

**USTA Missouri Valley
USTA League Tennis
2025 Rules and Regulations
2/3/2025 Final Draft**

General USTA Missouri Valley League Rules: The Missouri Valley Section League Tennis Rules and Regulations, which are supplemental and subordinate to the USTA National League Tennis Program Rules and Regulations, **must** apply to USTA League Tennis in the USTA Missouri Valley Section. District and Local Rules and Regulations may be developed to supplement the USTA National and Sectional Rules and Regulations. However, the District and Local Rules and Regulations must not contradict the National or Sectional established rules and regulations. **If a Section, District/Area or Local League does not have a regulation in place to address an issue and there is a National Championship Regulation on that issue, the Section, District/Area or Local League must follow the National Championship Regulation.**

The Sectional Office must approve any District or Local Rules and Regulations. If you would like a copy of the 2025 USTA League Tennis Rules and Regulations, contact your District League Coordinator, or the USTA Missouri Valley Section Office. (Notes: Numbers at the beginning of a sentence are a reference to a National Regulation. Red Underlined sentences and phrases are changes for 2025).

For purposes of these regulations, the term "level" refers to an NTRP level in which competition is held. Thus under this definition, each of the following is considered a separate level:

- 18-39 4.0 Men's and 18-39 4.0 Women's
- 18 & over 4.0 Men's and 18 & over 4.0 Women's
- 40 & over 4.0 Men's and 40 & over 4.0 Women's
- 55 & over 7.0 Women Combined Rating Level and 55 & over 7.0 Men Combined Rating Level
- 65 & over 8.0 Women Combined Rating Level and 65 & over 8.0 Men Combined Rating Level
- 18 & over 6.0 Combined Mixed and 18 & over 8.0 Combined Mixed
- 40 & over 7.0 Combined Mixed and 40 & over 9.0 Combined Mixed
- 55 & over 6.0 Combined Mixed and 55 & over 8.0 Combined Mixed

For purposes of these regulations, the term division refers to:

- Adult (18-39, 18 & over, 40 & over, 55 & over and 65 & over)
- Mixed (18 & over, 40 & over, and 55 & over)
- Tri-Level (three levels combined on one team)

MAJOR NATIONAL REGULATION CHANGES FOR 2025

1. 2.01C(4)a: The Missouri Valley Section may file a grievance if a full team retirement or combination of defaults occurs. If the grievance is upheld, the Missouri Valley may declare the match invalid and score the match according to the local or sectional regulations. The Missouri Valley and below may impose further penalties on the defaulting or retiring team. Penalties will follow the League Suspension System (See Regulation 3.03A(7) and 3.03D(4)).

Major Section Regulation Changes for 2025

1. Mixed 55 & over: No more than 12 players on a team may advance to sectionals. Districts may choose to impose lower roster limits.
2. MUSU for 55 & Over Mixed: No more than 6 players on a team that advances to nationals may stay together next year. This change first applies in 2025 for 2025 section championship winners advancing to nationals that are being held in 2026.
3. Mixed and Straight Level Dynamic Disqualification: When a player strikes out in mixed or straight level, the section will reverse all matches that received strikes, mixed and straight level. The player will then have to move up to their new level in both leagues. This applies to all self-rated, self-rated appeal, and DQ players.
 - For example; A self-rated 3.0 player generates 3 strikes in 18 & Over 6.0 mixed and 1 strike in 18 & Over 3.0 men's league; all 4 matches that generated strikes will be marked as wins for their opponent.

**USTA Missouri Valley League Regulations
(Applies to all USTA League divisions)**

1. Districts:

- a. District League Coordinators are appointed, or hired, by their District Association. The District League Coordinators and District Association appoint Local League Coordinators. District Championship Committees must be appointed and approved by the District League Coordinator and approved by the USTA Missouri Valley Section's Adult Competition Program Manager. The Sectional League Championship Committees must be appointed by the USTA Missouri Valley Section's Adult Competition Program Manager.
- b. Districts may impose restrictions regarding residency or number of players on any team rosters for any leagues. Players should refer to the District League Regulations regarding these restrictions.

2. Early Start Leagues and the Elimination of Early Start Ratings:

- a. An Early Start League begins its season before the Year End Ratings are published. Players wishing to participate in an Early Start League will compete with their most current Year End Rating, or Self-rating. Players who are moved up at Year End Ratings Publication may continue with their Early Start Teams, at their previous lower level, until the end of the local league season, as long as they have not reached the clearly above level. They may not participate in the lower level in any championships.
- b. Players who are found to have valid computer ratings at year-end but are at or above the clearly above level mark must adjust to that new NTRP level. Prior team matches played are valid.

3. Registration:

- a. **Playing under own name with a USTA number.** A player can only play under their own name and under the USTA number used to generate their NTRP rating if one exists. If a USTA membership lapses and is subsequently renewed, the prior USTA membership number will be used. Any player who violates the above, the team captain, and any team member who plays in a match with knowledge of impersonation or improper recording of scores, may be suspended from all USTA League Tennis.
- b. **Reaching minimum age.** Each player must have reached the required minimum age before or during the calendar year in which the player participates in their first local league.
- c. **Adult leagues are for players over the age of 18.** Additionally, a player must be 18 years old before registering or participating in any match in the USTA Adult League Program.
- d. **TennisLink registration before the first match.** Players must register for their team using TennisLink Leagues. Players must register prior to participating in their first match. Districts may enforce Registration Deadlines for any USTA League. Players should refer to their District or Local League Regulations regarding the Registration Deadlines for any leagues in which they participate.

4. Self-Rating

- a. **Players required to self-rate.** The following players must self-rate:
 - Player without a valid computer (C) NTRP rating in TennisLink;
 - Returning player with an expired NTRP rating;
 - Tournament Exclusive (T) rating;
 - Mixed Exclusive (M) rating;

These players are assigned a new rating, their last expired rating, or a higher rating based on their playing history.

