scorecards would then be exchanged and play would begin. OR
  - Captains can agree to exchange scorecards and begin play with the lineups as-is. Default rules will apply (See National Reg 2.03 K and Q&A). OR
  - Substitute a missing player with an eligible player that is on site and ready to play, but is not listed on the original scorecard. Substitutions must be made prior to the 15 minute default time and can only be exchanged for the missing player in the original lineup.
- K. Each team must have the minimum number of players available to play the majority of individual matches. If one team does not have the minimum number of player, the opposing team will be credited with a total team default and will win each individual match 6-0, 6-0. If neither team has the required minimum number of players, the match shall be scored as a double team default and neither team will receive credit for a win. In the case of a team default or double team default and individual courts have been played (for example, rain make-ups), any individual matches actually played will count only for player eligibility for advancement and cannot count for determining standings.
- If both teams have the minimum number of players available to play, but the combination of individual defaults by the two teams would result in the majority of matches not being played (valid team match), the teams must follow the procedure below:
  - The first course of action would be for both captains to agree on what individual matches, based on the number of players present, or to be present, can be played to constitute a valid team match. Once that is determined, both captains will re-exchange scorecards.
  - If both captains cannot come to an agreement on what lines will be played to constitute a valid team match, based on the number of players present, or to be present, then the following individual matches will be assigned in sequential order to be played:

Format	Required Matches in sequential order	Minimum # of Players Required for Each Team in Valid Team Match
3 doubles	#1 and #2 doubles	4

- If these procedures are not followed and the resulting scorecard shows an invalid team match, both teams will be charged a full team default.
- A. Full Team Defaults:
- 1 Team Default: At the end of the season, standings will be evaluated to see if the full team default had an effect on the final standings. If the final standings were affected, all of the matches

of the defaulting team will be removed from the standings (only the effected round, if more than one round robin) and the final standing will be recalculated. If neither team in contention received a full team default, the final standings will stand. The defaulting team may be subject to a grievance.

- b. 2 Team Defaults: If a team defaults 2 full team matches, all of their matches played or to be played will be null and void. Matches played will count for player NTRP ratings and player advancement purposes, but will not be used to determine the final standings. A grievance may be filed. Teams with 2 team defaults will not be eligible for advancement.
- B. Players may compete on more than one team except if the teams are on the same level, in the same age division and in the same local league.
- C. If a team has 4 or more players on a roster (3 for Singles League matches) who are playing or working at a League Championship at either the North Carolina State, Southern Section or National Levels and have a team match in conflict with these events, then the team can reschedule the match either by playing before the scheduled date or within 2 weeks after the scheduled match (as long as the makeup match occurs within the league season dates). The Captain of the team with the conflict must notify the opposing team captain and LLC of the conflict no later than 1 week before the scheduled match and work with both parties to reschedule the match within the above mentioned timeframe. Local Leagues may add a requirement that teams represent their local league to reschedule local matches and/or Local League Playoff matches.
- D. To win a Team match, a team must win at least a majority of the individual courts played. If the match ends in a tie, it will be broken by:
  - 1. The team with the fewest sets lost.
  - 2. The team with the fewest Games lost.
  - 3. Highest % of games won vs. games played.
  - 4. Method TBD.
- E. The winner of each local level will be the team having won the most team matches, unless there is a playoff within the level. In this case, the winner of the playoff would be the winner of the local level.
- F. In Local Leagues at the end of round robin play, if the season ends with a tie for first place, the tie shall be broken according to the following tiebreakers, unless otherwise specified in local league regulations:
  - 1. Winner of the most individual matches.
  - 2. Head-to-head winner
  - 3. Loser of the fewest number of sets.
  - 4. Loser of the fewest number of games.
  - 5. Highest % of games won vs. games played.
  - 6. Method TBD.



