

CHAMPIONSHIP YEAR 2015

National Leagues:

Adult 18 & Over
Adult 40 & Over
Adult 55 & Over
Mixed 18 & Over
Mixed 40 & Over

NorCal Leagues

NorCal Combo Doubles 18 & Over
NorCal Adult 65 & Over
NorCal Adult 70 & Over
NorCal Mixed 55 & Over

NEW RULES EFFECTIVE 2015

Rule 3 – Benchmark (B) ratings will no longer publish
Rule 5a – Captains and co-captains must have valid USTA memberships
Rule 8a – Restroom facilities must be accessible on-site for a home team match
Rules 11b, 11c, 12b – Notification requirement if taking home court advantage
Rule 8c – Clarification of conditions and court surfaces for team matches
Rule 12b – Playoff matches required to be played
Rule 16e – Notification requirement for withdrawing team from playoffs
Rule 17 – Automatic verification of entered scores if not done by opposing captain
Rule 23 – Bathroom Breaks
Rule 26c – Third Set match tiebreak requirement in Daytime leagues and within 120 minutes of facility closure
Rule 45 - Move-Up/Split-Up Rule changes for 2015

Please note that all forms, documents, and information referenced to the [League Resources](#) will be found at this link.

Waiver of Claims

Players participating in the USTA League acknowledge the risks associated with playing competitive tennis, accept those risks voluntarily, and in consideration of their acceptance in the USTA League Program, 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 [ULR 1.04E(5)].

Governing Rules

All USTA Northern California Leagues are governed by the USTA League Regulations (ULR) and these Local League Area Regulations (LLAR) for USTA Leagues. The LLAR includes the national rules and the modifications and additions thereof that are formulated by the NorCal Adult League Committee (ALC). At the discretion of the ALC, the LLAR may be clarified at any time. However, any change made to the LLAR will not be retroactive.

Compliance with the USTA League Regulations (ULR)

All players participating in the USTA League, as a condition of said participation, agree to abide and be bound by the USTA Constitution and Bylaws; the USTA League Regulations (ULR); the *Friend at Court* (FAC) including "The Code" and "Wheelchair Rules of Tennis"; and the standards of good conduct, fair play and good sportsmanship [ULR 1.04E(4)].

Team captains shall be responsible for knowing the ULR and for informing all team members of their obligation to be bound by the ULR. Failure to comply with the ULR or LLAR shall not be excused on the grounds that one was misinformed by a USTA staff member or volunteer. Team captains and/or their representatives at matches shall be responsible for not only their actions but the actions of their players and spectators. Copies of the ULR, LLAR, *Friend at Court*, and "The Code" may be found in the [League Resources](#). NorCal will use its own Team and Player Registration programs and its own score reporting system.

The following Local League Area Regulations apply to all leagues except where indicated. Please note that every reference to the masculine gender includes the feminine, unless otherwise specified.

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Player Eligibility and Requirements for Match Play

1. USTA Membership Requirements - A player must have a current valid USTA membership that extends through the team's local league season and playoffs. This membership information must be posted onto his NorCal player page before the player can successfully roster onto a team [ULR 1.04E(2)]. Any player who then progresses to a championship level event must also possess a current USTA membership that extends through each championship progression. If a player has to update and extend his membership at the national office, this process will require at least one more business day for the updated information to transfer from the national USTA office to the NorCal site before the player will be eligible to play for the team.

2. Age Requirements - In order to participate in a local league, the player must reach the required minimum age during the calendar year in which the league occurs [ULR 1.04E(3)]. **High school tennis players should check with their high school coach for specific eligibility rules. Playing on a league team may invalidate their participation on a high school team.**

3. Rating Requirements - When a player joins a new team, his current valid rating on his NorCal player page will transfer to the team roster. If the player's rating has expired, the player will be directed to self-rate before he can register for a team. If directed to self-rate, the player should utilize the General & Experienced Player Guidelines, as well as personal tennis background and past on-court performance when self-rating. If there is any question as to which level he should play, the player should always place himself in the higher NTRP level of play to avoid NTRP disqualification for himself and his team.

If a player needs to transfer a valid rating from another section to his NorCal player page, he should call NorCal for assistance in this matter.

If the player's rating subsequently changes because of appeal or disqualification, his rating will be manually updated on his player page and all active team rosters. The player and captain have a responsibility to ensure that the player's correct updated rating is always posted.

Once an automatic appeal is requested and granted, the player must play at the new rating. In the case in which a player's rating is adjusted up, no prior matches will be overturned. However, if the player remains eligible for the team, he must immediately play at the higher rating. **Once an automatic appeal is granted, the player may not rescind it for the rest of the year.**

VALID NTRP COMPUTER RATINGS FOR 2015	
C Rating Computer Year-End	This rating is valid for all league play. For players aged 59 or younger, a C rating is valid for three consecutive years unless a new rating is generated that supplants it. For players age 60 or older, a C rating is valid for two consecutive years, unless a new rating is generated that supplants it. <i>If a C rating is expired, the player will be directed to self-rate when he tries to join a team.</i>
M Rating Mixed-Exclusive	This rating is valid for mixed league play only. For players aged 59 or younger, an M rating is valid for three consecutive years unless a new rating is generated that supplants it. For players age 60 or older, an M rating is valid for two consecutive years, unless a new rating is generated that supplants it. <i>If an M rating is expired or if the player wishes to play in any other league division, this player will be directed to self-rate when he tries to join a team.</i>

T Rating Tournament-Exclusive	<p>This rating is valid for tournament and mixed league play only.</p> <p>For players aged 59 or younger, a T rating is valid for three consecutive years unless a new rating is generated that supplants it.</p> <p>For players age 60 or older, a T rating is valid for two consecutive years, unless a new rating is generated that supplants it.</p> <p style="color: red;">If a T rating is expired or if the player wishes to play in any other league division, this player will be directed to self-rate when he tries to join a team.</p>
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Please note that **Benchmark (B) ratings will no longer be published**. Championship players will not be allowed to appeal their ratings down for one year after playing in championship matches but will be allowed to appeal their ratings up if they otherwise qualify [ULR 2.07].

A self-rating (S rating) is not a computer rating. Self-ratings are valid for two years from the date of issuance or until replaced by a computer rating. At least one business day is required for a new self-rating to transfer from the national USTA office to the NorCal player page. If a self-rating expires while a player is playing on a team, that player and his captain will be notified. The player must self-rate anew to remain eligible to play for the team and to have his matches validated.

Self-rated players have a responsibility to rate themselves at the correct level for play at all times throughout the year. If a self-rated player is improving rapidly, he should consider moving himself up by using the automatic appeal process. Self-rated players are subject to the Three Strikes Procedure and to NTRP grievances. Please do not jeopardize your teams by under-rating. If a self-rated player is winning most of his matches and if a captain is relying on that player for his team wins, both should consider the possibility that the player is inaccurately rated.

4. Team Participation Requirements

4a. Roster Requirements - All players **must** be on the roster prior to the start of the first team match in which they play. A computer-generated scorecard will contain a list of eligible players at the time that it is printed. Any player not on the roster at the time of the match is ineligible, and his match, if played, will be reversed.

Q: May captains agree to let someone play if they promise to roster after the match?

A: NO.

Q: What happens if a match has not started and it is discovered that a player in the lineup has not been added to the roster?

A: If this player can be rostered with a smart phone or computer in time to play the match, there is no problem.

Q: What happens if a match is played and completed, and after the match it is discovered that one player from Team A was not eligible?

A: For the purpose of calculating team standings, this individual match will be reversed to a 6-0, 6-0 win for the opponents of the ineligible player. Both the ineligible player and his partner will not receive this match as credit for eligibility determinations for postseason play. The actual match scores and results will be kept for the determination of individual ratings.

