



NATL Tournament Rules

Updated on Aug 13th, 2023

Rules and Information

1. Level of Play

We encourage all players to select a level that offers good, competitive matches. The final determination of level placement will be made by the [NATL League Administrator](#) using the following criteria:

- Requested Level
- [NATL Tennis Play History](#)
- [NATL Knock Out Game](#) (1st time playing)

2. Scheduling your matches:

[NATL Tennis](#) allows you schedule the game with your components within the “Deadline” scheduled by [NATL](#). The Deadline date (listed on your schedule) is the last day a score may be posted for that match. The ONLY exception is the use of a Late Pass (see Late Pass Rules Below).

Directions and scheduled match time should be confirmed with the opponent.

A. Contacting your Opponent:

- a) Don't wait for your opponents to call you! Both players/teams are responsible for contacting their opponents prior to the Scheduled Week.
- b) Dates and times offered to your opponents must coincide with the dates/times of the league the teams are registered in. Any other offered dates/times are not valid.
- c) Once the match is scheduled and confirmed by both teams, then “Rescheduling” becomes obsolete, and the “Rescheduling” rule would apply if the scheduled match were cancelled.

IMPORTANT: If each team has offered 3 dates (within the timeframe for the match) and cannot agree on a date to play, the match is automatically scheduled to be played using the “Deadline/Final Times” below. Use common courtesy when arranging your matches. Rude phone behavior leads to on court confrontations.

B. Unable to contact your opponent:

If you are unable to contact your opponent, please check with [NATL league administrator](#). If you have attempted to contact your opponent at least twice, using both phone and WhatsApp and received no reply to you may choose one of the following options:

1. Report a default and receive 12 points

C. Rescheduling:

You may reschedule your match one time provided you give your opponents at least 24 hours' notice (you must receive confirmation back from your opponent that they received your rescheduling request). A rescheduled match is automatically scheduled for the Deadline/final time on the "deadline" date UNLESS the players/teams agree to a different date/time or to use a "late score" pass. If you give your opponent less than 24 hours' notice OR need to reschedule more than once, your opponent has the option of rescheduling or recording a "win by default". If both players/teams can't agree on a later date to play the match, the opponent will take the win by default.

D. Inclement Weather on the "Deadline" date:

If a match is rained out on the "play by date" AND one player/team forced the match to be played on the "play by date" without offering the three required match dates the other player/team can record a win by default, (players cannot use the "deadline date")

E. Inclement Weather on the LAST "Deadline" date of the Season:

For matches scheduled on the last "deadline" date of the season and are rained out, players/teams will receive a no points for the match. No late passes are allowed due to the start of the playoffs. Teams that have a match scheduled on the LAST "deadline" date of the season will run the risk of not playing the match if there is inclement weather.

F. Late Score Pass:

The late score pass is used to post a late score after the "deadline" date. The Late Pass is designed to help avoid defaults by providing members the ability to play one match beyond the posted deadline and by the last "Deadline" date. IMPORTANT - The late score pass is not valid for any match past the end of the regular season or for playoffs.

- Each players/teams have one late score pass per season.
- Both players/teams must agree to play the match after the "deadline" date and normal match scheduling rules apply.
- Decide which players/teams will use the late score pass. This must be confirmed by email by both teams.

Late Score Pass notes:

*If BOTH players/teams have a need to use the late score pass, we suggest you agree that the winning team uses their late score pass.

*If a players/team has used the Late Pass already but the opposing team has not, you can effectively play a second match late if the opposing players agree to use their Late Pass to report the score.

3. Match Play

A. USTA “the code” rules of conduct apply.

The current USTA Rules will govern play for procedures not covered by NATL Tennis Rules. NATL rules shall always supersede USTA rules of play.

B. Commitment to Play:

All players are expected to uphold their commitment to the league and the other players in the division by completing all matches.

C. Court Surface attire and footwear:

The NATL Tennis League permits the use hard (asphalt) court surfaces.

D. Balls:

The home player/team supplies an unopened can of yellow balls for the match and will retain the balls after the match. Winners do not receive an unopened can of balls.

E. Warm up:

Players/Teams may have up to a maximum of 10 minutes prior to the start of a match as a warmup. Remember, the warmup is not a time to practice "winners", return of serves, etc.

Players should make a good faith effort to hit balls back as close as possible to their opponent.

F. Posting scores:

The winning player/team MUST post the match score before midnight of the “deadline” date listed on your schedule. However, all players could report scores and are ultimately responsible for ensuring that all scores are reported on time and accurately.