- b. Any submission of false information regarding a player's tennis history will subject the player, the captain, and/or others who condone inaccurate self-rating to sanctions and disqualification. Any Self-Rating Player Appeals will be processed by the Section NTRP Appeals Committee. The appealing player is responsible for justifying the request for the appeal. If no justification is given, appeal will be denied.
- c. **3.03B(3)** For eligibility matters of simple fact (e.g., age, USTA membership, TennisLink registration), a USTA league coordinator may declare a player ineligible and disqualify that player without filing a grievance. (See Regs.1.04C(1) Official League Registration, 1.04E(2) Membership, 1.04E(3) Age, and 1.04F Official League Rating Program, and 2.01A1).

1. **In the event of a promotion due to Nation Regulation 3.03B(3a, Dynamic disqualification procedures are followed; all matches that generated a strike are reversed as wins for the opponent and the player will be moved to the level in accordance with the Player Experience and Guidelines chart. In the event of a promotion due to Nation Regulation 3.03B(3a, Dynamic**

5. NTRP

- a. Year End Ratings are published at the beginning of December and take effect on publication date. A player may play only one NTRP level above the player's current NTRP level in the Adult or Mixed Divisions.
- b. All Adult Divisions will include teams that maintain at least 30 % of players who are rated the level of the NTRP flight that they play. Ex: a 3.0 Adult 18 & Over team must have 30 % or more players registered on said team that are rated 3.0.
- c. Self-ratings are valid for two years from the date issued or until replaced by a dynamic or computer rating. If there is a change in playing experience, the player may promptly appeal to request a higher rating (an appeal up) or may be promoted by the Sectional League Coordinator.
- d. Adult NTRP Year End Ratings for players 59 years or younger will be valid for 3 years or until another valid NTRP rating level is generated.
- e. Adult NTRP Year End Ratings for players 60 years or older will be valid for 2 years or until another valid NTRP rating level is generated.

6. Self-Rate Appeals

- a. All self-rate appeals must be submitted through the self-rate appeals function in the player's TennisLink account. Only the player (or Section staff with the player's permission in extreme circumstances) may submit a self-rate appeal.
- b. If a player reports to any coordinator that **another person** has used the self-rate appeal function to appeal the players' self-rating, the coordinator must immediately file a grievance.

7. Dynamic Disqualification and Promotions

- a. A player may be dynamically disqualified based on match results from the Adult 18 & Over, Adult 40 & Over, Adult 55 & Over, **Adult 18 & Over Mixed, and Adult 40 & Over Mixed** divisions.
- b. Players who are subject to NTRP Disqualification are: A (Appealed players), T (Tournament-exclusive players), M (Mixed-exclusive players), and S (Self-rated players). A Computer-Rated Player will not be subject to NTRP Disqualification.
- c. Players will be NTRP disqualified if they reach the disqualification level three times based on all matches reported in the national database for All Adult Divisions, except 65 & Over, Tri-Level and 55 & Over Mixed. The individual matches that produced the three strikes at the NTRP level in which they were disqualified will be deemed wins for the opponent and any subsequent matches will be considered losses.
 1. **When a player strikes out in mixed or straight level, the section will reverse all matches that received strikes, mixed and straight level. The player will then have to move up to their new level in both leagues. This applies to all self-rated, self-rated appeal, and DQ players.**
 - a. **For example; A self-rated 3.0 player generates 3 strikes in 18 & Over 6.0 mixed and 1 strike in 18 & Over 3.0 men's league; all 4 matches that generated strikes will be marked as wins for their opponent**
- d. If the player is competing in two NTRP levels, results from the higher-level matches are considered in Dynamic Ratings and may cause strikes disqualifying a player at the lower NTRP level (with the exception of Computer-rated players).
- e. Players who are NTRP Disqualified may not play at the disqualified NTRP level of play (or any lower level) in either singles or doubles for the remainder of the championship year and for the succeeding championship year. A disqualified player becomes a benchmark. Players who are NTRP disqualified may be allowed to move up and participate on another team at a higher NTRP level during the same league season.

- f. **Dynamic Disqualification after Championships 2.04B(2)b**--After ANY District or Section Championship, Dynamic Ratings are run. Following the conclusion of the event, those players who received their third strike will be disqualified and notified by the Section League Coordinator, and if their team is advancing to sectionals or nationals, disqualified players will not be able to compete with their team. Following an NTRP Disqualification, the player may not play at the disqualified level of play in either singles or doubles for the remainder of the championship year and for the succeeding championship year.

8. Appeals

- a. **Medical Appeals**- All medical appeals will be reviewed by a National Committee. Any player wishing to submit a medical appeal must meet all criteria for a medical appeal. The player must submit the required forms to the Section League Coordinator. The section appeals committee will review the appeal, and if it meets all requirements, then it will be sent to the National Committee. **Grounds for a medical appeal are limited to permanent debilitating injury or permanent debilitating illness.**
- b. **Auto appeals**- If a player contacts any coordinator to report that someone **other than the player** has used the Auto-Appeal Function to appeal the players' rating without the player's permission, a grievance will be immediately filed by the coordinator, with a recommendation of suspension of 1 year for the person using the appeal function.
- c. **Promotion of Players 60 or Over**
2.05E(1)–(5) that described the eligibility criteria for players 60 and older to appeal their rating down have been removed from the USTA League Regulations. The opportunity for these players to appeal their rating has not changed. The player can appeal their rating with a few clicks, and will receive an immediate answer, based on the criteria programmed into TennisLink. As such, the specific criteria are not needed in these regulations.
- d. 2.05E(5) Any player who is "clearly above level" under the applicable Computer Methodology procedures, as defined in the Glossary, will be denied an appeal of their year-end rating under 2.05E(1), 2.05E(2) and 2.05E(3). "Clearly above level" refers to situations in which the NTRP computer program determines that the rating is outside appealable parameters.