4b. Playing on Multiple Teams - A player may play on more than one same-NTRP level team only if those teams are in different areas. A player may play on different-NTRP level teams in the same area. For example, John Smith is allowed to play on one 3.5 East Bay team, one 4.0 East Bay team, one 3.5 Fresno team, and one 4.0 Fresno team. If, in the same area, there is more than one flight at a given level, the player may only play in one flight [ULR 1.04G(2)].

If on multiple teams at the same level, the player must select only one of the teams to play on for postseason play from playoffs through Sectional Championships. Once he plays for a team from playoffs on, that team becomes his selected team through Sectional Championships. He may only complete local league matches for the other team(s). However, if otherwise qualified, a player may play with any team advancing to a national championship even if he did not play for that team in previous postseason play.

Q: What can be done about conflicts that players face when playing on multiple teams?

A: Some overlapping of league seasons, including postseason play, is unavoidable. NorCal makes every effort to schedule the different seasons in a way to minimize these conflicts, but with a growing number of leagues and league participation, it is not possible to avoid all conflicts. In order to minimize future scheduling conflicts among the various leagues, captains and players should anticipate and define their participation and expectations to each other well in advance.

4c. Playing Up - Players may compete on a team that is 0.5 level higher than their actual NTRP rating [ULR 1.04G(5)].

4d. Match Participation - A player may join a league team at any time prior to the end of the local league season. A player is eligible to participate in one individual match within each team match [ULR 1.04G(8)].

4e. Identification - All league players are required to have government-issued photo I.D. available for presentation at all league matches. A player shall not play a league match under another player's name. Any player who impersonates another player and any captain or team member who is aware of this impersonation at the time of the league match may be suspended from all USTA-sanctioned activities for a one-year period.

Q: What happens if there is no substitute for a player who cannot provide a photo ID?

A: Default Rules apply.

4f. Team Transfer/Credits – A player who is rostered on a team but has not played any matches for that team may request to be removed from the roster. The captain may remove the player at any time **prior** to the end of the local league season, and the player will then receive a **credit** for a future league registration. This credit will automatically apply when the player next registers for a league team. This credit will not expire, is not transferrable, and will not include the processing fee charged by TennisLink. NorCal does not issue refund checks.

EXCEPTION: if there is an at-level requirement for a team, players who fulfill this requirement will not be able to be removed from the team roster.

5. Team Requirements

5a. Team Captain – Each team shall appoint a captain to manage team activities and to represent the team in USTA league matters [ULR 1.04B(4)]. The captain and co-captain of each team must have valid and current USTA memberships that extend through the team's entire active playing season.

5b. "At Level" Player Requirement – For Adult 18 & Over and Adult 40 & Over leagues, all teams must have a **minimum** of 6 players for five-line leagues or 4 players for three-line leagues who are rostered at the team's NTRP level by the time the first team match is played. The team is required to maintain the required number of "at level" players rostered on the team throughout the entire season, including postseason play. If a team does not have the required number of "at

level” players rostered on the team at the time of any match, that team match will count as a loss with all individual team matches being scored as 6-0, 6-0 losses.

In any “plus” team (4.5+, 5.0+, etc.), up to two “plus” players may count as part of the total team requirement for the “at level” players.

The “at level” requirement is suspended for those qualified teams which elect the “Move-Up” option in the Move-Up/Split-Up rule for the following year [ULR 2.06A(3)].

5c. Two-Team 40% Requirement - If any Adult Division Age Group 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 to the two-team 40% rule is the Adult 55 & Over league that uses combined NTRP rating levels and will not be required to comply with this regulation [URL 1.04D(5)].

The “two-team 40%” requirement is suspended for those qualified teams which elect the “Move-Up” option in the Move-Up/Split-Up rule for the following year [ULR 2.06A(3)].

5d. Partnerships of Combined-Rating leagues – Combined-rating doubles league teams (Adult 55 & Over, NorCal Adult 70 & Over, Mixed, and Combo) are composed of teams of partners whose combined NTRP rating levels may not exceed a stated threshold for that league (5.5, 6.0, 6.5, 7.0, etc.). For 2015, a minimum level, a maximum level, and/or a maximum spread between partners may be specified for each league.

For National combined NTRP rating level teams, the **minimum** rating for 5.0 is 2.5; 6.0 is 2.5; 7.0 is 3.0; 8.0 is 3.5; 9.0 is 4.0; and 10.0 is 4.5. The NTRP rating difference between partners shall not exceed 1.0.

For NorCal Mixed 55 & Over, the **maximum** rating for 6.0 is 3.5; 7.0 is 4.0; 8.0 is 4.5; and 9.0 is 5.0. The NTRP rating difference between partners shall not exceed 1.0.

For NorCal Combo Doubles, the **maximum** rating for 5.5 is 3.0; 6.5 is 3.5; 7.5 is 4.0; 8.5 is 4.5; and 9.5 is 5.0. For 10.0+, the **minimum** rating allowed is 5.0.

6. Eligibility for postseason play – For Playoffs, District, and Sectional Championships, a player must have played in two matches for the same team during the local league season. One default win will count for eligibility. For National Championships, a player must have played in three matches for the same team through Sectional Championships. No defaults will count towards national eligibility. Retired matches will count for all players as a match played [ULR 2.03A(4)]. Please note that if a player is deemed ineligible after he participates in a match, that individual match will **not** count towards his or his partner’s eligibility for postseason play.

For Adult 18 & Over 5.5 and Open leagues, there is a two-match requirement to advance to Playoffs and Sectionals. There are no match eligibility requirements to advance to the national “Invitational” event. All players who participate in postseason championships must have current USTA memberships that extend through the Championship segment of play.

Organizing a Team

7. Team Registration – Do not register a team unless you are certain that you have enough players! A grievance may be filed against a captain who withdraws his team after the publicized deadline date. Unless the grievance committee finds the captain or person who registered the team had "good cause" for withdrawing the team after the deadline, the captain and the team members who are rostered may be penalized. "Good cause" will not include having an insufficient number of players to play.

8. Home Courts

8a. Hosting Responsibilities

- **Balls:** The home team shall supply new, standard Type 2 USTA-approved tennis balls for the match. It is the home team's option to use new balls in the third set [ULR 1.05].
- **Attire:** Specific attire regulations should be posted on the home team's NorCal Team Page.
- **Food:** Neither the home team nor visiting team is required to provide food at a match.
- **Water** must be available at the site of the match. Drinking fountains meet this requirement. Visiting teams should bring their own water containers.
- **Parking, Dogs, Driving directions, Etc.:** Teams should post all important rules and regulations regarding their home courts on their NorCal Team Page. Visiting teams are expected to abide by the home court's posted information.
- **Restrooms** must be accessible and on-site for players' use during the entire match. If during a match, the restrooms are not accessible or available within a reasonable time, the teams may stop play and reschedule the match. If there is no good reason for not having the restrooms available, the away team may take a retirement for delay of game in the affected matches.

8b. Visitors' Responsibilities - As guests, visiting teams are required to follow the guidelines and facility rules as posted on the host's NorCal Team page.

8c. Reserving Home Courts - Teams are required to reserve home courts for all home matches during the season.

- **Adult 18 & Over:** A minimum of three courts must be reserved for a five-line match, and a minimum of two courts for a three-line match (2.5, 5.0+, 5.5+, and Open).
- **All other Adult, Mixed, and NorCal Doubles leagues:** A minimum of two courts must be reserved for a three-line match.

The home team may provide the minimum number of courts either at the first or second scheduled time for the match. Unless the captains agree otherwise, the home team may host a match, with confirmed reservations, for the following court arrangements:

ADULT 18 & OVER LEAGUE 3.0-4.5 (five-line leagues):

Five courts at one time.

