



## ***Middlesex/Somerset/Union (MSU) Adult Men 2016 Local League Regulations***

The MSU Adult Leagues shall follow the regulations set forth by USTA National League Regulations, "The Code: Players Guide for Unofficial Matches" and in addition be governed by USTA Eastern, Inc. and the Rules of Tennis and Tournament Regulations. A summary of national and local rules are listed here. The complete League regulations are listed in the USTA Eastern website in the Captain's Tool Kit: [http://assets.usta.com/assets/636/15/2011%20Eastern%20League%20Regulations\\_final%20rev.pdf](http://assets.usta.com/assets/636/15/2011%20Eastern%20League%20Regulations_final%20rev.pdf)

### **I. FORMAT:**

- A. Fifty percent of a team must consist of players at level to advance to championship rounds. For example, on a 3.5 level team of 12 players, six of those players must be 3.5 level players.
- B. Each League shall consist of a minimum of two (2) teams. Any leagues consisting of two teams must play a minimum of four (4) matches. A total of (5) matches is encouraged.
- C. Each team shall have a minimum of 8 players, and may have additional players, no maximum.
- D. Each team must have use of at least three courts for home matches.
- E. Each match will consist of 2 singles court and 3 doubles courts; for a match to be considered an eligible match a minimum of three courts must be played. Advancing rounds will require 2 courts of singles and 3 doubles courts, i.e. districts, Sectionals, Nationals.
- F. All matches will be the best of two out of three sets, with regular scoring, and a set tiebreak at 6-all in each set. In the event of split sets, **a match tiebreak (first to 10 points, win by 2) shall be played in lieu of a third set, with no coaching allowed at any time during the match. Format is 2 singles courts, 3 doubles courts.**
- G. **WARM –UP** Limited to 10 Minutes.
- H. **Time Limitation Rule for Indoor Matches:** In the event of an indoor match there may be a **"two hour"** match limit imposed, to be agreed upon by **BOTH** captains of a given match. The "Time Limitation Rule" may be put in place to make sure that all matches are completed according to the court's programming requirements. The rule becomes effective **at 1 hour and 45 minutes** after the scheduled start time of each match and will be in effect. With 15 minutes remaining in a scheduled match, the following guidelines will be used to ensure the match's completion in a timely manner:
  - 1. If one team is ahead in the set by at least 2 games (e.g., 5-3, 4-1), the team with the 2-game lead wins the set.
  - 2. If there is a one game difference in the set (e.g., 1-0, 4-5), another game must be played. If there is now a two game difference in the set, item #1 above comes into effect, the player with a two game lead wins the set.
  - 3. If the set is now tied, a set tiebreak (first to 7 by 2 points) must be played to determine who wins the set.
  - 4. The match winner then will be determined as follows: If the set score is 2:0, the match is complete with the winner having 2 sets.
  - 5. If the set is tied (i.e., 1-1), a "Match Tiebreak" (first to 10 by 2 points) is played to determine the third set winner, and hence, the match winner. The last set's score should be entered as 1-0.

**Note:** Before the match begins, both teams are required to synchronize their respective timepieces, i.e., "game clock," to determine default time as well as commencement of the "time limitation rule." The "game clock" must show that time has expired upon completion of the last point, not when teams are done with their break between games or right before the server starts to serve the point of the next game. This will deter teams that are ahead from intentionally delaying time between games.

The "Time Limitation Rule" is needed to ensure timely completion of match play in the event of indoor matches only. If the final score of a match is determined with this rule, the score for that match should be entered as "Timed" instead of "Completed". Below are possible scenarios for further clarification:

**Scenario 1:**

At 1 hour and 45 minutes into a match Team A is up 3 to 1 in the second set. Team A also won the first set. The fifth game in the set has not yet started. Team A wins the match with 15 minutes remaining.

**Scenario 2:**

At 1 hour and 45 minutes into a match Team A is down 3 serving 5. Team A also lost the first set. Game #9 is currently being played. Team A wins the game resulting in a 4 – 5 second set score. One more game is played which Team A also wins. The set score is now 5 – 5. A tiebreak is played to determine the second set winner. Team A wins the tiebreak and wins the set. The match score is 1 set all. A match tiebreak is now played in lieu of a third set. Team A wins the third set match tiebreak and wins the match.

**Scenario 3:**

At 2 hours into the match (i.e. match scheduled end time) during a 3rd set match tiebreak, if the score is tied, the next point becomes the deciding point, “SUDDEN DEATH”. Before initiating the serve, the server must declare that the next point is match point.

**II. NTRP RATINGS:**

- A. The National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) Guidelines define the characteristics of the various NTRP skill levels.
- B. The USTA NTRP Computer Rating System is the official system to determine computer ratings for players throughout the country who participate in the USTA League. It is a mathematical system that assigns computer ratings to players by direct and indirect comparison of match results obtained from the USTA League and select NTRP tournaments.
- C. A valid NTRP rating level is in effect for two years for individuals 60 years of age and older prior to, or during, the League Year and for three years for all others, or until another valid NTRP rating level is generated. (See Appendix A: *Valid NTRP Computer Ratings Table*)
- D. Players with a valid NTRP rating level must enter at that rating or higher. (See Appendix A: *Valid NTRP Computer Ratings Table*)
- E. Players in the USTA League without a valid computer rating must self-rate in accordance with the *General & Experienced Guidelines – Supplement to the NTRP Guidelines*. Factors such as a player's on-court performance, tennis background, and any additional information must be considered in the self-rating decision. When players are rating themselves, if they question at which level they should play, they should place themselves in the higher NTRP level of play.