- G. All scores must be posted on TennisLink within the prescribed time listed in the local league rules. NOTE: Where there are no local league rules, the scores must be posted within 48 hours by the winning captain and confirmed within 48 hours of the match by the losing captain. If the score has not been posted and confirmed within the 48 hours after the match, the Local League Coordinator will determine if there is a winner by the information s/he has. Captains and players have until 2 weeks after scores are entered for a match to request a correction to the scorecard. Follow local league procedures to request a score change.
- H. If a scheduled match is completely rained out (play has not begun on any court), any defaults on the scorecard are reinstated and can be made up. If, however, one court has begun play (first point played) and the match is interrupted due to inclement weather, all defaults stand.
- I. If a date, time and location have been determined for a team match (or individual court) rescheduled due to inclement weather or another approved circumstance, i. e. State Championship conflict, the match can only be suspended again due to inclement weather. Any team that cannot make the rescheduled match time will default any affected courts.
- J. Substitutions for team matches interrupted due to inclement weather: For any court that had begun play (first point played), lineups will stand. For any court that had not yet begun play (first point played), teams may substitute players as long as the substitutions are not listed on the original scorecard.

## **V. STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS**

- A. Each local league will be extended one invitation per level of play for a team to go to the State Championships. The top two teams will be automatically invited when a level has the following number of teams:

League	Season	Min # of teams on a Level
USTA League Adult	Spring	30
USTA League Mixed Doubles	Summer	25
Southern Combo Doubles	Fall	30
NCTA Singles League	Varies	25
Tri-Level	Varies	25

- B. Wildcards will be offered, if needed, to local leagues according to the chart in Appendix A of these State Regulations. The NC Director of Adult Leagues will notify the LLC of each league after the Team Registration Deadline if any wildcards are being offered.
- C. If the first place team from a local league cannot attend the State Championships, the second place team from that local league's particular NTRP level will be asked to represent the local league. If the second place team is unable to attend, the Local League Coordinator must contact the NC Director of Adult League Tennis to discuss the possibility of a lower finishing team attending in its place. The offer may go to another Local League, as determined by the Wildcard chart in Appendix A of these State Regulations, if a team is needed to fill the draw.

- D. The following is the minimum number of team members who were on the final roster of their local league team at the conclusion of local league play who must be available and eligible to compete at the State Championships:

League	Season	Minimum number
USTA League Adult 55 & over and 65 & over	Spring	6
USTA League Mixed Doubles*	Summer	6
Southern Combo Doubles*	Fall	6
NCTA Singles League	Varies	3
Tri-Level*	Varies	6

\*Those 6 players must be able to combine to form 3 eligible teams.

- E. Teams must have played in a minimum of three local matches, except in cases where a team is advancing directly to the State Championships, as provided for in Rule II. E.
- F. Players must play in a minimum number of matches to be eligible to advance to the State Championships (players on teams advancing directly to the State Championships, as provided for in rule II. E., are exempt from the following):

League	Season	Minimum Required Matches Played	# of defaults that may count as a match played
USTA League Mixed 55 & over, 65 & over	Summer	1	1
Southern Combo Doubles	Fall	1	1
NCTA Singles League	Varies	1	1
Tri-Level League	Varies	1	1

G. Team Matches at the State Championships will consist of:

League	Season	Individual Courts Played
USTA League 55 & over and 65 & over	Spring	3 Doubles
USTA League Mixed Doubles	Summer	3 Doubles
Southern Combo Doubles	Fall	3 Doubles
NCTA Singles League	Varies	3 Singles
Tri-Level	Varies	3 Doubles

- H. Any team defaulting a court at the State Championships will incur a \$100 penalty for each court defaulted. The fine is payable prior to the team's next match or, if it is their last match, before they leave the tournament. If a team does not pay the fine, no members of that team will be allowed to play in any future league tennis until the fine is paid. Any matches played during the suspension will be defaulted.
- I. Any team withdrawing from a State Championship after the published Team Registration Deadline will incur a \$300 penalty. These dates will be published in the Captain's Information in each State Championship's Tournament information, posted at [www.nctennis.com](http://www.nctennis.com). The penalty is payable within 1 week after the team notifies either their LLC or the SLC that they will not participate in the tournament. If the penalty is not paid, all members of the team will be suspended from league play until the penalty has been paid. Any registration fees paid will not be returned.
- Teams who accept a wildcard after the Team Registration Deadline and then later withdraw will be subject to the same penalties.
  - Any team that fails to show up at a State Championship will be subject to the same penalties as a team that withdraws after the Team Registration Deadline.
  - Teams may be subject to a grievance by the Tournament Committee.
- J. Any player on two or more teams advancing to a North Carolina League State Championship may play for a maximum of two of those teams, unless those teams are in the same NTRP level and age division (ex. 2 Adult 18 & Over 3.5 teams from different local leagues).
- There will be NO special consideration in scheduling.
  - There is the possibility of several matches in 1 day.
  - The player is considered 2 different people, which requires separate championship fees.
- K. If a round robin or unflighted match play ends with a tie in Championship Play, the tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures that breaks the tie:
1. Most individual matches won.
  2. Head to head winner, only if all tied teams have played each other AND one team defeated all of the teams that are tied.
  3. Fewest sets lost.
  4. Fewest games lost.
  5. Highest % of games won.
  6. Toss of coin.