Three courts for the first shift, followed by two courts for the second shift.

Two courts for the first shift, followed by three courts for the second shift.

Four courts for the first shift, followed by one court for the second shift.

One court for the first shift, followed by four courts for the second shift.

ADULT LEAGUE 18 & OVER 2.5, 5.0, 5.5+, and ALL OTHER THREE-LINE LEAGUES:

Three courts at one time.

Two courts for the first shift, followed by one court for the second shift.

One court for the first shift, followed by two courts for the second shift.

Unless captains agree otherwise, the start time for the second-shift matches that follow the first-shift matches shall be 75 minutes after the start of the first-shift matches. The matches that are not following the first-shift matches on the same courts should have confirmed reservations on different courts. However, remember that the two captains may agree to a different scheduling procedure outside of the LLAR as long as both captains agree. When using split start times, please schedule matches by using LLAR Rule 14 – Order of Play, unless, of course, captains agree to a different order of play.

Q: May a match be scheduled with the one court starting first and four courts starting later?

A: Yes. The first court is scheduled. Four courts are scheduled to start 75 minutes later – one court may follow the first scheduled court when it is completed; the other three courts need confirmed reservations. The home captain may also schedule the other three or four courts earlier with confirmed court reservations as long as he gets the away captain's agreement.

Q: May matches be scheduled on indoor or clay courts?

A: Yes, if a registered home facility has indoor and outdoor courts, or clay and hard courts, the home team may elect to play the team match indoors or outdoors, or on clay or hard courts. However, the entire team match must be scheduled with the same conditions and court surface. Unless both captains agree otherwise, a home team may not mix court surfaces or elements (indoor or outdoor courts) for a team match. Prior notification should be given to the visiting team if the match will be played on anything other than outdoor hard courts.

Q: May matches be played on courts that are painted with youth tennis/"Under 10" lines?

A: YES.

Q: Where may home matches be scheduled?

A: Home matches must be scheduled at the designated home facility as listed.

Q: What if teams from different facilities wish to combine together and use both facilities at which to schedule home matches?

A: The combined team may schedule home matches at both facilities. However, the posted schedule must **clearly demarcate** which facility will be used for **each home match**. The designated home facilities must also be listed on the team's page. The captains must register one facility as the home facility and post the second facility under Captain's Tools, Name Your Team. Captains may also notate their designated facilities by using the Public Notes on their team page.

Q: If, during the season, a team is unable to provide courts for a match at the site under which it registered its team, may home matches be moved to another site within the same area?

A: YES, but only if the home courts are unavailable or unplayable. This rule applies to local league and playoff matches. The home team is responsible for notifying the opponents and providing directions to the alternate site. The home team cannot change the time of the team match or any of the individual matches without agreement from the opponent. Inclement weather is **NOT** a valid reason to unilaterally change the home court location to a different facility with indoor courts. The visiting captain must agree to this type of change. If indoor courts are listed as part of the home team's facility during team registration, the match may be played indoors without agreement from the visiting team. The visiting team is not required to pay fees for indoor court use.

Q: What should I do if I feel a court is dangerous or unsafe for play?

A: Stop playing, discuss the issue with the captains, and have the captains consider rescheduling the match if the issue cannot be resolved at the site by some other means (moving to a different court, going indoors if available, etc.).

Q: How can I obtain a certificate of insurance if requested by my home site?

A: Please refer to the League Directory and look under General Information for Insurance, or contact Tony Ng (Ng@norcal.usta.com) for more information.

9. Format – Descriptions of All Leagues

National League	Sectional League	Level	Individual Matches
Adult 18 & Over		3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5	2 Singles and 3 Doubles
Adult 18 & Over		2.5, 5.0+	1 Singles and 2 Doubles
	Adult 18 & Over 5.5+ and Open	5.5 & higher	1 Singles and 2 Doubles
	Adult 40 & Over	2.5	1 Singles and 2 Doubles
Adult 40 & Over		3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5+	1 Singles and 2 Doubles Local League 2 Singles and 3 Doubles Championship Play
Adult 55 & Over		6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0	3 Doubles
	NorCal 65 & Over	3.5, 4.0	3 Doubles
	NorCal 70 & Over	7.0, 8.0	3 Doubles
	NorCal Combo Doubles	5.5, 6.5, 7.5, 8.5, 9.5, 10.0+	3 Doubles
Mixed 18 & Over		2.5, 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0, 10.0	3 Doubles
Mixed 40 & Over		6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0	3 Doubles
	NorCal Mixed 55 & Over	6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0	3 Doubles

Q: What does (+) mean?

A: (+) allows all “Plus” NTRP level team rosters to include up to two players from the next higher NTRP level. “Plus” players must always play in the **#1 position**, either #1S or #1D. If there are three individual matches within a team match, only one “Plus” player may compete in a team match. If there are four or more individual matches within a team match, two “Plus” players may compete at one time [ULR 2.01A(1)].

Q: What does (+) mean for NorCal 5.5+?

A: NorCal 5.5+ is open to all players rated 5.5 and above. There is no limit to the number of players rated above 5.5 who may be on the roster. However, only two “Plus” players may play per team match and the “Plus” players must play in order of strength.

10. Number of Rounds - Small flights will be offered multiple rounds of play. Flights of three or fewer teams must play a minimum of three rounds [ULR 2.01C(1)]. NorCal may use uneven rounds by adding additional matches, selected randomly, within a flight to provide more opportunities to play [URL 2.01C(1)a].

11. Scheduling

11a. Deadline, Local League Season - Every league season has a deadline by which all local league matches must be completed [ULR 2.02A(1)]. If a match has no impact on playoffs standings, the two captains may agree not to play a match and to leave the scorecard blank. In determining final team standings, any matches not completed by the flight's deadline will be counted as losses for both teams.

11b. Scheduling & Communicating - Two opposing captains may agree to schedule their match at any time and place as long as the match is completed by the end of their local league season. Otherwise, the home team shall set the date and time of the match during the time frame that is specified for that match in the master schedule.

Weekday matches must be scheduled **to start** between 6:00 PM and 8:00 PM; weekend matches must be scheduled **to start** between 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Please note that these are start times. A second shift may be scheduled to start up to 75 minutes later.

There are TWO exceptions to these match times:

1. **NorCal 65 & Over and NorCal 70 & Over Leagues:** these team matches should be scheduled to start between 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM, Monday through Friday, unless captains agree otherwise.
2. **NorCal Women's Daytime Leagues:** these team matches should be scheduled to start between 9:00 AM and 11:30 AM, Monday through Friday, unless captains agree otherwise.

Before scheduling a match outside of prescribed scheduling guidelines (for example, in a different week, earlier or later start time than prescribed in LLAR, or at a different facility), the captain must not only communicate this request to the opposing captain but obtain agreement. Simply posting the variance will not constitute adequate notification and is not acceptable.

All initial matches must be posted by the deadline set by the NorCal league department. If a home team does not notify their opponents of the match date and time by the deadline, the opponents **may choose** to become the home team **by so notifying the original home team by the first day following the deadline at noon**. The new home team may then have three days from the initial deadline to post a date and time of the match during the specified week. Consequently, both teams have the option and the responsibility to set the date and the time of the match between them. **If the match remains unscheduled and both teams cannot agree on how to proceed, there is a possibility that this match will remain unplayed and so count as a loss for both teams. If captains wish for matches to count in terms of team standings, they must work together to get them scheduled and played.**

Once a match is initially scheduled or posted within the scheduling parameters, the home team cannot alter it without the consent of the away team. The away team cannot refuse a match that

is scheduled within these defined parameters. We cannot prohibit teams from scheduling matches on various religious, cultural, or governmental holidays. We cannot make a home team change its scheduled match date and time because of projected inclement weather or unanticipated conflicts that occur. We encourage captains to work together when issues arise, but also understand that home teams may only have certain dates and times to offer, and away teams should plan to abide by the posted schedule to the best of their ability.