**Note:** Players who are good athletes or intend to spend a great deal of time taking lessons and practicing should be aware that their improvement may be significant enough to surpass their original self-rating during the local league season or championship play. To avoid NTRP Dynamic Disqualification, these players should enter at a higher level of play at the beginning of the local league season.

- F. In the USTA League Adult Division, dynamic ratings will be calculated at regular intervals for all participants during local league competition, at the end of the local league season, and either during, or at the end of, District/Area through Section Championships.
- G. At the USTA League Adult Division National Championships, players will continue to generate dynamic ratings through their last match played but, there will be no NTRP Dynamic Disqualifications at National Championships. After the USTA League Adult Division National Championships, year-end NTRP published levels will be calculated using USTA NTRP Computer Rating System Procedures approved by the USTA League Committee.

**III. ALL TEAM MEMBERS MUST:**

- A. Register to play on their team through the Tennis Link web site:  
(<http://tennislink.usta.com/leagues/HomePage.aspx>) prior to playing their first match. The match fee is \$22.00.
- B. Be members of the USTA through the end of the National Championships, October 2016 to participate in the advancing rounds.
- C. Have reached the age of 18 or 40 years prior to or during the calendar year of the league season.

**IV. PLAYER PARTICIPATION**

- A. No individual player is eligible to play for any championship team unless he/she is listed on a team roster for the MSU season. Players may NOT be added for flight playoffs. To qualify to participate in any Championship (District, Region or Section), a player must have participated in at least two team matches (1 default may count)

during the MSU league season with the same team. To qualify for National championships a player must have participated in 3 matches (no defaults) and must be a USTA member through the conclusion of the National championship tournament.

- B. **National Championship Teams.** No team may have on its roster more than three players (two for 2.5 and 5.0+) who were on the roster of any team, or combination of teams, that advanced to, or qualified for, *any* Adult National Championship the previous year. The only EXCEPTION is that if more than three players (two for 2.5 and 5.0+) wish to play together again as a team, in whole or in part, they must move up one NTRP team level and may not combine with players who were rostered on any other team that advanced to, or qualified for, any Adult National Championship the previous year. These requirements apply to league participation in any Adult Division age and/or NTRP levels.
- C. Team members may play on more than one NTRP level within a division (adult or senior), providing it is a higher level than their rated level and is no more than one level above their rating. The team member must keep within the league guidelines regarding the percentage of players at level (50%).
- D. A player may play on more than one team per season as long as it is not the same league level within the MSU league. The Section has the right to accept or deny participation.
- E. Players who play on two or more teams at the same level in different regions in the Eastern Section must declare which team they will represent within 48 hours of completion of the deciding match, should more than one team qualify for a playoff championship, eg. District, Regional, Section championship.
- F. Teams are encouraged to field their players for each team match in order of strength.

#### V. THE TEAM CAPTAIN MUST:

- A. Be aware of all local, Section and National league rules. The best resource for all league info can be found on the website ([www.eastern.usta.com](http://www.eastern.usta.com)). In the Adult league section, captains should access the Captain's Toolkit for info on rules, ratings, appeals, grievances, championship rules and dates and other useful information.
- B. Make sure all players are registered through TennisLink and listed on an official roster and have valid ratings before participating in any match.
- C. Make sure every player listed on the roster is eligible for play at that level/division.
- D. Contact the opposing captain at least 48 hours prior to the match to discuss the site and confirm that there are no forfeits. In bad weather home captains are responsible for securing backup indoor courts. If courts are not available that day the match will have to be made up at later date based on agreements between the two captains. The agreement should be communicated in writing to the local league coordinator. If the makeup location requires additional costs, all players will share the court costs. If individual courts have to be played at different times in order to get the match played the roster presented prior to the first match will be the one followed for the rest of the matches in that series. NO substitutions on the roster are allowed once the first match of the makeup match is played. **If the captains cannot agree on a date for a rained out match, the league coordinator will assign a date.**
- E. Be present at every match or assign someone in his/her place to be the acting captain; designees must be familiar with league rules.
- F. Exchange lineups **simultaneously, prior to starting play**, and record scores of each match. Sign the scorecards after checking that the scores are written correctly. The team captain (of either team) is responsible for inputting scores into Tennis Link within 48 hours. The opposing team captain is responsible for confirming the scores within 48 hours of the match. Penalties may occur if scores are not input in a timely manner. Captains may forfeit their right to dispute a scorecard if they do not confirm match results in Tennis Link within 48 hours.

#### VI. MATCH REGULATIONS:

- A. Regular matches will be scheduled and played according to the league schedule, if possible. Rained out matches or stoppage of play due to circumstances beyond the control of the players should be rescheduled **within one week** and must be played on the rescheduled date/time using the original line up cards exchanged on the originally scheduled date and time. Agreements for rescheduled matches must be submitted **in writing** by both captains to the Local League Coordinator, unless the league coordinator reschedules the match. Matches may be played indoors the date of original match date if **BOTH** captains agree and **all** players split fees accordingly.

- B.** In the event of rain or stoppage of play due to circumstances beyond the control of the players:
1. Completed individual matches will stand as played.
  2. An incomplete match shall be continued by the same players and resumed at the exact point where it was discontinued - set, game, point - as existed when play was halted. (Any point played is always counted and never replayed.) If players (s) are unavailable to continue the match on the rescheduled date then the individual match will be scored as either a retirement in favor of the team whose players are available or a double default if both teams are missing a player.
  3. If teams have assembled to play and the beginning of the match is delayed by rain or wet courts or other circumstances beyond the control of the players, teams must wait no longer than one hour past the original time for the start of the first match to determine whether or not courts are playable. If the courts are not playable after 1 hour, teams are free to leave and reschedule the match, unless both teams agree to wait longer.
- C.** **There is a fifteen-minute default rule** in effect for all league matches. Players arriving after the start of match play are subject to a game penalty for each 5 minutes up to a maximum of 15 minutes, a total of 3 games penalty. **If player is 15 minutes late, they are defaulted.** We strongly encourage play and good faith to report to matches on time.
- D.** Once the scorecards are exchanged, no changes can be made unless a player becomes ill or injured during the warm up. If a change is needed due to injury or illness only rostered players can be used as a substitute. **Defaults must occur from the bottom up.** If a doubles player is missing at the end of the warm-up, the line-up must be adjusted and that team put into the 3<sup>rd</sup> doubles position. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> doubles teams will be moved up 1 position – no changes in the teams are allowed. A missing singles player must be moved to the 1<sup>st</sup> singles position. 3<sup>rd</sup> doubles and/or 2<sup>nd</sup> singles must be the first courts defaulted.
- E.** All matches will be the best of two out of three sets, with regular scoring, and a set tiebreak at 6-all in each set. In the event of split sets, a match tiebreak (first to 10 points, win by 2) shall be played in lieu of a third set. **The Coman tie-break procedure** will be used for all tiebreaks. Players will exchange ends of the court after the first point and every 4 points thereafter. This tiebreak procedure allows doubles teams to continue serving from the same side of the court as they have been doing throughout the set or match.

## **VII. SCORING:**

- A.** In the event of a tie, the tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures:
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.

## **B. FORFEITS/DEFAULTS:**

A forfeit/default is “**planned**” if you are aware of it before the line-ups are exchanged. A planned forfeit is to take place from lowest position in singles/doubles. Cancellation notice must be given to the tennis facility (if applicable) and the opposing captain a **MINIMUM of 24 hours in advance**. A cancellation that occurs the day of the match, or after 3:00 pm on the day prior to the match, will result in the forfeiting team ***paying any court fees to the opposing club***. If a team reserves courts at a tennis facility and if they do not show up, or if they cancel without notifying the facility of the cancellation 24 hrs in advance, that team will be responsible for paying any court fees at said club where match is scheduled.

An “**unplanned**” forfeit/default takes place from the bottom up. It can be due to late arrival or a “no show” of one or both players which was not known by the captain until after the official match start time. If a player is missing at the end of the warm-up, the lineup must be adjusted accordingly. Court fees will not be mandatory.

- C. Forfeited/Defaulted matches.** The non-forfeiting party shall be credited with a 6-0, 6-0 win. Please review Eastern Section penalties **as respects team forfeit**, may be found via USTA website, Captain’s tool kit, Eastern League Regulations. Strict penalties will apply if entire team forfeits a match without prior notification to the League Coordinator as to circumstances.
- D.** All matches will be the best of two out of three sets, with regular scoring, and a set tiebreak at 6-all in each set. In the event of split sets, **a match tiebreak (first to 10 points, win by 2) shall be played in lieu of a third set, with no coaching allowed at any time during the match. Format is 2 singles courts, 3 doubles courts.**

- E. The winner of each flight will compete in the NJ Regional Tournament in August of 2016 with opportunity to advance to Section Championships.

A minimum of 8 players (5 for 2.5 & 5.0) must be available to participate at any level of championship play. There must be 8 eligible players for every match at any championship level. **All championship matches must be played if team enters championship play.** However, if a team is unable to field the minimum team required to participate, the second place team of the flight may be invited to attend. Teams who register for advancing play and who do not comply are subject to further sanctions and penalties which may include, but are not limited to, team split up, suspension of captain, players, and/or team, and loss of eligibility for future championship play.

**FURTHER SOURCE FOR USTA RULES & REGS**

[http://www.eastern.usta.com/For-Players/20017\\_USTA\\_Adult\\_Senior\\_Leagues\\_\\_Regulations/](http://www.eastern.usta.com/For-Players/20017_USTA_Adult_Senior_Leagues__Regulations/)