



**INTERMOUNTAIN
MONTANA**

**2016 League Regulations and Procedures for
the USTA Montana District**

*Approved by the USTA-Montana Board of Directors
March 19th, 2016*

USTA-Montana Board of Directors 2015-2016

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Welcome to League Tennis!

This handbook is for you whether you're playing:

- USTA Adult League 18 & Over
- USTA Adult League 40 & Over
- USTA Adult League 55 & Over
- USTA Adult League 65 & Over
- USTA Mixed Doubles 18 & Over League
- USTA Mixed Doubles 40 & Over League
- ITA Mixed Doubles 18 & Over League

League tennis is part of the United States Tennis Association (USTA). Although Montana Tennis Association (MTA), also known as USTA-Montana, runs league tennis in Montana, USTA rules govern it. Everything from how many players are on a team to who is eligible to play is determined by the USTA, not by Montana.

The most recent version of the USTA rules can be found at https://assets-ssl.usta.com/assets/1/15/2016_regulations.pdf

Whenever you have questions about league tennis, the 2016 USTA League Regulations are the place to look for an answer. USTA also has a Questions & Answers section on its website, at https://assets-ssl.usta.com/assets/1/15/Q_A_-_Interpretations_07082015b.pdf, which answers questions about how the USTA interprets the regulations in particular situations.

The USTA-Montana League Regulations describe how league tennis operates in Montana. It is important to remember that Montana does not have its own separate rules for league tennis apart from the USTA Regulations.

If you have a question and you cannot find an answer, **the person to call or email is the Montana District League Coordinator (DLC)**. The DLC is responsible for coordinating league tennis in Montana. For 2016, the Montana DLC is **Lauren Olson**, based in Missoula. You can email Lauren at lolson.mta@gmail.com or you can call her at (406) 579-2716. Lauren will answer your question, or will find the person who can answer your question.

For more information about USTA-Montana generally, or tennis in Montana specifically, please visit our website at www.montantennis.org.



LEAGUE PLAY OVERVIEW

All league play in Montana is local league play. Montana does not have district championships. The 2016 USTA League Regulations for local leagues apply to all Montana leagues, even though Montana is unique in playing all local leagues over one weekend.

USTA defines two divisions of league tennis: Adult and Mixed. The Adult Division has three age groups: 18 & Over, 40 & Over, and 55 & Over. 65 & Over is offered in Montana as an ITA program, not a USTA national program. Winners advance to Boise, which is the final championship tournament. The Mixed Division has two age groups: 18 & Over and 40 & Over.

Adult 18 & Over -- The 2016 Montana Adult 18 & Over tournament will be July 21-24, 2016, in Bozeman. Winners will progress to the Intermountain Tennis Association (ITA) Section Championship August 19-21, 2016, in Salt Lake City.

Adult 40 & Over -- The 2016 Adult 40 & Over tournament will be August 11-14, 2016, in Missoula. Winners will progress to the ITA Section Championship Sept. 16-18, 2016, in Denver.

Adult 55 & Over -- The 2016 Montana Adult 55 & Over tournament will be June 24-26, 2016, in Great Falls. Winners will progress to the ITA Section Championship Sept. 23-25, 2016, in Denver.

Adult 65 & Over - The 2016 Montana Adult 65 & Over Tournament will be September 9-11, 2016 in Bozeman. Winners will progress to the ITA Section Championship Oct. 7-9, 2016, in Boise, ID. (There is no national championship.)

Montana offers three mixed doubles leagues:

The **USTA Mixed 18 & Over League** tournament will be June 3-5, 2016, in Missoula. Winners will progress to the ITA Section Championship July 15-17, 2016, in Boise, ID.

The **USTA Mixed 40 & Over League** tournament will be Sept. 9-11, 2016, in Bozeman. Winners will progress to the ITA Section Championship October 7-9, 2016, in Henderson, NV.

The **Fall ITA Mixed** tournament will be Sept. 30 - Oct. 2, 2016 in Billings. Winners will progress to the ITA Section Championship Oct. 28-30, 2016, in Las Vegas, NV.