11c. Rescheduling - If rescheduling a match is indicated, the captains may agree to set the parameters for the make-up match between them as long as the match is completed by the end of the local league season. No extension of time will be given to complete local league matches. Matches not completed by the end of the local league season will count as losses for both teams in terms of team standings.

Only if the two captains cannot agree to a date and time of a reschedule, then the home team must offer the visiting team at least two different dates (the two dates must be offered at the same time). The home team must offer these dates within seven days from the original match date. The dates offered cannot conflict with another league match in the same league. The visiting team must choose one of those options within three days of receiving them. If the visiting team does not make a choice by the fourth day of receiving the dates, the home team may select which one of the two dates will be used to play the match by so notifying the visiting team.

If the home team does not offer dates by the seventh day at 9 PM, the visiting team may elect to become the "home team" **by so notifying the original home team by noon on the eighth day**, and then has seven days, starting immediately, to set up the match in accordance with the same procedures. Consequently both captains have an opportunity and a responsibility to set a match date. **If the match remains unscheduled and both teams cannot agree on how to proceed, there is a possibility that this match will remain unplayed and so count as a loss for both teams. If captains wish for matches to count in terms of team standings, they must work together to get them scheduled and played.**

Once a match has been rescheduled, the home team may not change the date and time without agreement from the away captain.

11d. Rescheduling at a New Site – Please refer to Rule 8c – Reserving Home courts, Q & A.

11e. Rescheduling an Interrupted Match - When a match is not completed due to outside circumstances, the captains should set up a new date for completing the match by following the rescheduling procedure. Captains may then allow the individual players to arrange convenient dates and times to finish their individual matches prior to the new rescheduled match date. Any individual matches not completed by the new match date should be played on the newly scheduled match date. Any match that is not completed by the new match date is considered a RETIREMENT with the win going to the team that was able to play. "Retirement" is selected in the drop-down box; the winner is selected as the team that was able to play; and the scores are recorded from the winner's perspective exactly as they were when the match was interrupted.

If an individual match had not started (a match starts with first serve attempt), any rostered player who was not playing in any other line of the match may be used. When an individual match has started, the same players must complete that match. If there was a default in the original lineup and if any one match had begun, the defaulted line stands.

12. Playoffs – Unless otherwise specified, there will be a two- or four-team playoff as defined by the Local League Rules 12a. below with the EXCEPTION of daytime leagues.

Daytime leagues that have playoffs should schedule their playoffs within their league's specified parameters for match play. However, if the schedule is compressed, the home team must give at least 48-hours notification of the playoff date if the standard deadline does not allow at least this amount of time. Posting the match date and time on the web schedule constitutes notification. If the playoff scorecard is not yet available on-line, notification may be done by email to the opposing captain to meet this time requirement. The playoff must be completed by the standard designated timeframe for any playoff round.

12a. Playoff Format - Unless otherwise specified, Local League Playoffs will be scheduled for two weekends. Please note that within a given area, there may be multiple subflights. Each subflight is treated as a separate flight in terms of scheduling, but players may only play on one team within an area with subflights.

- Flights of four or fewer teams will have a two-team playoff on the designated first playoff weekend. Team #1 will host Team #2.
- Flights with five teams will have one extra week of local league season play in order to have 10 matches. The top two teams will have their playoff on the designated second weekend of playoffs to accommodate this variance. Team #1 will host Team #2.
- Flights of six or more teams will have a four-team playoff. On the designated first playoff weekend, Team #1 will host Team #4, and Team #2 will host Team #3. The winners from the first weekend will play on the designated second weekend with home court advantage going to the team ranked higher at the conclusion of the local league season.

12b. Scheduling Playoffs - Captains may agree to hold a playoff match earlier, but not later than the designated weekend/week. If a playoff is a four-team playoff, the #1 team hosts the #4 team, and the #2 team hosts the #3 team on the first weekend. For any subsequent round of playoffs, the team higher in local league standings is designated as the home team.

First Round:

- The home team must notify the away team of the date and time of the first round playoff match by 9 PM on the first Monday that follows the end of the local league season. Posting the match date and time on the web schedule constitutes notification. If the playoff scorecard is not yet available on-line, the home team must email the away team notifying them of the date and time by the deadline.
- If the home captain fails to provide his opponent with this information by the deadline - either by email or web posting - the visiting team **may** take home court for the playoff match **by notifying the opponent captain by 12 noon on Tuesday, the day following the deadline**. The captain, who is taking home court advantage, then has until 9 PM on the following Wednesday (48 hours from the original deadline) in which to notify the original home team of the date and time of the match. This notification should be sent by email with a copy to NorCal so that the scorecard can be changed to reflect the correct home and away teams.
- If the captain who takes home court advantage does not notify the original home team with the appropriate date and time by the deadline of 9 PM on Wednesday, then the original home team captain has home court advantage back in which to schedule the date and time of the match for the upcoming playoff weekend.

Additional rounds:

- By 9 p.m. on Monday, the day after completion of the first round playoff weekend, the home captain must notify the visiting captain of the date and time of the second upcoming playoff match. Posting the match date and time on the web schedule constitutes

notification. If the playoff scorecard is not yet available on-line, the home team must email the away team and notify them of the date and time.

- If the home captain fails to provide his opponent with this information - either by email or by web posting - by the deadline, the visiting team **may** take home court for the upcoming playoff match **by notifying the opponent captain by 12 noon on the Tuesday, the day following the deadline**. The captain, who is taking home court advantage, then has until 9 PM on the following Wednesday (48 hours from the original deadline) in which to notify the original home team of the date and time of the match. This notification should be sent by email with a copy to NorCal so that the scorecard can be changed to reflect the correct home and away teams.
- If the captain who takes home court advantage does not notify the original home team with the appropriate date and time by the deadline of Wednesday, 9 PM, then the original home team captain has home court advantage back in which to schedule the date and time of the match for the upcoming playoff weekend.

All playoff matches shall be played. If a playoff match is not completed by the scheduled deadline, then a random method, such as a coin toss, by NorCal will determine the winner.

EXCEPTION:

- If BOTH captains agree **AND** if the playoff match is not required for advancement, the teams may agree not to play and will be placed in order of local league standings for placement as the area representative or the wildcard. NorCal must be notified of this decision by both teams.

During the Match

13. Starting Time - An individual match starts at the moment when the first-service attempt occurs. A team match starts at the moment the first-individual match starts. For matches played in two shifts, if the second-shift matches will follow on the same courts as the first-shift matches as they complete, the second-shift's scheduled time for its matches shall be 75 minutes after the first-shift's scheduled match time. As long as both captains agree, second-shift matches may be scheduled earlier if they have confirmed courts and times to play separate and apart from the first-shift matches. In no case, may the two shifts be scheduled more than 75 minutes apart from start to start.

Q: What happens if a match runs past its allotted court time?

A: In the case of back-to-back league matches that are scheduled with different teams, any team whose match runs over its scheduled time allotment should vacate the courts for the next team, even if it has not finished its match. See the rescheduling procedure for finishing the incomplete matches at a later date.

14. Order of Play - The order of play shall be in the following sequence:

Adult 18 & over: #1 singles, #1 doubles, #2 doubles, #2 singles, #3 doubles.

Adult 40 & Over: #1 singles, #1doubles, #2 doubles

All other Leagues: #1 Doubles, #2 Doubles, #3 Doubles

Q: May Captains agree to a different order of play?