G. Opponent is Late:

There is a 20-minute default rule. After 20 minutes, the waiting player/team has the option of taking the win by forfeit or waiting longer for the opponent to arrive. Schedules list cell phone numbers so you should at least try to contact a late opponent to be sure they aren't lost or having traffic problems. NATL Tennis is about playing tennis. We want matches determined on the court whenever possible. To avoid misunderstandings that can lead to unnecessary no shows, players should:

- o Keep cell phones near and turned on.

- Have the opposing player/team's contact numbers on hand. o Designate a meeting place at the facility (many times both players are at the facility just in different locations)
- Call the opposing player/team immediately if running late and provide a time frame your team will arrive (if it is not excessive beyond the 20-minute rule).

H. Excessive Forfeits:

A player/team having excessive forfeits may be disqualified from playoffs and/or suspended for the next season. This penalty also applies to any player/team withdrawing after the registration deadline and to teams that forfeit playoff matches. I.

Conflicts settled by the code:

Conflicts should be settled by the players using the USTA rules and ‘The Code’. All players have the right to question a line call or score. If you dispute a call, reaffirm with your opponent what they saw and accept their decision. Remember... Good

sportsmanship begins with fair play and a good attitude. Disagreements between players that are subjective in nature will not be ruled on by the [NATL](#) League Administrator. While the [NATL](#) League Administrator will not rule on these events, we do want to be informed of all negative behavior. Players who encounter flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct are asked to report the incident to the league office so that a complaint may be logged, and appropriate action taken.

These conflicts include:

- Bad line calls and the excessive questioning of calls
- Foot Faults
- Scoring Issues
- Rude Behavior
- Scheduling Difficulties

Because a [NATL](#) League Administrator representative is not present during matches, we cannot take one player's word over the other. Players who encounter conflicts on court are expected to resolve them in an adult like manner on the court. The League Office will not mediate matches or settle disputes between players regarding these types of conflicts. **J. Unsportsmanlike conduct:**

[NATL](#) League Administrator reserves the right to refuse league play to a player that has a history of unsportsmanlike conduct complaints filed against him/her.

4. Weather

A. Inclement Weather:

In the event of rain, the home player/team must verbally contact the opponent as soon as it is apparent that the match will not be played at the scheduled time. The home player/team should never assume the opponent knows it is wet at your courts and the visiting team should never assume that a match is canceled due to weather at opponent's courts. DO NOT cancel matches via email. Always call your opponent when the weather is questionable. If Team A shows up at the courts to play at the scheduled match time/day, and Team B does not show because they assume the match is unplayable due to weather (without contacting Team A), Team A may take the win by default.

B. Rescheduling due to weather:

If weather dictates that you reschedule your match, you should do so before the "Deadline" date in case of rain on that day. If the player/team cannot agree to reschedule before the "Deadline" date, then the match is rescheduled at the default time.

C. Weather Interruption:

If players have assembled to play and the match is delayed or interrupted by rain or wet courts, players should be prepared to wait a ½ hour to determine if the court is playable. If after 30 minutes, or if forecasts indicate that a long delay is inevitable, players are free to leave and reschedule. If the match had begun, players should resume the match at the exact game and point as they stood when halted. New balls must be provided by the

home team when resuming a match in the 3rd set, or with more than 2 days between the start of the original match.

D. Extreme Temperatures:

If the temperature is above 98 degrees or below 32 degrees (Fahrenheit) before the match is started, it is the option of the players to reschedule the match. Do not force an opponent to play in temperatures that can pose a health risk.

E. Inclement Weather on the LAST "Deadline" date of the season:

If you have a match scheduled on the last "Deadline" date of the season and it is rained out it will go unscored. You cannot use a late pass.

F. Incomplete matches - that will not be completed:

If a match is rained out and it will not be completed at later time, player/teams should report an incomplete match. Select this option from the scoring page. Neither player/team will receive the win, however, both players/teams will receive up to a maximum of 10 points based on the number of games won in their two best sets.

5. Scoring

A. All matches are the best 2 out of 3 sets.

B. Set Completion

A set is completed when one player wins 6 games by a margin of 2 games. If the set score reaches 6-6, a 12-point tiebreaker is played to determine the winner of that set. (See Tie-break rules below)

C. Tie break in lieu of a 3rd set.

IF ALL PLAYERS AGREE, you may play a 12-point tiebreaker in lieu of a 3rd set. In this case, record the 3rd set score as 7-6.

