

Spring 2023 - PRE-COLLEGIATE LEAGUE RULES

Matches begin on Sunday, March 5, 2023 at 3:30 pm.

Registration

Registration for teams and players must be submitted online using the TennisLink program - <http://teamentnis.usta.com>.

Teams will be responsible for the accuracy of their information. Once a player is added on TennisLink, there are no refunds, under any circumstances. Please check all player eligibility requirements PRIOR to registering the player. Any questions or concerns should be addressed prior to registering on TennisLink.

The registration deadline is **February 17th**. The cost is \$30/player.

The minimum number of players is 5 boys and 5 girls. A team must have this minimum by the registration deadline in order to be included in the schedule. If the minimum is not met, the team will need to be removed. Refunds are not given for teams that must be removed.

It is the captain's responsibility to register the team at the appropriate ability level. Failure to adhere to this rule may result in default. Levels include Middle School A and Middle School B. Level A is for teams with higher intermediate-advanced players and Level B is for teams with beginner-lower intermediate players. Middle School B teams will play with the green dot balls.

Players must be in grades 5-8 to play on a middle school team.

Team Size/Playing Twice

Teams consist of a minimum of 5 boys and 5 girls. It is recommended to have additional players to avoid forfeits. One boy and one girl may play two positions per match (referred to as "playing twice"). These players must play a #1 OR #2 doubles position and a mixed doubles position. For example, a player may NOT play #1 boys doubles and #2 boys doubles. The same players may not play twice in more than two matches per season. Abuse of this rule will result in a loss of points. Playing twice will not be permitted in the playoffs or finals.

Level Eligibility

Players with a National standing in the ranges below as of September 7, 2022 must play at the A level:

o16U: 1-1500 – must play Middle School A

o14U: 1-1500 – must play Middle School A

o12U: 1-650 – must play Middle School A

*Please note: TennisLink will NOT stop an ineligible player from registering to a team if it is due to their standing. It is the responsibility of the parent/captain to check eligibility before registering each player. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.

Additional Players

A team can add any number of players throughout the season. Any added player must comply with the level eligibility rule. Please check eligibility before adding players as we will not give refunds.

Abuse of this rule may result in disqualification and loss of all points won by that player. Captains are responsible for the accuracy of the skill level of their added players.

Players must be registered to the team BEFORE they play in a match. Failure to do so will result in default.

Add-ons will be accepted up until the last regular season match. However, a player must have credit for one regular season match to be eligible for playoffs.

Courts

Teams are required to furnish a minimum of 2 courts. Most teams in this league have more available for play. It is highly recommended that you use as many courts as possible to avoid darkness and make-ups. We do not require facilities to have lights or bathrooms. If your facility does not have bathrooms, please have the courtesy to make the visiting team aware of this beforehand.

Time

The official match starting time is Sunday at 3:30 pm. If both captains agree, matches can be played early but never after the scheduled match time. For your protection, if you make changes to your scheduled match time be sure to email your coordinator (Amanda Hunt – Amanda@ustatlanta.com) with those changes.

Unless otherwise agreed upon, the default match start times are as follows:

3:30 PM: #1 Boys Doubles and #1 Girls Doubles

4:30 PM: #2 Boys Doubles and #2 Girls Doubles

5:30 PM: Mixed Doubles

Match Arrangements/Order of Play

The home team parent must call the visiting team parent by Wednesday prior to the scheduled day of play (Sunday). They must discuss at that time the details for arranging the match, such as, how many courts will be available, what the court surface is, any preferred order of play, directions, any schedule complications or facility problems. BE CO-OPERATIVE SO THAT THE KIDS CAN PLAY. If no agreement or other arrangement is made, the official order of play is #1 Boys Doubles, #1 Girls Doubles, #2 Boys Doubles, #2 Girls Doubles and Mixed Doubles. See default match start times in the "Time" paragraph above. Scorecards should be exchanged prior to the start of the match.

Balls

The home team supplies balls for each match. Each position is required to bring a can of balls. Suggestion: Team parent may want to collect a specified number of

cans in advance. NOTE: The Middle School B Division will be using the **Green Dot** balls.

Directions

Directions should be confirmed when captains communicate about the match arrangements. USTA Atlanta is not responsible for incorrect directions.

Team Lineups

Team Captains must exchange scorecards with complete line-ups simultaneously prior to starting play. Once the scorecards have been exchanged, changes to the lineups cannot be made except as follows: (1) if a player becomes ill or injured before his/her individual match is played, another player may be substituted; (2) if a player does not arrive in time to play their individual match, another player may be substituted; or (3) the match is postponed due to inclement weather (see rule titled 'Rainouts or Darkness'). Players removed from the lineup due to (1) or (2) above cannot be reinserted in the match. A substitution is defined as a player not scheduled in the lineup or a player in the lineup that is eligible to play two positions (See rule titled 'Team Size/Playing Twice').

Playing Strength

Your strongest players must play at the #1 position. You may not move a losing #1 team down to the #2 position in order to move a #2 losing team up to the #1 position. Remember, #1 doubles players are always stronger than #2 doubles players. Be fair to your players and opponents.