A: YES, but see Rule 16f.

15. Lineups - Except for Plus (+) players who must play in order of strength, teams are not required to field players in order of strength. The team captains for each team shall present and exchange their line-ups simultaneously before the scheduled start time of the match. The lineups must be completely filled out, even if the match is being played that day in two shifts [ULR 2.01C(5)]. Once lineups are presented and exchanged, substitutions may only be made in an individual match for injury to, illness of, a disqualification of, or a failure to show of a player prior to the start of the match. See Rule 16f – Substitutions.

Q: May a captain delay the exchange of lineups because someone is late – or for any other reason?

A: No.

16. Defaults

16a. Individual Ineligibility – If an ineligible player plays a match, this individual match will be reversed to a 6-0, 6-0 win for the opponents of the ineligible player in terms of team standings. Both the ineligible player and his partner will not receive match credit for eligibility determinations for postseason play. The actual match scores and results will be kept for the determination of individual ratings.

16b. Individual Match Defaults - When substitutes are not available, a default may be taken if the scheduled player is not ready to play at the court site within 15 minutes after his scheduled match time. Other than as stated above, there will be no penalties for lateness imposed. The loss of toss and games as defined in “Friend at Court,” is NOT used in Local League matches.

Defaults must be taken from the bottom up of the singles and/or doubles lineup. One default must be taken either at the bottom of the singles or at the bottom of the doubles lines. Two defaults may be taken sequentially either at the bottom of the singles or doubles lines, or they may be taken as one default in the bottom singles line and one default in the bottom doubles line.

In a match with staggered-start times that has an unforeseen default in the first round of matches and in which there are no second-round players or substitutes available to fill the line, then that individual match will be a default and the other individual matches will play as written on the lineup card.

Q: May a captain be flexible in allowing extra time before claiming a default?

A: YES.

Q: What happens if a player who is present at the match site suddenly becomes unable to play after the exchange of scorecards but before the match is started?

A: If a substitute is not available, that particular match shall be defaulted. See Rule 16f.

Q: What if a lower position starts out of sequence and then a higher match later defaults?

A: All matches stand as played [“The Code”, Section 2].

Q: What if two team players who are members of different doubles teams fail to appear on time for a match?

A: The two doubles players who did appear shall play together and only one position shall be defaulted.

Q: May a default received be used toward qualifying players for postseason play?

A: YES and NO. One default may be used to qualify the player for Playoffs, Districts, and Sectionals. NO defaults may be used to qualify the player for National Championships.

16c. Double Defaults - If both teams simultaneously default the same individual match, the match will be scored as a double default. This will be scored as a 6-0, 6-0 loss for both teams. If circumstances after the match, such as NTRP disqualifications, cause the winner of a team match to become undetermined, the team win will be given to the team with the better overall score in the eligible lines.

16d. Total Team Match Defaults - Team matches will not be validated for scoring if there are more individual match defaults than lines played for both teams. For example, in a three-line league match, if Team A defaults #1 singles, Team B defaults #2 doubles, and only # 1 doubles is played, this team match would not be valid. The two teams must work together to play at least two out of the three lines or three out of five lines for the match to count [ULR 2.01C(2)]. **A team default will not count for any team as a team win.**

- All five-line leagues may default a **maximum of two** individual positions without defaulting the entire team match.
- All three-line leagues may default a **maximum of one** individual position without defaulting the entire team match.

If a default of an entire match is claimed as a win, a grievance may be filed by USTA NorCal against the defaulting team. If the Grievance Committee determines, at its discretion, that there was good cause for not playing the match, it may require that the match be rescheduled and played according to the Rescheduling Procedure. If the Grievance Committee determines, at its discretion, that there was no good cause, the team's season may be declared null and void, and for the purpose of standings, all of its matches may be voided. Further penalties against the captain and team members may include suspension from all USTA league participation for up to one year. The team shall continue to play its remaining matches, unless both teams agree not to play, and the results, other than for purposes of individual computer ratings and eligibility for championship play, will not be included in the standings for any team.

16e. Defaults at Playoffs - Any team that withdraws from participation in Local League Playoffs must notify the NorCal office of their withdrawal no later than 24 hours after the deadline by which the hosting team must give notification of the playoff date and time. Failure to give timely notice may result in a grievance filed by NorCal against the withdrawing team with subsequent penalties against the captain and team members. When applicable, NorCal will attempt to replace the withdrawing team with a lucky loser. All advancing teams should expect to play a match when possible.

16f. Substitutions - Once the line-ups have been presented and exchanged, no substitution may be made in any individual match EXCEPT when a player fails to appear on time or when a player suffers an injury, illness, or disqualification prior to the actual start of the match. When a substitution is made, the substitute may only play in the position that is open. Once the lineups have been presented and exchanged, no substitute may be taken from the original lineup, EXCEPT that if a player's doubles partner does not show up due to injury, illness, disqualification, or failure to appear on time, the player who is present may be treated as a eligible substitute [URL 2.03F].

The substitute is entitled to a 5-minute warm-up.

Q: In a match played in two shifts, does this rule apply to both shifts?

A: YES. For example, if a match is being played at 3:00 and 4:15, and at 4:15 one of the players is not available, an eligible substitute may be used in that player's position.

17. Scorecards - Blank scorecards are available on the website for each scheduled match. Each scorecard includes a current list of eligible players at the time that it is printed. **Either** captain must enter the scores on-line within 24-hours of the match completion or by the end of the local league season, whichever occurs first. The other captain must verify on-line scores within 24 hours. **Both** captains have the responsibility to enter and confirm the scores. If a match date is changed or delayed due to inclement weather or by other agreement, captains should update the match date to reflect the date that the last individual match is completed.

If the match scores are entered but not verified within 48 hours by the opposing captain, an automatic verification will occur. Any scores not reported by the end of the local league season will not be used in the calculation of team standings.

Q: How do I change a scorecard once it has been confirmed by the other captain?

A: Once a scorecard is confirmed, corrections to the scorecard can only be made through the office with the knowledge of both captains. Names for default wins will not be changed once the scorecard is confirmed.

18. Warm-Up - Warm-up is five minutes for all matches and should include serves. A player arriving late, but within the 15-minute default time, may not be denied a five-minute warm-up. There is no coaching allowed during the warm-up [FAC IV.C.10.d].

19. Coaching - Coaching is only permitted during the 10-minute set break between the 2nd set and the FULL 3rd set. No coaching is allowed during the two-minute set break if a 10-Point Match Tiebreak is being used in lieu of a third set or during any warm-up [ULR 2.01D].

Q: Is coaching allowed during bathroom breaks, medical time-outs, two-minute set breaks, or any other short break?

A: NO!

20. Cell Phones & Electronic Devices - *Friend at Court* specifies that if player's cell phone rings while the ball is in play, it is a deliberate hindrance and as such the opponent may stop play and claim the point. Using a cell phone or other electronic device during a match gives the appearance of coaching and is not allowed. Electronic devices should not be visible or used while on court.

21. Court Monitor - Players may request any USTA member to act as a court monitor. The court monitor's primary duty is to help both players in an impartial and unbiased manner in accordance with "The Code". ("The Code" is referenced in the League Directory under Rules, "The Code"). One or two monitors may be used; each positioned at a net post. The players may ask the monitor(s) for assistance with line calls, foot faults, keeping score, and/or monitoring time between points, changeovers and sets.

Use of a court monitor does not relieve players of the obligation of making calls in accordance with "The Code". Players are expected, as always, to demonstrate good sportsmanship and give their opponent the benefit of doubt on any calls in which there is uncertainty.