9. Grievances

- a. A player who is designated with an A, M, D, T, or S is subject to an NTRP Grievance.
- b. **3.02B--NTRP Grievance Complaint.** Any captain, coordinator, or committee member may file a Grievance against any player and/or captain they feel has entered, or condoned entering, below their actual skill level. The Section League Grievance Committee having jurisdiction, augmented as necessary by experts in NTRP ratings, will review the alleged violator's completed USTA Player Electronic Self-Rate questionnaire.
1. **NTRP Grievances at Section Championships.** If NTRP Grievances are filed during a Sectional Championship, they will be held and then forwarded to the Section League Grievance Committee within 48 hours of the conclusion of the championship. After review, and in consultation with the NTRP experts who have augmented the committee, the Committee will take action as they deem appropriate, including, but not limited to, disqualification, suspension from league play, or other league sanction.
 2. NTRP Grievances may be filed by a League Coordinator, Captain or Committee member, at any time, for a fee of \$50. If the grievance is upheld by the committee, then the \$50 will be reimbursed.
 3. **Grievance Decision Appeal.** Parties included in a grievance, wishing to submit a League Grievance Decision Appeal, regarding any Section League Grievance Decision, may do so by completing the official form, accompanied by a Check, payable to USTA Missouri Valley for \$50.00, and submitting it to the Adult League Manager, at the USTA Missouri Valley section office.
- c. **Grievance Deadlines. 3.02A-**
1. *Grievances.* All complaints alleging a violation by an individual or team during local league competition must be filed in writing with the Local or District League Coordinator (or designee) having jurisdiction. The complaint must be filed before the earliest of:
 - The start of the next team match in that flight of the individual or team; or
 - Within 24 hours after the end of local league play, whichever occurs first.

2. *Decisions on grievances.* The USTA Missouri Valley section and its districts have up to 72 hours after the end of the local league season to decide an eligibility grievance. Additionally, the decision must be made before any playoff.
 - All matches played by the disqualified player are defaults and are considered wins for the opponent and scored 6-0, 6-0. The ineligible player is not allowed to continue or advance.
 - If an eligibility disqualification involves a single elimination event, the last individual match played by the disqualified player is a win for the opponent and scored 6-0, 6-0.
 - If a double disqualification results in a tie, the local tiebreak procedure is used to determine the winner of the team match. If no local tiebreak procedure exists, Reg. 2.03H Procedures in the Event of a Tie is used to determine a winner of the team match.

10. Local League Season:

- a. **Line-Ups:** In a local league season, teams are not required to field players in order of strength at any level of league competition within the USTA Missouri Valley Section. Team Captains for each team must exchange their team match cards simultaneously prior to the scheduled starting time of the team match. No substitutions may be made in an individual match after the lineup has been presented, except for injury to, illness of, or a disqualification of a player prior to the start of such match. If the substitution is made during the warm-up, the substituted player is entitled to a warm-up. The first serve is considered the start of the match.
- b. **Timed Match Procedures at Section Championships: Timed matches may be used as an alternate format if weather becomes an issue at Section Championships.**
 1. The tournament director will announce if the Timed Match procedure is going to be used prior to the start of the match.
 2. **Timed Match Procedure:**
 - At 15 minutes before the end of play, no new game will begin. All games "in play" are completed. (A game is "in play" once the server has struck the first ball.)
 - If a player/team is ahead by two games, they have won the set.
 - If no player/team is ahead by two games, they must play a 7-point set tiebreak.
 - **If only one set has been completed, no further tiebreaks will follow. The match winner will be the winner of the first set.**
 - If the sets are then one-all, a 7-point set tiebreak must be played in lieu of a third set.
- c. **2.01C(1) Full Round Robin:** Sections may have the option to allow additional matches within a flight, additional randomly selected matches across flights and additional play-off round robin within a flight, as long as at least one complete round robin has occurred.
 1. **Majority of matches not played - If a team does not play the majority of individual matches (3 courts in a 4 or 5 match format and 2 courts in a three match format), the match is a team default. No match will not be included in the standings per national regulation 2.01C3 for the round in which the team default occurred.**
 2. **Teams removed from any round-robin due to a team default will not be allowed to advance to District or Section Championships.**
- d. Local league winners at each level within the Adult Leagues will progress to a District Championship (if necessary). Players are eligible to advance to District Championships if they have two qualifying matches. A maximum of one defaulted match will count as a match played for the players receiving the default, but not for the players who defaulted. A retired match will count for all players involved.
- e. The District League Coordinator in accordance with the USTA League Championship Regulations must coordinate the District Championship using the TennisLink Championship Module.
- f. The District League Coordinator must update all district champions in the league tree no later than 48 hours after the completion of any district championship or local league season. All District information (rosters from local league winning teams) regarding the Sectional Championships is to be submitted no later than 48 hours after the completion of any District Championship, or 14 days prior to the start of Sectional Championship competition.

- g. Participation numbers for both 2.5 men and 5.0 mixed do not support continuation of a National Championship event. USTA discontinued the Mixed 5.0 18 & Over and Adult 2.5 18 & Over Men's National Championship events as of 2016. The Adult 18 & Over 2.5 Women's National Championship will continue to be offered.
- h. There will be a National Invitational offered for 18 & Over Open and 40 & Over 5.0.

11. Two-Team Leagues:

- a. **1.04D(6) Two-Team Leagues.** If any Adult League Type consists of only two teams in a level of play, each team must *maintain* its roster with at least **40% of its players at the designated NTRP level of play**. The exception is the Adult 55 & Over League Type and the 65 & over, which uses combined NTRP rating levels will not be required to comply with this Regulation (see next paragraph). **Districts have the option to increase the percentage of players in level for their local leagues.**
- b. All two team leagues, in any division except 65 & and over and 55 & and over mixed, must have two viable teams participating, including any combination rating league types. **Accommodation matches created to allow a team to advance may not be created. Accommodation matches do not count.** "Viable" would mean a minimum number of combination rated players to fill court formation. EX: 3 courts of 9.0 combination doubles teams, minimum, to participate in Adult 55 & Over 9.0 league.
- c. Two-Team Leagues from all league formats must schedule and publish the schedule on TennisLink with a minimum of 3 matches. All score reporting rules must be followed if the winner of a two-team league wishes to be considered a valid team to advance to a sectional championship.