D. Reporting scores:

Scores for all matches (including "Forfeits" and "Retired" matches) must be reported by the winning player/team by midnight of the "deadline" date. Record the actual set scores. Tiebreakers are recorded as 7-6. If the score is not reported, the match score will be blank, and each team will receive zero points. A score may be recorded after the "deadline" date by using a "Late Pass" (see "Late Score Pass" under "Matches").

E. Earning Points:

Players/Teams receive points based on the set scores of your match. Point Calculations:

The Winning Player/Team Receives:

12 points for a 3-set win.

14 points for a 2-set win.

The Losing Team Receives:

One point for each game won in their "two highest scoring sets".

A losing player/team can receive up to a maximum of 8 points per match.

Example match score: 6-4, 6-2 winner receives 14 points loser receives 6 points.

Example match score: 6-2, 4-6, 7-5 winner receives 12 points loser receives 8 points

F. Win by default.

A "Win by default" is reported when the opponent(s) is not available to play the match or does not respond to the opponent's emails and phone calls by the Wednesday of the primary week.

G. Retired matches:

A retired match is the result of one player/team. A "Retired" win is reported by the winning player/team when a match cannot continue due to injury, illness, personal reasons, disagreement, if court is not available for the entire match or the lights go out at the home player/team's court before a match is completed. To record a Retired match, enter the score of games/sets played and check the "Retired" box.

H. Incomplete matches:

An incomplete match is the result of weather or some uncontrollable event and not the result of a player/team. The games completed should be reported if the match will not be finished. When reporting a score for an incomplete match, enter the scores exactly what they were at the time play stopped. The system will detect that the scores are incomplete and will ask you what caused the stoppage in play. Players will receive up to a maximum of 10 points for an incomplete match.

I. No Score Reported:

If a match score is not reported, the match will be shown as a blank or not played and each team will receive 0 points. A score may be recorded after the "deadline" date by using a "Late Pass" (see "Late Score Pass" under "Matches").

J. Scores Reported Incorrectly

To help avoid the incorrect reporting of scores, players should confirm the final score with each other once the match is completed. The winning player should then report the match scores as soon as possible. If a player discovers an incorrect score, they should confirm the correct match score with their opponent and may re-report it prior to the deadline. Corrections of scores that are beyond a scoring deadline should be emailed to Customer Service. It is in the best interest of all players regardless of who wins or loses a match to review their scores on a regular basis so that corrections can be made in a timely manner. The League Office will not make corrections to scores once the final deadline for the season passes.

K. Reporting Defaults

All players are on the honor system and should never report a default unless it is warranted. Since the "winner" is the player determined to report scores, defaults should not be reported until the actual "winner" is determined.

6. 12 Point Tiebreak Rules

12-Point Tie-Break

The 12-point tie-break is played at 6-all in each set. Even though tiebreaker is technically played to seven, it's called a "twelve-point tiebreaker" because it's the best of twelve points.

Procedures and scoring for the tiebreaker is as follows:

Serving - The player whose turn it is to serve will be the Server for the first point and will serve the first point from the deuce or right side of the court. The opponent will then serve the second and third points. The second point will be served from the ad or left side of the court and the third point is served from the deuce or right side of the court. Players will continue by serving alternately for two consecutive points. Each time the server switches the new server begins serving on the ad or left side of the court.

TIP: When the score total is EVEN, you always serve from the deuce side. When the score total is ODD you always serve from the Ad side.

Changing Ends - Player's change ends after every 6 points and at the conclusion of the tie-break game. For example, when the score reaches 4 - 2, the players will switch sides. Note: The player serving immediately prior to a changeover will take their second serve once the changeover is made.

Scoring - Players receive one point for each point won. The tie-break winner is the first player to reach seven points provided there is margin of two points. If there is not a margin of two points, play continues until a two-point margin is reached.

If service from a wrong half of the court occurs and is undetected, all resulting play shall stand, but the error should be corrected as soon as it is discovered.

7. Injury and Withdrawals

(NATL LEAGUE ADMINISTRATOR OR REPRESENTERS ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY INJURY OCCUR DURING THE GAME, IF YOU'RE REGISTERED FOR THIS NATL TOURNAMENT, THEN BY DEFAULT YOU ABIDE TO THIS RULES AND CONSIDERED WAIVER IS SIGNED BY DEFAULT.)