Monitors remain silent unless asked by a player to verify a call. When asked, the monitor should only overrule a call if he is 100% sure that the original call made was in error. Otherwise, he should allow the original call to stand. If two monitors are used, the one with the clearest and closest view of the play should make the call, especially if along his sideline. In a situation in

which both monitors believe they saw the play clearly, yet disagree on the call, the point shall be replayed.

If the players ask for assistance with calling foot faults, keeping score, and/or timing intervals between points, changeovers and sets, the monitor may so act. Otherwise, the monitor should not interject himself into the match and remain silent.

The time that is used to find a court monitor should not exceed a few minutes. The player may notify his captain or another player to help find a monitor if needed. Play should resume; the players should not wait for the court monitor to arrive. If a court monitor is not available and players cannot complete the match under The Code, then players may stop play and have the captains agree to reschedule the match for a time when monitors could be available, even if this time might be a half-hour later.

22. Medical Time Outs for league matches that are not officiated (guidelines) - A medical time out may not exceed 3 minutes, and includes all evaluation and treatment time. Any changeover or set break time that is due is granted first. Then timing of the medical time out should begin. If the need for a medical time out occurs during a game, then timing should start when play is stopped.

- The opposing team should announce when the timing of the medical time out is commencing.
- Only one time out per injury or illness is allowed. (Twisted ankle = one time out, sprained shoulder = one time out, cramping/heat related illness = one time out, etc.) No other time outs are allowed for the same injury or illness during the match.
- One time out for any and all cramping/heat-related illness is allowed per match regardless of what body part is involved.
- Fatigue is not a valid reason for a medical time out.

Q: Does the medical time out information in “Friend at Court” apply to league matches?

A: NO. It only applies to officiated matches.

23. Bathroom breaks - are given “reasonable” time. Reasonable time is defined as the time it takes to walk briskly to the bathroom, use the toilet, wash hands, and then walk briskly back to court. Bathroom breaks should not be used to recover condition or for fatigue.

Bathroom breaks should be taken first at set breaks, and then if necessary during a changeover. Only in a true emergency should a bathroom break be taken at any other time.

24. Rest Periods - Players are entitled to a two-minute set break after the first and/or second set. If the players have agreed to play a full third set, there is an optional ten-minute break, and players may leave the court at this time. There is no rest period after the first game of any set. There is a maximum 20 seconds allowed between points and a maximum of 90 seconds allowed when players change ends of court. Otherwise, play is continuous. A player may leave the court for a bathroom break or to find a court monitor, but he must inform his opponent when he leaves the court.

25. Referee / Official - A captain may request an official for a match from the NorCal League Department pursuant to the following procedure:

- The request should be made at least three weeks prior to the match date to guarantee that an official will be present. If the request is made less than three weeks prior to the match date, a reasonable effort will be made to accommodate the request.
- The captain making the request must notify the opposing captain, in advance, that the match will be officiated.
- The captain making the request must send a check in the amount of \$85, payable to USTA NorCal, Attn: Adult Leagues/Officials, 1920 North Loop Rd., Alameda, CA 94502. USTA NorCal will hire and pay the official.

The official shall not have a direct conflict of interest with either team and shall be held to the Officials' Code of Conduct. The official shall notify both captains that he/she has been hired to officiate the match. Questions should be addressed to: Leagues@norcal.usta.com

26. Ties & Tiebreaks

26a. Procedures for Breaking a Tie in Flight Standings [ULR 2.03H] - If teams are tied in the winning percentage of team matches, the tie shall be broken by using the following procedures:

1. Higher number of total team match wins
2. Higher number of total individual match wins
3. Lower number of sets lost
4. Lower number of games lost
5. Winner of head-to-head matches
6. Coin toss

Exception: NorCal will use percentages of #1-4 only when a flight has teams that are playing a different number of matches within the flight.

26b. Coman Format for Tiebreak - The Coman Format for tiebreaks requires players to change ends after the first point and after every four points thereafter. (i.e., change ends after the 5th, 9th, 13th point, etc.), and at the conclusion of the tie break. The Coman Format is optional for local league play, and the decision to use it should be made at the beginning of the match. If teams cannot agree on using the Coman Format, the home team makes the decision. The decision, once made, can be changed only by unanimous agreement by all players on the court. Only the Coman Format will be used for set and match tiebreaks at District, Sectional, and National Championships.

26c. 3rd Set / Match Tiebreak - The decision to play either a full third set or a match tiebreak is made by the home team on each court prior to the start of the match and must be communicated to the opposing team. If the players forget to make this decision before the match, it should be made as soon as this oversight is discovered. Once made, the decision can be changed only by unanimous agreement by all players on the court.

EXCEPTIONS:

- All DAYTIME leagues will be required to play a third set match tiebreak unless both teams agree otherwise.
- Any league match that starts play within 120 minutes of the facility closure is required to play a third set match tiebreak.

27. Wheelchair Play- When a wheelchair tennis player is playing with or against an able-bodied person in singles or doubles, the Rules of Wheelchair Tennis shall apply for the wheelchair player and the Rules of Tennis for able-bodied players shall apply for the able-bodied player.

Rules of Wheelchair Tennis:

Two Bounces: If the ball is taken on the first bounce, it must bounce within the bounds of the court. If the ball is taken on the second bounce, the second bounce can hit the ground either within the boundaries of the court or outside the court boundaries before being returned.

The Service: The server shall throughout the delivery of the service

- Not change position by rolling or spinning. The server shall not by slight movements of the wheels which do not materially affect the location originally taken up by him, be deemed "to change his position by rolling or spinning."
- Not touch, with any wheel, any area other than that behind the baseline within the imaginary extension of the center-mark and sideline.

Player Loses Point: The wheelchair is part of the body. All applicable rules apply. A player loses the point if:

- (a) The ball in play touches him or his wheelchair or anything he wears or carries, except his racket in his hand(s). This loss of a point occurs regardless of whether the player is inside or outside the bounds of his court when the ball touches him.
- (b) A served ball hits him or his wheelchair or anything he wears or carries, except his racket in his hand(s).

It is legal for a player to hit a return, fall out of his chair and then get back into his chair to make the next return.

Appeals, Promotions, Grievances, & DQs

28. Appeals and Promotions

28a. Automatic Appeals - computer-rated players may request an automatic appeal (up or down) of their year-end rating on the national USTA (TennisLink) site. If the player's year-end rating falls within a certain threshold range and number of matches, the appeal will be automatically granted.

Self-rated players may also automatically appeal their rating up at any time on the national site. When a self-rated player appeals his rating down, he will be offered a self-rate appeal form to fill out. He then submits this electronically to a committee for a decision. This decision will stand for one year.

Once an appeal is granted, it remains in effect for the remainder of the current league year. A player cannot change his mind and go back to his former rating.

In order to do any automatic or self-rate appeal on the national USTA site, the player must be able to log into the national USTA (TennisLink) site with his own USTA number and password. (This national site is different than the NorCal site.) Any new appeal that is granted will take 1-2 business days to transfer into the NorCal player and team pages. Players and captains have the responsibility to ensure that their ratings are reflected correctly on the player and team pages. Please call the NorCal office if there is a problem.

28b. Medical Appeals - A player with a valid computer rating may make a medical appeal if an intervening, **permanently disabling** injury or illness occurs that renders his current NTRP rating

level inaccurate. Information on medical appeals may be obtained in the [League Resources](#) under ratings.

28c. 60 & Over Promotions and Appeals – players 60 & over who are promoted at year's end will be granted an appeal for a lower rating if they have been at that same or lower rating without benefit of appeal for their three most recent computer year-end ratings.

28d. 65 & Over Year-End Ratings - players 65 & Over will not publish a higher rating than their most recent valid (non-expired) year-end rating. The player may appeal to have his rating moved up.