ELIGIBILITY TO PLAY

- Eligibility to play league tennis is determined by the 2016 USTA League Regulations.
- All players who compete in league tennis must be current USTA members throughout the time they are playing.

| MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENTS | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| AGE GROUP | MINIMUM AGE (by Dec. 31, 2016) |
| Adult 18 & Over | 18 |
| Mixed Doubles 18 & Over | |
| Adult 40 & Over | 40 |
| Mixed Doubles 40 & Over | 40 |
| Adult 55 & Over | 55 |
| Adult 65 & Over | 65 |

Players must play a minimum of two local league matches to be eligible to play with that team at section championships. One defaulted match may count toward the minimum match requirement. All retired matches count toward the minimum match requirement.

A player may play on two teams within one age group (Adult 18 & Over, Adult 40 & Over, Mixed, etc.) **if** the teams are at different NTRP levels. A player may play up to one NTRP level above the player’s current NTRP level.

USTA LEAGUE TEAM COMPOSITION
Table 1

| AGE GROUP | MINIMUM NUMBER OF PLAYERS | GENDER | NTRP LEVEL |
|--|----------------------------------|---------------|--|
| Adult 18 & Over 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, & 4.5 | 8 | Same Gender | Player’s NTRP level shall not exceed team NTRP level <i>except</i> 18 & Over 5.0+ and 40 & Over 4.5+ (see USTA Regulation 2.01A) |
| Adult 18 & Over 2.5 & 5.0+ | 5 | | |
| Adult 40 & Over 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, & | 8 | | |



| | | | |
|---|------------------------|-------------|--|
| 4.5+ | | | |
| Adult 55 & Over, 65 & Over Combined levels 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0 | 6 | Same Gender | Combined NTRP rating of partners shall not exceed team NTRP level AND NTRP difference between partners shall not exceed 1.0 |
| Mixed Doubles 18 & Over, 40 & Over 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0, & 10.0 | 3 men 3 women | Men & Women | |
| ITA Fall Mixed Doubles 5.5, 6.5, 7.5, 8.5, 9.5 | | | |

If an Adult league consists of only two teams at an NTRP level, each team must maintain its roster with at least 40 percent of its players at the designated NTRP level. USTA Regulation 1.04D(5). (This does not apply to Adult 55 & Over teams that use combined NTRP levels or levels that have more than two teams registered.)

If you don't know your NTRP rating, you can go to www.tennislink.usta.com, or the League page at www.montanatennis.org. TennisLink automatically removes expired ratings.

You have to "self-rate" if:

- You don't have an NTRP rating, or
- You have a (T) rating and want to play Adult 18 & Over, Adult 40 & Over, Adult 55 & Over, Adult 65 & Over, Mixed 18 & Over, or ITA Mixed, or
- You have an (M) rating and want to play Adult 18 & Over, Adult 40 & Over, Adult 55 & Over, or Adult 65 & Over.

For more information about self-rating, see USTA Regulation 1.04F(1).

A player who inappropriately self-rates at a level lower than the player's actual skill level, as well as captains and others who condone inappropriate self-rating, may have an NTRP Grievance filed against them and be subject to possible sanctions, including disqualification and suspension. USTA League Regulation 3.03E(1)a.



NTRP RATING LEVELS FOR ENTRY INTO LEAGUE PLAY

Table 2

| DIVISION & Age Group | PLAYER NTRP ENTRY LEVEL |
|---|---|
| Adult 18 & Over | Player may play at current NTRP level and/or up to one NTRP level above the player's current NTRP level <i>unless</i> they are playing 5.0+ in Adult 18 & Over, or 4.5+ in Adult 40 & Over. |
| 2.5 Mixed Doubles 18 & Over | |
| Adult 40 & Over | |
| Mixed Doubles 18 & Over Mixed Doubles 40 & Over ITA Mixed Doubles (combined NTRP levels) | Combined NTRP levels of partners shall not exceed team NTRP level. NTRP differences between partners shall not exceed 1.0. The minimum NTRP Level for: 6.0 is 2.5; 7.0 is 3.0; 8.0 is 3.5; 9.0 is 4.0 |
| Adult 55 & Over (combined NTRP levels) Adult 65 & Over (combined NTRP levels) | |

REGISTERING FOR LEAGUE

All teams and players must register through TennisLink. Team captains must register their teams and receive a team number so that individual players may register for the team.

Captains may create teams at www.tennislink.usta.com, or by going to the League page at www.montanatennis.org.

Players may register at www.tennislink.usta.com, or by going to the League page at www.montanatennis.org.



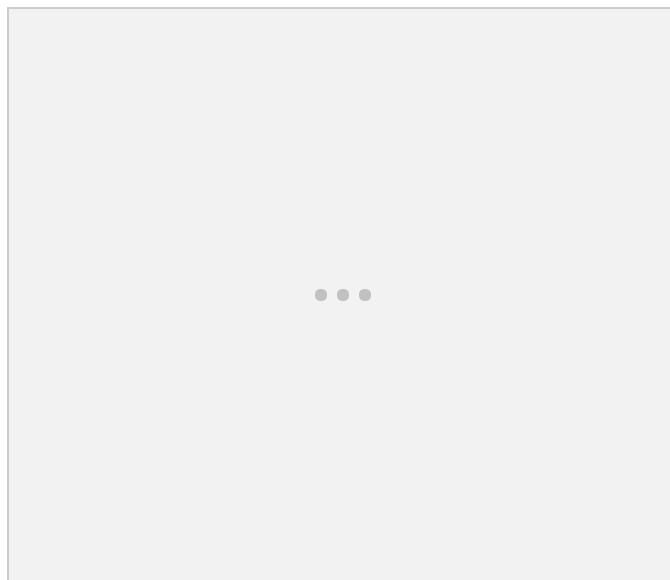
Players may not play any league matches unless their names are on the team roster in TennisLink. If a non-registered player plays a team match, the match will be declared a default.

All players must pay the league fee regardless of whether they intend to go to the Section Championship. **Players may get a refund for withdrawing up to one week after the registration deadline.** After the refund deadline, no refunds will be given unless the District League Coordinator and Executive Director determine a refund is warranted due to exceptional circumstances. Examples of exceptional circumstances include injuries that make it impossible to play, a death in the player's family, or cancellation of the event.

REGISTRATION DEADLINES

Players must register for their teams and have all members of their team signed up by the deadline announced for each age group (Adult 18 & Over, Mixed, etc.). *See* Table 1, Team Composition. Specific deadline dates are given below.

The District League Coordinator may change or extend the registration deadline, but shall do so for all players in the division.



USTA League Registration Deadlines

Table 3

| DIVISION & AGE GROUP (tournament date) | FINAL REGISTRATION DEADLINE for TEAMS and PLAYERS | FINAL REFUND DEADLINE |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| Adult 18 & Over (July 21-24, 2016) | <u>Teams</u> : Mon., July 11, 2016 <u>Players</u> : Wed., July 20, 2016 | Mon., July 18, 2016 |
| Adult 40 & Over (Aug. 11-14, 2016) | <u>Teams</u> : Mon., Aug. 1, 2016 <u>Players</u> : Thurs., Aug. 11, 2016 | Mon., Aug. 8, 2016 |
| Adult 55 & Over (June 24-26, 2016) | <u>Teams</u> : Mon., June 13, 2016 <u>Players</u> : Thurs., June 23, 2016 | Mon., June 20, 2016 |
| Adult 65 & Over (Sept. 9-11, 2016) | <u>Teams</u> : Mon., Aug. 29, 2016 <u>Players</u> : Thurs., Sept. 8, 2016 | Mon., Sept. 5, 2016 |
| Mixed 18 & Over (June 3-5, 2016) | <u>Teams</u> : Mon., May 23, 2016 <u>Players</u> : Thurs., June 2, 2016 | Mon., May 30, 2016 |
| Mixed 40 & Over (Sept. 9-11, 2016) | <u>Teams</u> : Mon., Aug. 29, 2016 <u>Players</u> : Thurs., Sept. 8, 2016 | Mon., Sept. 5, 2016 |
| ITA Fall Mixed (Sept. 30-Oct. 2, 2016) | <u>Teams</u> : Mon., Sept. 19, 2016 <u>Players</u> : Thurs., Sept. 29, 2016 | Mon., Sept. 26, 2016 |
| | | |



TEAM CAPTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

To become a team captain, you must find players and create a team.

- Captains are the primary liaisons between the District League Coordinator and the players.
- Captains ensure that players are kept informed of news and updates from the District; the District does not communicate directly with players.
- Captains must attend mandatory captains' meetings prior to league season.
- The District League Coordinator will contact existing captains via email.

Captains, please notify the District if your email address changes after you register your team. Meeting times and dates will be published on www.montanatennis.org.

Captains shall inform their players that league play is governed by the 2016 USTA League Regulations, and either send an email to their players with a link to the USTA regulations at https://assets-ssl.usta.com/assets/1/15/2016_regulations.pdf, or give them a printed copy of the regulations.

Local leagues are organized into the following formats:

**USTA MONTANA LEAGUE FORMAT
Table 4**

| DIVISION AND AGE GROUP | LEAGUE MATCH FORMAT | NTRP LEVELS |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Adult 18 & Over 2.5 & 5.0+ | 1 – Singles 2 – Doubles | 2.5, 5.0+ (up to 1 5.5 player allowed) |
| Adult 18 & Over | 2 – Singles 3 – Doubles | 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5 |
| Adult 40 & Over | 2 -- Singles 3 – Doubles | 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5+ (up to 2 5.0 players allowed) |



| | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Adult 55 & Over Adult 65 & Over | 3 – Doubles | 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0 |
|------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|

A player may play only one individual match in each team match.

LOCAL LEAGUE TOURNAMENTS

Montana’s local leagues are all played in one weekend tournament. The tournament dates for Adult 18 & Over, Adult 40 & Over, Adult 55 & Over, Adult 65 & Over, Mixed Doubles 18 & Over, Mixed Doubles 40 & Over, and ITA Fall Mixed Doubles are in Table 3, above, and also on the MTA website, www.montanatennis.org.

All Montana local league play is a round robin competition. If there are 10 or more teams in an NTRP level, the teams will be divided into flights, with a playoff between the top two teams from each flight. If there are 7 or fewer teams, the teams will all play one another, with a minimum of three team matches. If there are 8-9 teams within an NTRP level, the District League Coordinator will consult with the USTA-MT League Committee, which will decide whether to create flights or play a full round robin. The committee’s decision is final.

Further tournament details will be discussed at the captains’ meeting prior to local league tournaments.

The District League Coordinator will schedule all team matches, and notify the captains of the tournament schedule. Captains may find the opposing teams’ rosters online.

If a player is not present when the player’s match is called, the USTA Point Penalty system will be applied.

A default may be called if a player is not present 15 minutes after the match is called. If a match is defaulted because of lateness, the match shall not be played.

Warm-up is limited to 10 minutes.

Captains’ Responsibilities

- Captains’ responsibilities at local league tournaments include:
- Ensuring players are at the site 30 minutes before each team match;
- Turning in lineups to the site coordinator 30 minutes before each team match;
- Checking with players after their matches to ensure the reported match scores are correct;
- Signing the match scorecard at the completion of the team match, indicating agreement with the lineup and scores;
- Contacting the site coordinator or District League Coordinator immediately to



- dispute any reported score;
- Acting as the liaison between the team and the site coordinator and District League Coordinator.

Defaulting an Entire Team Match

A team that defaults a team match during a local league tournament may disrupt play for all other players at their NTRP level. According to 2016 USTA Regulation 2.03L, a team that defaults an entire team match for any reason during round robin play is ineligible to continue play at that championship. All matches of the defaulting team already played shall be null and void when determining standings but will be used for ratings and advancement purposes. If all teams with a mathematical chance to advance have already played the defaulting team in good faith, those matches will stand as played.