12. Coaching- Coaching will be permitted only during authorized rest periods (e.g., if there is a 10-minute rest period between 2nd and 3rd sets, when playing best two out of three sets) or suspension of play (e.g., for a rain delay).

13. Score Reporting- 1.04C(2) Official Score Reporting and Standings System: Establishes a 48 hour deadline for scores to be initially reported into TennisLink after the completion of a match if the Section does not have a deadline established. The other Team then has 48 hours after the score is reported to Confirm or Dispute. TennisLink will automatically confirm scores 48 hours after being reported.

14. Advancing leagues

- a. One team from each District Level will be eligible to compete at the USTA Missouri Valley Sectional Championships or Invitational.
- b. Winners from the Sectional Championships or Invitational will advance to the USTA National League Championships or Invitational.
- c. In the event a Local, District, or Sectional first place team, in any division, is not able to compete at the next level Championships, then the second place team in that level's Area, District, or Section would then qualify to take the place of the first place team. In the event the second place team was unable to attend, then the third place team would have the opportunity to attend the next level Championship.

15. Section Championships

- a. **Match Minimum-**USTA Missouri Valley will offer teams in any division advancing to Section Championships a minimum of 3 matches. The Tournament Director may change this policy if weather or other issues arise.
 - 1. **Majority of matches not played** - If a team does not play the majority of the individual matches (3 courts in a 4 or 5 match format and 2 courts in a 3 match format), the match is a team default. No match will not be included in the standings per national regulation 2.01C3 for the round in which the team default occurred.
 - 2. Teams removed from any round-robin due to a team default will not be allowed to advance to Section Championships.
- b. No team may advance to a section championship or invitational if that team does not include the required number of players needed to fill all courts for each match scheduled or if that team does not intend to advance to nationals in good faith.

1. This includes any teams that are eligible to advance to more than one national championship of USTA or any other organization or league as well.
 2. If the district's winning team in the division cannot attend with the required number of players needed, then the district will invite another team in the order of finish in the division until a team is found with the required number of players needed to represent the district.
 3. If no representative is found, the district will decline to send an advancing team.
- c. If a team is found to have participated in section championships with no prior intent to advance to national championships in that division, the players on that team will not be able to participate in any USTA League programs for the following year.
- d. **Eligibility (minimum match requirement) to advance to Section Championships.** A player is eligible to play the Section Championships if the player meets the applicable minimum match requirement.
1. **(S) Self-rated players**—must play at least 3 matches on the same team at that same level in that same age group. Defaults do not count.
 2. **(S) Self-rated players whose appeals have been granted**—must play at least 3 matches on the same team at that same level in that same age group. Defaults do not count.
 3. **(A) Computer-rated players whose appeals have been granted**—must play at least 3 matches on the same team at that same level in that same age group. Defaults do not count.
 4. **(M) Mixed exclusive players**- For Mixed leagues only- Players must have at least 2 matches on the same team at the same level in that same age group. (They may have won 1 match by default.)
 5. **(C) Computer rated players**—must play at least 2 matches on the same team at that same level in that same age group. (They may have won 1 match by default.)
 6. **Any player whose rating changes during a season must qualify at that rating type (A, C, D, or S) to advance to the championships.**
- e. **Registration-**
1. Each District must abide by the set registration deadlines for teams that advance to the Section Championships and must complete the Section On-Line Registration.
 - a. A team that does not have the required minimum number of players registered by the deadline may not play in the Sectional Championships. In this case the District League Coordinator may invite the second place team to immediately register by a revised registration deadline.
 2. The District Coordinator may continue to invite teams in the order of finish and establish revised registration deadlines until the coordinator finds an eligible team that is able to compete. Once the team advancing has been determined because the required minimum number of players has registered, no fees will be refunded for any reason. Deadlines are set for at least 14 days before any section event.
 3. Any player who has missed the Sectional Registration Deadline, set by the section, and who wishes to participate in the championship, must contact the Adult Program Manager for permission and must submit payment of the registration fee, at captains check-in, to be eligible to play. No players will be allowed to play in the championship if they did not register or pay the fee at check-in.
 4. Players who are eligible for more than one team may participate on multiple teams in a Section Championship as long as the teams are in different levels. **(See Substitution and Default Rules below.)**
 - a. **Schedules will not be modified to avoid conflicts.** The tournament committee may adjust individual match start time as long as the modification does not delay future matches. Players may need to move to the last position for potential default. **See new national Regulation**

f. Substitutions, Defaults, and Retirements at Section Championships

1. Substitutions

- a. During the USTA Missouri Valley Sectional and District Championships, no substitutions may be made in an individual match after the line-up has been presented, *except for* injury to, illness of, or disqualification of a player before the start of such match, and under other circumstances authorized by the Championships Committee.
- b. If the substitution is made during the warm-up, the option to recommence the warm-up rests with the substituted player. If no replacement is available, regulation 15f(2) does not apply. The match will be recorded as a default win for the opponent.

2. Defaults

- a. **The position to be defaulted** follows the National table for Allowable Defaults at All Championships (National Reg. pg.21). Since USTA Missouri Valley Section League Championships are "no-default" events, the action applied for "Special Defaults" will follow the rationale for USTA League Regulation 2.03L Scoring of Team Defaults.
- b. **If a team defaults a position for any reason during round robin play:**
 - The position should not play additional matches in that round robin.
 - For all matches already played at the position, the opponents will be awarded a 6-0, 6-0 win.
 - The position matches already played will be used for both player ratings and championship advancement purposes.
 - If all teams with a mathematical chance to advance have played the defaulting team in good faith, those matches must stand as played when determining standings.
 - If a player(s) is/are defaulted for circumstances outside the control of the player(s) and the team, then the Tournament Committee has discretion to not impose the above-listed sanctions against the team.

EXCEPTIONS:

- If a player is defaulted by an official due to the point penalty system, this regulation does not apply. The match will be recorded as a retirement as long as play has started. If play has not started then it will be recorded as a default.
 - If a player is injured or becomes ill during the warm up, and no replacement is available, this regulation does not apply. The match is a retirement but will be recorded as a default due to TennisLink capabilities.
- c. **When a team notifies the TD of a "Special Default"**, all remaining opponent(s) will be informed of the "Special Default" before submitting their line-up. If the opponent has not been informed prior to submitting their line-up they may elect to change their line up.
 - **"Special Default"** is a default that occurs after the start of a championship. The captain is responsible for informing the TD immediately upon their knowledge of the "Special Default".
 - d. **If a team defaults a second position**, this regulation also applies to the second position in a 5 position championship.
 - e. **If the defaulting team advances out of round robin play**, all positions are eligible to play in the next level of the championship.

3. Retirements

- a. A retirement occurs when an individual match has started and a player/doubles team is unable to continue due to injury, loss of condition, or emergency. (see National Reg. 2.03N Scoring of Retirements.) Refusal to play will result in suspension points.
- b. If a player is found to have retired due to illness, injury or personal circumstance, wherein actuality it is because their team has secured the other lines, the player, team and captain will be subject to a sportsmanship grievance. This can include, but is not limited to, being disqualified from the event. (National Regulation 2.03K(1))

g. Draw Format-

1. Each Championship will operate on a basis of 8 total teams in each level (2.5–5.0 for Adults 18 & Over and 3.0–4.5 for Adults 40 & Over) with a representing team from each District.
2. Wildcards will be awarded according to Missouri Valley Section Regulation 15.J
3. **Divisions with 8 teams**, there will be two pools of 4 teams. Each pool of 4 teams will play a round robin. The top 3 teams from each pool will advance to the next round. Those 6 teams will compete in a single elimination quarter-final, a semi-final, and a final.
4. **Divisions with 4 or 5 teams**, a round robin will be played with the team with the best record overall wins.
5. **Divisions with 3 teams**, we will offer a double-round robin with the best record overall winning.
6. **Divisions with only 2 teams**, will have 3 matches scheduled; if the same team wins the first two matches, the last match will not be played.

7. After all wildcard options have been exhausted:

- a. **A flight with 6 teams:** the format will be a round robin. If the event moves indoors or the format is shortened, the Tournament Committee must decide, before the captain's check-in, whether to keep the round robin format or change to pool play. Pool play is 2 pools of 3 teams, all advancing to the quarter finals.
 - b. **A flight with 7 teams:** There is one pool of 4 teams and another pool of 3 teams. All teams except for the fourth place team in the pool of 4 advance to the quarterfinals.
- h. All players will be asked to show picture identification upon being assigned to a court for their first match of the championship. Any player unable to show picture identification by the time they are assigned to a court for their 2nd match will be immediately disqualified and their first match, if a win, will be awarded to the opponent.
- i. The USTA Missouri Valley Section League Championships I & II will operate on a combination of select levels from the Adult 18 & Over League and select levels of the Adult 55 & Over League. Adult 18 & Over and Adult 55 & Over teams will compete in the same championship, but not against each other. In one Championship, Adult 18 & Over League levels 3.0, 4.0 and 5.0 will be held along with the 55 & Over League levels 7.0 and 9.0. In the other Championship, Adult 18 & Over League levels 2.5, 3.5, and 4.5 will be held along with the 55 & Over League levels 6.0 and 8.0.

j. Section Wildcards

1. Wildcards may not be used for Sectional Championships in a flight unless:
 - a. Six or more districts send a team in the level; or
 - b. Fewer than three teams are sent in the level.
 - c. If six districts send advancing teams, 2 wildcards will be awarded, as per the Wildcard Rotation Schedule, until 8 teams will advance and compete in pool play championship.
2. Wildcard Requirements
 - a. Wildcard teams should not be accepted in the Section Championships if the team is not able to field a complete roster (enough players to fill all courts for all matches played) and plan on advancing to Nationals if they win their division. If the District's second place team is not able to field a complete roster, or does not intend to advance to nationals, the District should invite its third place team and so on. If the District's teams are unable to field a complete roster, then the District must pass the wildcard to the next district in line. Each district has 48 hours to find a team or they must pass the wildcard.
 - b. Wildcard teams must not have a losing team record. If a team record is tied, then their individual wins must be greater than their losses, or if their individual match record is tied, then they must have a game-winning percentage of greater than 50%.

3. If a team withdraws within 14 days of the start of the Section Championships, a replacement team may be sought from the Wildcard Rotation Schedule. No refunds will be given for team members who dropped out. Fees will go for the cost of the replacement team. If a team withdraws from any section Championship within 7 days of the start of the event, no replacement team will be sought. The SLC reserves the right to replace a team with a wildcard from the hosting district if feasible.
4. Wildcard positions will be rotated as District teams are selected to fill positions. The selected District team will then rotate to the bottom of the rotation for the next year. No Wildcard will be offered to any district unless the district has three or more teams within the level, *except* that when all districts that fielded teams in the level had only two teams.
5. **Team and Wild Card placement will be via a random draw.** Placement of two teams from the same District in the same pool is not allowed unless it is unavoidable because there are three teams from the same district.
6. If USTA Missouri Valley offers each eligible district a wildcard but cannot fill all spots, then the USTA Missouri Valley will go back through the wildcard rotation to determine which district, if any, can send an additional wildcard team.

k. 2.03D Championship Competition Formats.

2.03D(1) Championship Competition Format at Section Level Events and Below. The Sectional Association must determine the competition, team match, and scoring formats for the championship competitions.

2.03D(1)a The Sectional Association must determine the competition format used to determine the champion of a local league that utilized a full round robin competition under 2.01C(1).

2.03D(1)b If a local league used a partial round robin competition under 2.01C(2), the competition format used to determine the local league format for that NTRP level must be a minimum of a single elimination playoff between the top two teams at the conclusion of the partial round robin.

2.03D(2) Competition Format at National Championships. The USTA League Committee must determine the competition, team match, and scoring formats for National Championships.

2.03E Team Match and Scoring. A team match will consist of the matches as shown in table 2.03E in the national regulations. Sectional Associations may follow either the National Championships scoring format or its own format order to determine the winning team of a championship competition. For each team match, a majority of the individual matches must actually be played by the two teams to constitute a valid team match. The Championship Committee has the authority to determine the actions to take when the combination of individual match defaults given by the two teams in the team match would result in a situation where the majority of the individual matches would not be played.

- I. **2.03H Procedures in the Event of a Tie.** If there is a tie, whether in round robin or single elimination competition, the tie must be broken by the first of the following procedures that does so:
 1. If there is a tie at a championship below the level of Sectional Championships, that championship determines and publishes the order in which the procedures listed in the next paragraph are used to break the tie. If the championship does not publish the procedure, then it must follow the order for breaking ties in the next paragraph.
 - a. **The Tennislink breaks as many ties as possible using a given step before using the next step until the order of finish is determined.**
 - b. **If 3 or more teams are tied, once a tie is broken, Tennislink restarts the tiebreak procedure with the remaining teams. This will repeat until there is one winner.**
 2. For Sectional and National Championships, **in which there is** a tie, the tie must be broken by the first of the following procedures that does so:
 - 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. Procedure will be announced prior to commencement of championship competition.

m. **Timed Match Procedures at Section Championships: Timed matches may be used as an alternate format if weather becomes an issue at Section Championships.**

1. The tournament director will announce if the Timed Match procedure is going to be used prior to the start of the match.

2. **Timed Match Procedure:**

- *At fifteen minutes before the time designated to end play:*
 - All games in progress are completed. (A game is "in play" once the server has struck the first ball.)
- *Determining the winner of a set in progress*
 - If a player/team is ahead by two or more games, they have won the set.
 - If the match is tied in a set, a 7-point tiebreak is played to decide the set. The service order is what would have been followed for the set tiebreak.
- *Determining the winner of a match that is or becomes tied at one-set all.*
 - If the match is tied at one-set all or becomes tied at one set all after playing a 7-point tiebreak to decide the second set, a 7-point tiebreak is played to decide the third set and the match.
 - The service order is what would have been followed for a Match Tiebreak
- **If only one set has been completed, no further tiebreaks will follow. The match winner will be the winner of the first set.**

n. Teams advancing to Sectional Championships are required to complete the Sectional Championship within the reasonable timeframe established. Once the Sectional Championship begins, a team may not withdraw from or refuse to play any team match without the approval of the Section League Coordinator. If a team withdraws from or refuses to play any team match without this permission, each player on the team who appeared at the Championship (regardless of whether the player had yet played a match) will not be allowed to participate in any USTA local league during the following championship year.

o. 2.03K(1) The Championship Committee has the authority to file a grievance and recommend the actions to take when multiple match default(s) given by one team result in a situation that may materially impact the championship's standings. Team penalties may include, but are not limited to, non-advancement, disqualification, or suspension. (See Regulation 3.03A(7)).

p. A cell phone belonging to a player that rings on the court, during play, results in the loss of a point due to a hindrance.

q. **Teams Qualified/Advancing to National- 2.06 MOVE-UP/SPLIT-UP.**

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 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. These Split-Up requirements only apply to players other than:

- Self-Rated and Valid Computer Rated Appealed Players who played at least three matches (only one default received counts as a played match); and
- Self-Rated and Valid Computer Rated Appealed players who played at least four matches (no defaults count), for that team during the championship year.

2.06A(3): If a Section has a regulation that limits the number of players on a roster that are at a specific level, the Section must suspend that regulation for one year for any team that advanced to, or qualified for, any National Championship the previous year and chooses to move up one NTRP team level.

18 & Over, 40 & Over and 55 & Over Adult Leagues

1. Captains will be responsible for reviewing all league regulations (national, section, and district) and communicating those to their players. Districts will hold captains' meetings, and any captain unable to attend will still be solely responsible for obtaining the information provided at the meeting

2. 2.01A Levels of Play: Local Competition

2.01A(1) When using straight NTRP levels, a player may not have an NTRP rating higher than the NTRP level in which the player is competing.

55 & Over Combination leagues only: It is the responsibility of the team Captain to ensure that all doubles partners are within the combined level of play during each match, per National regulation table Team Composition pg. 11. There may be no more than a two-level (i.e., one-point) difference between partners on the court. Each Combination Rating Level has a minimum rating requirement to compete. Failure to comply will result in match disqualification.

For example, in a 7.0 pairing the minimum NTRP level for a player to register is 3.0 and the maximum is 4.0. So, two 3.0's can play together (6.0), two 3.5's can play together (7.0), one 3.0 and one 3.5 can play together (6.5), and one 3.0 and one 4.0 can play together (7.0).

3. **Sectional Match Format.** In accordance with the USTA League Rules and Regulations, all local league matches should consist of a format that has been determined by the District Association. At Section Championships the following formats will be used, aligning with the National Championship format:
 - a. 18 & Over-Team matches must consist of two singles and three doubles matches, except that 2.5 and 5.0 levels should consist of one singles match and two doubles matches.
 - b. **Adult 40 & Over Leagues must consist of five courts, one singles and four doubles.**
 - c. Adult 55 & Over Leagues must consist of 3 doubles courts.
4. A computer-rated player is eligible to progress to a District Championship if that player has played on that same team in at least two matches during its LOCAL LEAGUE Season. A maximum of ONE defaulted match will count as a match played for the players receiving the default, but not for the players who defaulted. A retired match will count for all players involved.
5. **Match requirement for advancement to Section Championships- See Section 15.(d)1-5 in the Section Regulations.**
6. **Advancement to National Championships- Minimum match requirements 2.03A(4)-** In Order to advance to any Adult National Championships,
 - **Computer (C) rated player** must have participated in three matches during all competition on that specific team. 1 default may count as a match played.
 - **Self-rated (S) and computer-rated appealed (A) players** are required to play at least four matches on the same team at the same level in the same Age Group. No defaults received count.
 - Any player whose rating changes during a season must qualify at that rating type (A, C, D, or S) to advance to the championships.
7. All Adult Divisions will include teams that maintain at least 30% of players who are rated at the level of the NTRP flight that they play. Ex: a 3.0 Adult 18 & Over team must have 30% or more players registered on said team that are rated 3.0.