29. Disqualifications

29a. Disqualified Player - If a player is disqualified during local competition or other round robin competition, all of his previous matches played at that level, shall be considered losses and will be adjusted to reflect 6-0, 6-0 wins for the opposing player or doubles team [ULR 3.03B(4)a].

If a player is disqualified in playoffs or any other single elimination format, the last individual match played by the player shall be considered a loss and will be adjusted to reflect a 6-0, 6-0 win for the opposing player or doubles team [ULR 3.03B(4)a].

If the player is disqualified after the conclusion of local league competition or championship competition, the team will remain eligible to participate but the disqualified player may not be able to continue or advance with the team if his new level makes him ineligible for the team [ULR 3.03B(4)b].

The player's match results from the team at the level at which the player was disqualified, as well as match results from any new team, will be used to determine the player's computer rating. The player will need to play the required number of matches on any new team during the local league season to establish eligibility for any postseason play on the new team.

29b. Up and Out - Early Start (RENO-TAHOE AREA ONLY - Adult 40 & Over) - Players who receive Year-End computer ratings that are **clearly above** the Early Start rating levels will be notified and moved to the next level immediately. Matches played prior to this adjustment are valid. Players who are not notified are not considered clearly above the Early Start rating levels and may continue with the team at the Early Start rating even if their year-end rating is higher.

29c. NTRP Dynamic Disqualification Procedure (Three Strikes Procedure) - The Three Strikes Program is solely a computer-based program and applies to the national Adult League Division only. Any player who receives his third strike at a given level of play will be disqualified from that level of play. During local league play, any matches played at the disqualified level will be adjusted to reflect a 6-0, 6-0 win for the opponent. (Exception: if a player with an early start rating strikes out, only his last match will be overturned.) If a player receives a third strike during playoffs, District, or Sectional Championships, any matches played at that postseason level will be adjusted to reflect a 6-0, 6-0 win for the opponent [ULR 2.04B].

A computer-rated player (C) is not subject to Three Strikes Disqualification; however a player who has appealed his computer rating down (A) is.

Mixed-Exclusive Ratings (M) and Tournament Exclusive Ratings (T) must self-rate to play in adult leagues. All self-rated players (S), all players with adjusted or appealed computer ratings (A), all players who were disqualified due to Three Strikes or NTRP grievances (D), and players with an

Early Start Rating lower than their previous computer rating (E or Q) are subject to Three Strikes Disqualification.

30. General Grievances (Sportsmanship, Rule Violations) - Any grievance alleging a violation of the USTA constitution and Bylaws; the *Friend at Court*, including “The Code” and the “Wheelchair Rules of Tennis” (unless modified by the USTA league regulations or LLAR); the USTA League Regulations; the LLAR; or standards of good conduct, fair play and good sportsmanship shall constitute a GENERAL GRIEVANCE [ULR 3.02A].

Any general grievance against an individual or team may be filed by the captain of the team involved in the match where the alleged violation occurred, a league coordinator, or a member of a Championship Committee. If the captain is filing the grievance, the grievance must be filed within four business days of the match involving such player or team; or within 24-hours after the end of the local league season, whichever occurs first. A captain may also file a general grievance within 24-hours after a playoff segment for that segment of play. (Championship procedures differ).

A grievance against a player will be sent to the player and the player's team captain. The player(s), captain, and filer(s) will all be considered parties to the complaint. Information from any party to a grievance is shared among all parties to the complaint.

The Grievance Committee shall have the power to dismiss or deny the grievance or to direct the correction of any violations by reasonable means, including the suspension of an individual or team. This procedure is applicable to any party to the grievance as long as such party has been given the opportunity to review and present evidence [ULR 3.03D(2)]. Matches played and completed in good faith will stand.

An individual may continue to play during a grievance investigation and hearing, but must understand that if the grievance is upheld, all matches played during that time may be reversed [ULR 3.03A(8)].

The decision of the Grievance Committee may be appealed by any party.

If the grievance was upheld but then appealed, the party is subject to all penalties imposed by the Grievance Committee during the appeal process [ULR 3.04A(4)a]. If the grievance was dismissed or denied and then appealed, the party may participate in league activities during the appeal process, but must understand that the decision of the Grievance Committee may be sent back for reconsideration of penalties [ULR 3.04A(4)b].

The procedure to file a General or Sportsmanship grievance is referenced in the [League Resources](#) under Disqualifications/Grievances. Appeal information will be contained within the grievance decision. Failure to comply with any procedural rule for filing a grievance or appeal may result in such grievance or appeal being dismissed.

31. NTRP Grievance - An NTRP grievance alleges that:

- 1) a player’s posted NTRP level is lower than his or her actual skill level, as supported by match dynamics, and/or
- 2) a player has entered USTA League play by inappropriately or inaccurately self-rating, and/or
- 3) a captain or co-captain participated in or condoned the action of his/her player

Self-Rating: A rating for a new player entering the program determined in accordance with the *National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) Guidelines* during the on-line player registration process.
Inaccurate self-rating: A self-rating that occurred as a result of **no** willful intent on behalf of the player whether by the player or one acting on behalf of the player.
Inappropriate self-rating: A self-rating that occurs as a result of **willful intent** to misrepresent a player's level of play, whether by the player or one who condones or acts on behalf of the player (i.e., captain, coach, etc.).

An NTRP Grievance may be filed by a league captain, a league coordinator, or a member of a Championship Committee against any player with a self-rating (S or D) or Early Start rating (E or Q). Players with Computer (C) , an Automated Appeal (A) rating of a computer rating, and Players 60 & Over who are promoted and then granted an appeal down are NOT subject to NTRP Grievances [ULR 3.03E(1)b].

An NTRP grievance may be filed at any time prior to 48 hours after the completion of Sectional Championships. A grievance against a player shall be sent to the player and the player's team captain, and both shall be considered parties to the complaint. All information provided by parties to the committee will be shared with all other parties involved in the grievance except for information of a non-public nature such as dynamic ratings, self-rate and/or self-rate appeal forms, and the player background history form. Any information of a proprietary nature for USTA will not be shared with the other parties but may also be submitted to the grievance committee.

A player who has an inaccurate or inappropriate self-rating is subject to a rating adjustment by the NTRP Grievance Committee. If a rating adjustment is made, all eligible matches played prior to the rating adjustment will be reversed due to the ineligibility of the player. A player who has inappropriately self-rated as well as a captain or others who participated in or condoned this action are subject to further penalties which may include, but are not limited to, disqualification and suspension [ULR3.03E(1)a].

NTRP grievance committee decisions made after 24 hours of the completion of local league play, a playoff weekend, or a District or Sectional Championship event will not be retroactive and match results will not be reversed for that segment of play. NTRP grievances may be filed but will not be decided during a championship event.

The decision of the NTRP Grievance Committee may be appealed by any party.

The procedure for filing an NTRP grievance is referenced in the [League Resources](#) under Disqualifications/Grievances. Appeal information will be contained within the grievance decision.

Failure to comply with any procedural rule for filing a grievance or appeal may result in such grievance or appeal being dismissed.

Special Rules for Championship Events: Districts, Sectionals, & Nationals

32. Team Participation Fee at District and Sectional Championships - teams which qualify for and wish to participate in either the District or Sectional Championship events will be required to pay a non-refundable championship team fee for that event. The fee will be \$150 per team for 5-line leagues, and \$90 for 3-line leagues. This fee must be paid at the time the team

registers for the championship event. Unless otherwise stated, the deadline for team registration will be 9 PM the Monday following the determining round of playoffs.

USTA Northern California will contribute to the expenses of the qualifying team for travelling to and participating in the USTA National Championship events. For five-line leagues, NorCal will contribute \$600; for three-line leagues, NorCal will contribute \$500. This contribution will be paid directly to the individual listed as captain of the team on the date of the national championships and will be mailed at the conclusion of the USTA National Championships for each league.

33. Wildcards -The areas in NorCal are divided into groups of four to compete against each other at Championships. Because the less populated areas may not have any teams at a certain level, wildcards may be used to round out the number of teams that advance to postseason play. Wildcards are chosen by random draw from the areas with the greatest number of teams.

34. Set and Match Tiebreaks at Championships - The Coman Format will be used for all match tiebreaks used in lieu of a third set, and shall be scored as one set and one game for tiebreak purposes.

35. Procedures for Breaking a Tie in Championships [ULR 2.03H]

1. **Individual Matches.** Winner of the most individual matches in the entire competition.
2. **Head-to-Head.** Winner of head-to-head match.
3. **Sets.** Loser of the fewest number of sets.
4. **Games.** Loser of the fewest number of games.
5. **Coin Toss.**

36. Grievances at Championships - NTRP grievances will be accepted but not decided during championship events. Sportsmanship or general grievances must be filed within 30 minutes of completion of the match in question to be considered.

37. NTRP Dynamic Disqualification (Three Strikes Procedure) - USTA NorCal will run dynamic calculations throughout Adult Championships (18 & Over, 40 & Over, and 55 & Over). Until the conclusion of the Championship event, NorCal will notify and disqualify any player who meets the criteria for NTRP Dynamic Disqualification (Three Strikes Procedure) and reverse appropriate matches played [ULR 2.04B(2)a].

38. Total Team Defaults at Championships - Any team that withdraws from participation in Districts, Sectional and/or National Championships must notify the NorCal office of their withdrawal no later than 48 hours after securing a position in that event. Failure to give notice may result in a grievance against the team and subsequent penalties against the team members. Any team that defaults any team match at District or Sectional Championships shall be subject to a grievance and may be declared ineligible to participate in any USTA league play for the immediate ensuing year.

39. Individual Match Default Courtesy at Championships - Players often travel and incur significant expense to participate in District and Sectional Championships. If a captain knows in advance that he does not have the minimum number of players available to field an entire line-up at a District or Sectional event, as a courtesy, it is recommended that he notify the opposing captain and/or the NorCal office about the impending default. Once a default has been conceded, it cannot be rescinded. If a captain turns in a lineup with a default to the desk, the

opposing captain will have the opportunity of re-doing his lineup before this match is sent out to court to play.

40. Minimum Number of Players Required at National Championships - The minimum number of players required to fill an entire line-up must be available and eligible to compete at a national championship [ULR 2.03A(5)].

41. Lineups at Championships - are due at the tournament desk 30 minutes before matches are scheduled to start and may not be altered after being submitted except for Rule 39 above or for an illness, injury, disqualification, or failure to show of a player when a substitute is available.

42. Rest Time between Championship Matches - Minimum rest time between singles and/or doubles matches played on the same day is one hour.

43. Officiated Matches - Championship matches are officiated and the point penalty system is in effect.

44. Number of Matches Required to Qualify for Postseason Play [ULR 2.03A(3)]
– For Playoff, District, and Sectional Championships, the player must have played in two matches during the local league season for the team. One default received will count as one of the matches. To proceed on to Nationals, the player must have played in three matches for the same team prior to playing at Nationals. No defaults will count towards National eligibility. Retired matches will count for all players. For levels 18 & Over Adult 5.5+ and Open Leagues, there is a two match requirement to advance to Playoffs and Sectionals. There are no match eligibility requirements to advance to the national “Invitational” event.

45. Move-Up OR Split-Up Rule – For 2015, the following rule changes have occurred for national teams.

1. Two divisions will be subject to the move-up/split-up rule:
 - A. The Adult Division will consist of 18 & Over, 40 & Over, and 55 & Over **adult** leagues.
 - B. The Mixed Division will consist of 18 & Over and 40 & Over **mixed** leagues.
2. The Adult and Mixed Divisions are separate and distinct from each other. An Adult National player will not count as a Mixed National player, and vice versa. There will be no “crossover” between the two divisions. An Adult National player will count as one adult national player in **any** Adult league age group (18 & Over, 40 & Over, 55 & Over) if he plays at the **same NTRP level or lower than his 2014 adult team**. A Mixed National player will count as one mixed national player in any mixed league age group (18 & Over and 40 & Over) if he plays at the same NTRP level or lower than his 2014 mixed team.
3. A National team is any team that participated in or **qualified** for Nationals, even if the team elected not to participate in the national championships. All wildcard teams will count as national teams.
4. The move-up/split-up requirements will only apply to players who have participated in **three** or more matches, excluding defaults, for any national team during any part of that team’s entire league season.

5. Move-Up Option: A player will **NOT** count as a national player if he **moves up** one level from his 2014 team's NTRP level.
6. Split-Up Requirement: If a player joins a team at the same NTRP level or lower than his 2014 team, he will count as one national player for that division (Adult or Mixed) in **any** age group. All teams are limited to any **three** national players (except 2 for 2.5 and 5.0+ leagues) in each division. A player does not count as a national player if he does not meet the match requirement on the original national team, if the player moves up a level, or if the player crosses over to the other division (mixed or adult).

2015 Move-Up/Split Up Rule					
<u>League and Team NTRP level</u>	<u>SPLIT - UP</u>	<u>MOVE-UP</u>			
Player is on the 2014 roster for this national team and played in three matches	Maximum number of national players who can combine to play together at this same NTRP level or lower in 2015	If moving up to these levels or higher, the player will not count as a national player in 2015.			
		Adult 18 & Over	If eligible, Adult 40 & Over	If eligible, Adult 55 & Over	Mixed 18 & Over & Mixed 40 & Over (if eligible)
Adult 18 & Over					
2.5	2	3.0	3.0	6.0	
3.0	3	3.5	3.5	7.0	
3.5	3	4.0	4.0	8.0	
4.0	3	4.5	4.5+	9.0	
4.5	3	5.0+	XXXX	XXXX	
5.0+	2				
Adult 40 & Over					
3.0	3	3.5	3.5	7.0	
3.5	3	4.0	4.0	8.0	
4.0	3	4.5	4.5+	9.0	
4.5+	3	5.0+	XXXX	XXXX	
Adult 55 & Over					
6.0	3	3.5	3.5	7.0	
7.0	3	4.0	4.0	8.0	

8.0	3	4.5	4.5+	9.0	
9.0	3	5.0+	XXXX	XXXX	
Mixed 18 & Over					
2.5	3				6.0
6.0	3				7.0
7.0	3				8.0
8.0	3				9.0
9.0	3				10.0
10.0	3				
Mixed 40 & Over					
6.0	3				7.0
7.0	3				8.0
8.0	3				9.0
9.0	3				10.0

For sectional teams: Adult 65 & Over, Combo Doubles 18 & Over, and Mixed 55 & Over, the Move-Up/Split-Up Rule applies separately to each league's sectional winners. If the sectional winners move-up a team level the following year, then they will not count as sectional winners. If they play at the same or lower team level the following year, then they will count as sectional winners. Each team will be limited to three sectional winners for that league. Players will count as being on a team's roster if they have played in two matches, including one default.

Adult 18 and Over 5.5+ and Open League teams, and NorCal Adult 70 & Over are exempt from this rule. For 2015, NorCal Combo 10.0+ teams are also exempt.

Q: What happens if a player is in violation of the Move-Up-Split-Up Rule?

A: The player is not eligible to be on the team. Any match played by the ineligible player will be reversed and scored as a 6-0, 6-0 win for the opponents.

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