In Case of Rain

All matches shall proceed even if rain is imminent. If a captain notifies the site coordinator that his/her team is defaulting any individual matches, and the team match is later rained out, the defaults stand.

The roving umpire shall stop play upon determining that the conditions may make play dangerous. If there is no roving umpire, the site coordinator shall stop play after determining that conditions may make play dangerous.

Players may ask the umpire or site coordinator to stop play if they believe footing is compromised by rain. The umpire or site coordinator shall check the courts and determine whether to stop play. If no umpire or site coordinator is available, players may agree to stop play because of rainy conditions if they believe the conditions are making play dangerous.

When a local league tournament is halted because of weather, players should stop play, agree on the score, note the server and the sides, and report immediately to the site coordinator.

If play moves indoors and all matches cannot be completed, the District League Coordinator shall make it a priority to put on those teams that are in contention for first place. Play shall begin where it left off after a 10-minute warm-up.

If it is not possible to finish all matches by a reasonable time on the last day of the tournament, the District League Coordinator may require that matches be completed in an expeditious manner. Options for completion include changing the scoring, or using a coin toss.

Dynamic NTRP Ratings

Adult Division players' NTRP ratings are dynamically calculated, which means they are calculated after each match they play during the local league tournament. Players subject to NTRP Dynamic Disqualification, as described in the NTRP Dynamic Disqualification



Table on the inside back cover of the 2016 USTA Regulations (reproduced below), will be dynamically disqualified if they reach the disqualification level three times based on all matches except retirements. Players who are NTRP dynamically disqualified will be notified and have a right to a review in accordance with the procedures in USTA Reg.204C.

| NTRP DYNAMIC DISQUALIFICATION | |
|---|---|
| Each NTRP level is followed by a letter indicating the type of rating. The following identifies who can and cannot be NTRP dynamically disqualified. | |
| Who <u>cannot</u> be dynamically disqualified? | |
| NTRP Level followed by the following letter: C Computer Rated Players * | |
| Exception: * Any player who entered an Early Start League at an NTRP level lower than their current year--end rating is subject to NTRP dynamic disqualification. (NOTE: Montana does not have an Early Start League, so C rated players are safe from dynamic disqualification unless their rating was generated in another state as part of an Early Start League.) | |
| M | Mixed Doubles Players ** |
| T | Tournament Players ** |
| ** Year--end (M) and (T) players who are required to self--rate to enter the Adult or Senior League Divisions automatically become (S) rated players upon entering those Divisions and therefore become subject to NTRP dynamic disqualification when playing Adult or Senior League. | |
| Who <u>can</u> be NTRP dynamically disqualified? | |
| Participants in Adult 18 & Over and Adult 40 & Over: | |
| NTRP Level followed by the following letter: | |
| A | Appealed – all granted appeals including Medical and Players 60 and Over Promoted |
| S | Self--rated players |
| D | Dynamic or NTRP Complaint Disqualified |
| E | Dynamic rated players for Early Start Leagues |
| C | Exceptions to C Year--End ratings as noted above * |



Players participating in Adult 18 & Over and Adult 40 & Over who are promoted as a result of NTRP dynamic disqualification will be immediately required to participate at their new NTRP level in all USTA League Programs.

Announcing Winners

For all Adult Division tournaments, dynamic NTRP rating system reports are not issued until 24--48 hours after the last local league matches. Therefore, local league winners will be announced as soon as possible, within 48 hours of the last day of the tournament.

Mixed Doubles tournaments do not use the dynamic NTRP rating system; therefore, winners will be announced at the end of the tournament weekend.

LEAGUE MATCH AND SCORING
Table 5

| DIVISION & AGE GROUP | TEAM MATCH | TEAM POINT AWARDED FOR: |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Adult 18 & Over 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5 | 2 – Singles 3 – Doubles | 3 individual matches won |
| Adult 40 & Over All levels | | |
| Adult 18 & Over 2.5 & 5.0+ | 1 – Singles 2 – Doubles | 2 individual matches won |
| Mixed Doubles All levels | 3 -- Doubles | |
| Adult 55 & Over Adult 65 & Over All levels | | |

DEFAULTS

Table 6 outlines the maximum number of individual matches that can be defaulted



without defaulting the team match. Defaults must occur in the order provided below.