If more than 2 teams are tied: Tiebreaks noted above will be used to eliminate teams. Once a team is eliminated, tiebreaks will continue down the list until only 1 winner is declared. For example, Teams A, B, C and D are tied at the end of the round robin. Tiebreak #2 eliminates Team D. Tiebreak #3 eliminates Team C. Tiebreak #4 and then #5 (if needed) is used to break the tie between Team A and Team B.

If, at the end of random play (10 or fewer teams in the flight), 3 teams are undefeated, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place teams (as determined by standings in TennisLink) will play a playoff match to determine which team advances to the **finals**. For the playoff match, the team match will follow the championship format for the affected age division and level (for example, 40 & Over 3.5 Men would play 1 single and 3 doubles courts; 18 & Over 3.5 Women would play 2 singles and 3 doubles courts) with each court playing a 10-point tiebreaker.

If, at the end of random play (11 or more teams in the flight), 5 teams are undefeated, the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> place teams (as determined by standings in TennisLink) will play a playoff match to determine which team advances to the **semifinals**. For the playoff match, the team match will follow the championship format for the affected age division and level (for example, 40 & Over 3.5 Men would play 1 single and 3 doubles courts; 18 & Over 3.5 Women would play 2 singles and 3 doubles courts) with each court playing a 10-point tiebreaker.

- L. If a player's team wins at the State Championship but s/he did not play at the State Championships, that player is eligible to play at the Section Championship provided he or she had met the requirements to qualify for the State Championship.

## **2020 State Championships**

League State Championship	Date	Location	Levels
USTA League Adult 65 & Over	October 15-17	Greenville	All
USTA League Mixed Doubles	Sept. 9-12	Asheville	All
Tri-Level	Sept. 23-26	Hickory	All
NCTA Singles League	Oct. 7-10	Goldsboro	All
Southern Combo Doubles (Part 1)	Nov. 4-7	Wilmington	2.5/6.5/8.5
Southern Combo Doubles (Part 2)	Nov. 11-14	Wilmington	5.5/7.5/9.5

### **COMMITTEES**

*Grievance committees for both State and Championship grievances will consist of 3 persons from the current Local League Coordinators and/or Adult League Committee. Additional committee members can be selected from other USTA affiliates, as needed.*

2021 Local League Coordinators		2020-21 Adult League Committee	
Cindy Perry	Tracy Debnam	Jean Haas	Cathy Reagan
Bevie Walker	Janie Ebner	Tracy Debnam	JD Weber
Samantha Haislip	Bobby Taylor	Amy Knudson	Gwenda Priest
Cathy Reagan	Lela Thompson	Brenda Jones	Michael Ward
Iris Ham	Angie McEachran	Lisa Blalock	Yubie Albert
Robyn Haug	Sherry Strickland	Robyn Haug	Stephen Keaney
Susan Brodeur	Suellen McCrary	Anna Martin	
Erika Harris	Michelle Benson		
Anna Martin			

## ***Appendix A***

### **2020 Wildcards**

#### **Rules Governing Wildcards**

*Wildcards will only be offered in a level if needed to fill a draw in the State Championship schedule. The order that wildcards are offered are posted at [www.nctennis.com](http://www.nctennis.com). Areas automatically sending their top two teams for a level, will move to the bottom of the list for that level.*