If your partner becomes injured, we will allow a one time, for the season, replacement. This will allow your team to complete the season provided that the player is added during the first three weeks of play. The replacement player must be updated to [NATL](#) League Administrator and must be rated at or below the team's current [NATL](#) level of play.

Refunds:

There are no refunds or credits for withdrawals after schedules are posted.

8. Resolving Disputes

A. On Court Conflicts

To ensure a positive match experience players are responsible for knowing the rules, enforcing them while on court and conducting themselves in a manner representative of the league's Code of Conduct. Most conflicts that occur during a match come down to players not understanding the basic rules and etiquette of the game. Conflicts are broken down into two categories:

B. Protestable Conflicts:

Protestable Conflicts occur when an actual rule violation happens while on court. In this case the violation may justify filing an Official Protest with the league office. The league office will only mediate disagreements between players where an Official Protest is justified and was issued to the offending player at the time of the infraction.

C. Non Protestable Conflicts:

Non protestable conflicts are disagreements between players that are subjective in nature and will not be ruled on by the League Office. While the league office will not rule on these events, we do want to be informed of all negative behavior. Players who encounter flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct are asked to report the incident to the league office so that a complaint may be logged, and appropriate action taken per our Three Strike Policy. These conflicts include:

- Bad line calls and the excessive questioning of calls
- Foot Faults
- Scoring Issues
- Rude Behavior

Because a league representative is not present during matches, we cannot take one player's word over the other. Players who encounter conflicts on court are expected to resolve them in an adult like manner on the court. The League Office will not mediate matches or settle disputes between players regarding these types of conflicts. Resolving on Court Conflicts provides helpful information on how players can work together to solve conflicts if they occur.

D. On Court Disputes

The best way to avoid scoring conflicts is to call out scores clearly before the start of each point as well as each game. When a dispute in scoring occurs, players must go back to the last point or game in which they agree upon and resume the match from there.

- Example 1 Player A calls the score 30 to 15. Player B believes the score is 30 to 30. The last score they both can agree on is 15 to 15. Play resumes from 15 to 15.
- Example 2 Player A calls the game score of 4 games to 2. Player B states the game score is 3 games to 2. They last game score they agree on is 2 games to 2. Play resumes from 2 games to 2.

E. Code of Conduct

Good sportsmanship begins with treating opponents with respect. The tone of the match is set from the first call to an opponent, to the last handshake over the net. Because matches are played without an official, players are on the honor system and must conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner both on and off the court. This includes:

- Responding timely to phone calls/emails from opponents related to match scheduling.

- Playing matches on time and reporting scores accurately within the given time periods
- Notifying opponents in advance when a match cannot be played for any reason.
- Arriving on time for matches
- Understanding the rules and apply them fairly and honestly.
- Refraining from the use of profanity

F. Three Strike Conduct Policy

We are committed to providing quality opponents that follow the rules and produce a positive overall match experience. Players that produce complaints or behavior that is consistently offensive to other members will be removed from the league. All players are subject to our Three Strike Conduct Policy so that we may quickly remove disruptive and/or unsportsmanlike players. Unsportsmanlike conduct includes:

- Being non-responsive to opponent's phone calls and or emails
- Difficulty in scheduling
- Repeated bad line calls.
- Excessive questioning of line calls
- Excessive gamesmanship or distracting behavior
- Rude or argumentative behavior
- Verbal abuse towards an opponent

To accomplish this, we ask that unsportsmanlike behavior to be reported to the league office as soon as possible. Each valid complaint is logged into a player's conduct file and begins the Three Strike process:

- 1st Complaint - Complaint is recorded.
- 2nd Complaint - Player is contacted by phone and given a verbal warning
- 3rd Complaint - Player is suspended from the league for one year.
- Players returning after a one-year suspension are on a "One strike - zero tolerance policy". ANY new complaints will result in a "Permanent lifetime suspension" from the league.

G. Conduct Requiring Immediate League Suspension

- Falsifying scores which include Fabricating scores, changing scores or reporting substitute matches not played.
- Verbal or written abusive language towards UT staff members.
- Physical abuse
- Verbally threatening to use physical abuse.

Players subjected to threatening verbal abuse should issue a warning to their opponent stating they are violating the Code of Conduct and request that the behavior stop. If further abuse occurs, the player should leave the match and report the violation to the league office immediately. [NATL](#) League Administrator will review the offense and make a ruling. If during our investigation we determine a complaint to be valid, the offending player will not only lose the match but will be subjected to immediate and permanent

suspension from the league. Note: Players suspended from league play will not receive a refund or credit for the season