A retirement occurs when an individual match has started and a player or doubles team is unable to continue due to injury, loss of condition, emergency, or refusal to play. In case of a retirement, the non-retiring doubles team or player shall be credited with the number of additional games it would have won if the match was completed and the non-retiring doubles team or player won every subsequent game. USTA Reg. 2.03M, N.

ALLOWABLE DEFAULTS

Table 6

| DIVISION & AGE GROUP | MINIMUM # ELIGIBLE PLAYERS AVAILABLE PER MATCH | MAXIMUM # POSITIONS THAT CAN BE DEFAULTED | REQUIRED ORDER OF MATCH DEFAULTS |
|--|---|--|---|
| Adult 18 & Over 2.5 & 5.0+ | 3 | 1 | No. 1 Singles or No. 2 Doubles |
| Adult 18 & Over 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5 | 4 | 2 | <u>Singles:</u> No. 2 Singles before No. 1 Singles |
| Adult 40 & Over | | | <u>Doubles:</u> No. 3 Doubles before No. 2 Doubles; and No. 2 Doubles before No. 1 Doubles |



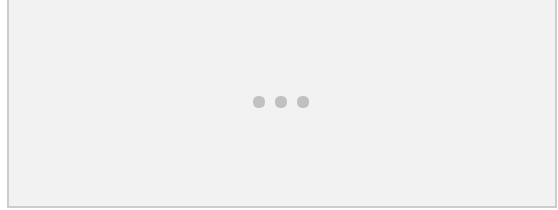
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|--|--|---|---------------|
| | | | |
| Adult 55 & Over Adult 65 & Over | 4 players who are eligible and able to combine | 1 | No. 3 Doubles |
| Mixed Doubles | | | |



GRIEVANCES

All grievances arising from league play are governed by the USTA regulations. *See generally* USTA Regulations section 3.00 of the 2016 USTA Regulations https://assets-ssl.usta.com/assets/1/15/2016_regulations.pdf

Montana has a Local League Grievance Committee, appointed by the USTA-Montana Board President and approved by the ITA Section League Coordinator. Montana also has a Local League Grievance Appeal Committee, also appointed by the USTA-Montana Board President and approved by the ITA Section League Coordinator. Members of the Local League Grievance Committee may not be members of the Local League Grievance Appeal Committee.



The USTA regulations define five types of league grievances – general grievances; administrative grievances; national league grievances; eligibility grievances; and NTRP grievances. These grievances are defined in detail in the 2016 USTA Regulations. Each type of grievance has its own procedure.

3.02A General Grievance. Any grievance that is not covered by 3.02B, C, D, or E, and alleges a violation of

- (i) the USTA Constitution and Bylaws,
- (ii) the USTA League Regulations,
- (iii) the Friend At Court, *USTA Handbook of Tennis Rules and Regulations*, including The Code and Wheelchair Rules of Tennis (unless modified by the USTA League Regulations), or
- (iv) the standards of good conduct, fair play, and good

sportsmanship is a General Grievance.

3.02B Administrative Grievance. Any complaint pertaining to administration of the League Program at any level shall constitute an Administrative Grievance. Captains and committee members are not subject to Administrative Grievance.

3.02C National League Grievance. The only National League Grievance that can be filed is an Administrative Grievance against the National League Administrator.

3.02D Eligibility Grievance. Any complaint, other than an NTRP Grievance, contending that a player has failed to meet eligibility requirements to participate in USTA League shall constitute an Eligibility Grievance.

3.02E NTRP Grievance. A grievance contending that a player's NTRP level is lower than the actual skill level shall constitute an NTRP Grievance. *See* Reg. 3.03E(1)a, 3.03E(1)b and 3.03E(1)c.