18 & Over and 40 & Over Adult Mixed Doubles Leagues:

1. **Levels of Play:** Mixed Doubles 18 & Over League Play will be available at combined NTRP Levels of 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0, and 10.0. In the Mixed 40 & Over, play will be available in Combined NTRP Rated 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, and 9.0 levels.
2. A player who plays exclusively in the Mixed Doubles Division and chooses to participate in an Adult Division the next year must enter the Adult Division by self-rating. The player must then play at the higher of the self-rating and the mixed-exclusive rating. If players had a previous valid NTRP Computer or Benchmark Rating, this rating will be used instead of a Mixed Exclusive Rating.
3. **Roster Requirements-** It is the responsibility of the team Captain to ensure that all doubles partners are within the combined level of play during each match, per National regulation table Team Composition pg. 11. There may be no more than a two-level (i.e., one-point) difference between partners on the court. Each Combination Rating Level has a minimum rating requirement to compete. Failure to comply will result in match disqualification.

For example, in a 7.0 pairing the minimum NTRP level for a player to register is 3.0 and the maximum is 4.0. So, two 3.0's can play together (6.0), two 3.5's can play together (7.0), one 3.0 and one 3.5 can play together (6.5), and one 3.0 and one 4.0 can play together (7.0).

4. Any player NTRP disqualified from the USTA League Tennis-Adult division may not play at the disqualified level of play for USTA Mixed Doubles or any event sanctioned by USTA for the remainder of the championship year or for up to three years, unless a new NTRP rating is generated.
5. **Match requirement for advancement to Section Championships- See Section 15.(d)1-5 in the Section Regulations.**
6. **Advancement to National Championships- Minimum match requirements 2.03A(4)** In the Adult and Mixed Divisions, all players other than Self-Rated and Valid Computer Rated Appealed Players are eligible to advance to National Championship competition if that player has played on the same team in at least three matches at the same NTRP level in the same Age Group through Sectional Championships and is otherwise eligible. A maximum of 1 default received by the player during local league or championship competition may count for advancing.

-All Self-Rated and Valid Computer Rated Appealed players are eligible to progress to National 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 must count for advancing.

-Retired matches count toward advancing for all players involved in both USTA League Divisions. (*See Matches Required to Advance to Championships Table.*)

65 & Over Adult Leagues:

1. All USTA Adult 65 & Over League participants must be at least 65 years of age, or turn 65, in the calendar year in which they play.
2. **Roster Requirements-** It is the responsibility of the team Captain to ensure that all doubles partners are within the combined level of play during each match, per National regulation table Team Composition pg. 11. There may be no more than a two-level (i.e., one-point) difference between partners on the court. Each Combination Rating Level has a minimum rating requirement to compete. Failure to comply will result in match disqualification.

For example, in a 7.0 pairing the minimum NTRP level for a player to register is 3.0 and the maximum is 4.0. So, two 3.0's can play together (6.0), two 3.5's can play together (7.0), one 3.0 and one 3.5 can play together (6.5), and one 3.0 and one 4.0 can play together (7.0).

3. The 65 & Over Invitational Event is to determine winning teams to advance to the National 65 & over National Invitational in the winter of the following calendar year. The eligibility for players to advance to this invitational is by registering on TennisLink with a team number assigned by their district they are representing and to complete the online player registration for the event.
 - a. **Districts with more than one team must have a local league, district championship, and/or playoff to determine the team advancing to the Section Invitational.**
 - b. **Only teams with a game winning percentage of at least 40% or that have advanced to a district championship are eligible to receive a wildcard to the Section Championship.**
4. **National Match Requirement.** The eligibility for players to advance to the National 65 & over Invitational is two matches played with their team, with 1 default able to be counted as a match played. A waiver may be submitted to the Tournament Committee if they wish to advance with any players who do not meet this criterion, especially in the 9.0 Level.
5. **Move-Up/Split-Up:**
 - a. **Move-Up-** Teams and team members who advanced to or qualified for the 65 & Over National Invitational may play together as a team, in whole or in part, if they move up one NTRP team level.
 - b. **Split-Up-** No more than 50% of the players on the roster of any team that advanced to or qualified for the 65 & Over National Invitational the previous year may play together in the same Division, same Age Group, and at the same NTRP team level as the National Invitational team(s), if their NTRP rating allows. These Split-Up requirements only apply to players and rating types who participated in at least two matches (only one default may count as a played match) for that team during the championship year.
 - c. If a district has a regulation that limits the number of players on a roster at a specific level, the district must suspend that regulation for one year for any team that advanced to or qualified for the 65 & Over National Invitational the previous year and chooses to move up one NTRP team level.

18 & Over Tri- Level Adult Leagues:

1. All USTA League Tennis Regulations in 1.00 GENERAL and the following regulations must apply to the USTA League Tennis – Tri-Level Division.
2. **Local League-** A “team” must consist of doubles teams for at least three NTRP levels. Team matches must consist of a minimum of three NTRP consecutive levels (a “Tri-Level Format”). For example, a team may have doubles teams at the 2.5, 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5, and 5.0 levels, but only three of those levels will be playing during a team match.
3. **Number of Teams-** A local league is a team competition in a specified geographic area that applies specific local league regulations and consists of Tri-Level formats with a minimum of two or more teams per format.
4. **Entry-** A player without a computer rating must self-rate on Tennislink to enter the program. A player with a current NTRP computer rating must use that rating to enter the program.
5. **Levels of Play-** For league play, doubles teams will use straight NTRP levels (2.5, 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5 and 5.0). Local leagues may authorize a player to play one level higher than the player’s rating.
6. **Tri-Level Format-** The local league should determine which approved levels will be available for the Tri-Level teams in the local league competition.
7. **Scoring-** Any USTA-approved scoring method that is compatible with the USTA NTRP Computer Rating System may be used.
8. **Local Competition Format- Round Robin.** Each Tri-Level format within a local league should play at least one round robin competition wherein every team plays every other team. Any Tri-Level format with only two or three teams is required to play a minimum of three matches.
9. **Team Match and Scoring-** Each team match in a local league should consist of such a number of individual matches of Tri-Level as determined by the local league. The scoring in the event of a default or disqualification must be 6-0, 6-0.
10. **Individual Match-** An individual match is any Tri-Level match played as part of a team match.
11. **Tri-Level Sectional Player Eligibility**
 - a. **Self-Rated-** Self-Rated players are eligible to participate in a Section Invitational, but must generate a Year End Computer Rating, at the same level they competed in the local league, to be eligible to compete at the National Invitational. (i.e., **all players competing at the National Invitational must have a computer rating; a minimum of 3 matches are required to generate a computer year-end rating.**)
 - i. Self-rated, Appeal-rated, DQ, and promoted players are only required to have one match played on their team, with no defaults counting, in order to advance to Tri-level sectionals.
 - ii. Mixed exclusive and Tournament Exclusive rating types are considered self-rated and must generate a computer rating at year end in order to be eligible for National Championships.
 - b. **All Computer-rated players-** Must play at least one match with their team to be eligible to play at the section event. Defaults do not count for matches played.
12. **Roster Requirement-** Teams wishing to compete at the Section Invitational must have at least two rostered players in each NTRP level registered and able to attend/compete at the invitational. If not, the team will not be invited to attend. An individual may only play in one match within each team match.
13. **Split-Up:**
 - a. **2.06A:** Split-Up- No more than three players on the roster of a team that advanced to or qualified for Tri-level National Invitational the previous year may play together on the same Tri-Level team for the following championship year. These Split-Up requirements only apply to players, and rating types who participated in at least two matches (only one default may count as a played match), for that team during the championship year.

Mixed 55 & Over Leagues

1. **Local League-** Mixed Doubles 55 & Over leagues will be offered at the Combined NTRP Rated 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, and 9.0, levels. The local league should determine which levels will be offered for the Mixed 55 teams in the local league competition.
2. **Roster Requirements:**
 - a. It is the responsibility of the team Captain to ensure that all doubles partners are within the combined level of play during each match, per National regulation table Team Composition pg. 11. There may be no more than a two-level (i.e., one-point) difference between partners on the court. Each Combination Rating Level has a minimum rating requirement to compete. Failure to comply will result in match disqualification.
 - a. For example, in a 7.0 pairing the minimum NTRP level for a player to register is 3.0 and the maximum is 4.0. So, two 3.0's can play together (6.0), two 3.5's can play together (7.0), one 3.0 and one 3.5 can play together (6.5), and one 3.0 and one 4.0 can play together (7.0).
 - b. **Mixed 55 & over: No more than 12 players on a team may advance to sectionals. Districts may impose lower roster limits.**
3. **Number of Teams-** A local league is a team competition in a geographic area with local league regulations and consists of Mixed 55 & Over leagues with a minimum of two teams per level.
 - a. **For districts unable to produce at least two teams in local league play for any division, the Tournament Committee will allow those districts to form and send one waiver team as a representative of that district. The District League Coordinator must submit a request for a waiver before the deadline set by the USTA Missouri Valley office; October 1, 2025.**
4. **Entry-**
 - a. A player who plays exclusively in the Mixed Doubles Division in one year and chooses to participate in an Adult Division the next year must enter the Adult Division by self-rating. The player must then play at the higher of the Self-rating; Mixed-exclusive rating; and NTRP Computer or Benchmark Rating.
 - b. A player without a computer rating must self-rate on TennisLink to enter. A player with a current NTRP computer rating must use that rating.
5. **Local Competition Format- Round Robin.** Each level within a local league should play at least one round robin in which each team plays every other team. Any level with only two or three teams must play at least three matches.
6. **Team Match and Scoring-** The method of awarding points to determine the winning team of a local league team match and the winner of the local league competition must be compatible with TennisLink and the USTA NTRP Computer Rating System selected by the local league. The scoring of a default or disqualification is 6-0, 6-0.
 - a. **Player Participation-** A player may only play one match within each team match.
7. **Mixed 55 & Over Sectional Player Eligibility**
 - a. **Self-rated, Appeal-rated, Tournament Exclusive, DQ and promoted players are only required to play one match for their team (with defaults not counting) to advance to Mixed 55 & Over sectionals.**
 - b. **All Computer-rated players-** Must play at least one match with their team to be eligible to play at the Sectionals. Defaults do not count for matches played.
8. **Move-Up/Split-Up: (This starts in 2025 for teams advancing to Nationals in 2026)**
 - a. **Move-Up-** Teams and team members who advanced to or qualified for the 55 & Over Mixed National Invitational may play together as a team, in whole or in part, if they move up one NTRP team level.
 - b. **Split-Up-** No more than 6 players on any team that advanced to or qualified for the 55 & Over Mixed National Invitational the previous year may play together in the same Division, same Age Group, and at the same NTRP team level as the National Invitational team(s). This assumes their NTRP rating allows them to play at this level.
 - c. **If a district has a regulation that limits the number of players on a roster at a specific level, this regulation is automatically suspended for one year for any team that advances to or qualifies for the 55 & Over Mixed National Invitational the previous year and moves up one NTRP team level.**