Captains

The captain/co-captain is responsible for keeping their parents under control. During a match, the captains should be the ones to communicate and parents should not be involved. If the captain or co-captain for a team cannot be at the match they need to make sure the parent that has stepped up is aware that they are the captain for the match and responsible for keeping their parents under control. The designated captain should be the one to talk to the opposing captain and parents should not be involved.

Coaching

A designated captain/coach/parent is allowed to talk to players when they are switching sides and between the 2nd and 3rd sets if you feel it is necessary. This should be no longer than 90 seconds.

Scoring

Matches will be the best 2 out of 3 full sets. Matches that split must be completed by playing either a full third set or a match tie-breaker, with the winner being the first team to win 10 points and ahead by 2 points (i.e. 10-8 or 18-16).

The use of a full third set in lieu of a match tiebreaker must be agreed upon prior to the start of each individual match, but is negotiable. If team parents cannot agree on

the use of a full third set or tie-breaker, the official choice is the tie-breaker. Third set scores should be entered as 1-0 whether a full third set or a match tiebreaker is played. PLEASE WORK WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH THE PLAYERS.

The choice of a full third set or match tie-breaker is negotiable for all positions in a match. It does not have to be consistent with every position or every match. For example, the first 3 positions played full third sets, the 4th and 5th positions may elect to play a match tie-breaker. However, the decision must be made prior to beginning the match.

Defaults/Forfeits

Players who are late by 20 minutes when a court is available must forfeit their point. Only the point affected is forfeited; other positions play as scheduled.

If teams agree to use 3 or 4 courts, then those additional positions must be available to play in the first time slot.

If your team does not have enough players to field a complete lineup for a specific match, you must forfeit starting with Mixed Doubles or the # 2 Doubles in either Boys or Girls. If the stronger #1 doubles team is unable to play, the # 2 doubles must play at the #1 doubles position. PLEASE ASK YOUR PLAYERS FOR THEIR COOPERATION IN MAKING THEMSELVES AVAILABLE. PLEASE BE FLEXIBLE IN PLAYING MATCHES EARLY IF NECESSARY TO COMPLETE THE MATCH.

A team may only forfeit a maximum of 6 lines the entire season. Remember that players are allowed to play twice in two matches. This should reduce the amount of forfeits that have happened in previous seasons. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in post season ineligibility.

Rainouts or Darkness

a. If a match is rained out or if darkness occurs while a match is in progress, teams must make up the match within six days. If no time can be agreed upon, then the makeup match will be played at 9:30 am on the Saturday following the originally scheduled match date.

b. If inclement weather prevents the makeup match from being played on the makeup default day/time (Saturday at 9:30 am), the new default makeup time moves to the following Monday at 7:00 pm and continues day-to-day at 7:00 pm until weather permits the match to be played. For example, if inclement weather prevents the makeup match from being played Monday at 7:00 pm, the match should be scheduled for Tuesday at 7:00 pm. If inclement weather then prevents the makeup match from being played Tuesday at 7:00 pm, the match should be scheduled for Wednesday at 7:00 pm. And so on, until weather permits the match to be played.

c. If the last regular season match or a playoff match is cancelled due to rain, the match must be made up the next day weather permits. For makeup matches being played on a weeknight, the default time is 7:00 pm.

d. If players are now available to play positions previously forfeited, those positions may now be played.

e. Substitute players may play in positions that have not started the match (warm up does not qualify as match play).

f. Players may move to different positions provided you follow the guidelines of playing by strength.

Scores

Scores should be entered by either team captain on TennisLink by Monday at 6:00pm.

Playoffs and Finals

Individual matches won during the season determine the division winners. In the event of a tie, we will look at total matches won, then total sets won, then total games won, until we have broken the tie.

A player must play at least once in the regular season to be eligible to play in the playoffs and finals.

The number of teams that go to the playoffs will depend on the number of divisions in that level. All playoff rounds are single elimination. Playing twice is not allowed in the playoffs.

A. Levels with one division will not participate in playoffs/City Finals.

B. Divisions of two will take the first and second place teams to one round of playoffs followed by City Finals.

C. Divisions of three will take all first and the top second place team with the highest winning percentage for one round of playoffs followed by City Finals.

D. In divisions of four, all first and second place teams will play two rounds of playoffs, followed by City Finals.

E. Divisions of five will take five first place teams and the top three second place teams for two rounds of playoffs followed by City Finals.

F. Divisions of six will take six first place teams and the top two second place teams for two rounds of playoffs followed by City Finals.

G. Divisions of seven will take seven first place teams and the highest scoring second place team for two rounds of playoffs followed by City Finals.

H. Divisions of eight will take eight first place teams for two rounds of playoffs followed by City Finals.

The semifinals (if applicable) will be Sunday, April 30th at 3:30 pm at the higher seeded team's home courts.

Finals (if applicable) will be held the morning of Sunday, May 7th. Finals for all levels are played at one facility and match times will be determined by the coordinator.

Prizes/Championships

There will be weekly raffles for prizes and all players are eligible to win! All finalists and champions will receive bag tags, and champions will get their picture taken with the big trophy, as well as their team name engraved on it.

BE FLEXIBLE, HAVE FUN AND KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE!