



## USTA Mississippi Championship Procedures

USTA Mississippi is comprised of the eight local leagues of Delta, East Central, Gulf Coast, Jackson, North Central, Northeast, Pinebelt, and Southwest. The USTA Mississippi Championship Information document will apply to all USTA Mississippi State Championships. When not stated in the Championship Information, the National and Sectional regulations and Friend at Court will apply.

### \*Notice Regarding COVID-19\*

*USTA Mississippi will take proactive measures to create a safer environment for our participating tennis players. These actions will be relayed to teams prior to the start of each championship. Such measures may include but not limited to staggered championship schedule (to make player capacity smaller); an app for scorecard submissions; online schedules, resources and materials (as opposed to print-outs); sanitizing stations, no spectators, and mask and social distancing requirements.*

*To ensure a smooth and nondisruptive tournament experience, we require all players to abide by guidelines given by USTA Southern Tournament Staff. This is for the safety of everyone. Should a "state of emergency" occur in leading up to our USTA Mississippi League Championship, tournament staff will notify captains and players with as much advance notice as possible.*

*Should a Mississippi League Championship cancellation occur due to COVID or another infection virus/disease, and the securing of another date/ location is not possible, the championship "cancellation policy," as described in these Championship Procedures, will be followed.*

*Due to this possibility, we highly encourage players to secure lodging at places that allow refundable deposits.*

### Team Eligibility

- Local winning teams and teams qualifying based on regulations will be allowed to advance to the state championship
- Wildcard or replacement teams qualifying based on regulations will be allowed to advance to the state championship. Wildcards are issued based on regulations and a blind draw. In the final weeks prior to a state championship, wildcard openings may be opened to all local leagues if needed to be filled immediately. Additional wildcards may be extended under the discretion of the state league coordinator (tournament director).
- The minimum number of players to field a full team match is required for team entry for a championship unless a waiver is granted. Where combined or multiple NTRP levels are present, the minimum must include the proper combinations to field a full team match. Teams that share players must have enough unique players registered for the event per team to field full team matches.
- The state league coordinator (tournament director) may issue invitations to all teams to attend the championship in groups in which there is a limited number of teams available statewide depending on the overall ability of the event to accommodate additional teams
- The state league coordinator (tournament director) may declare an entire group's competition be held as a "local at state league" if there are a limited number of teams available statewide.
- For groups in which play for the entire state occurs within one local league, that local league winner will advance to the next level of competition.

### Player Eligibility

- **Membership:** Players must possess current USTA membership through the conclusion of the state championships
- **Match play:**
  - **USTA League Adult 18 & Over, Adult 40 & Over, Adult 55 & Over, Mixed Doubles 18 & Over, and Mixed Doubles 40 & Over:** Players are eligible to advance to the state championship level competition if that player has played on that same team in at least 2 matches during its local league season. A

maximum of 1 default received by the player during local league competition shall count for advancing to State. Retirements count as a match played.

- **Mixed Doubles 55 & Over, Adult 65 & Over, Tri-Level, and Southern Combo Doubles:** If local play was available, players are eligible to advance to championship level competition if that player has played on that same team in at least 1 match (1 of which may be a default received) during its local league season. If local play was not available, the player/team may advance with no match play requirements.
- **Participation:** Players who qualify for State Championships may advance on multiple teams, but there will be no scheduling accommodations extended. A player may not compete on multiple teams in the same NTRP level within the same age group. For example a player may not play on two 3.0 18&Over teams. Teams that share players must have enough unique players registered for the event per team to field full team matches.

**Official MS State League Championships Entry** Registration of the minimum number of players along with all fees and required information shall be submitted by the team captain and/or players prior to the announced deadline for entry into the event. The captain is responsible for reviewing and adhering to all information pertaining to the league championships. All championship information may be accessed at [www.msleaguetenis.com](http://www.msleaguetenis.com).

### **Registration, Entry Fee, and Deposit Requirements**

- Championship entry fee: \$35 per player for players that had local play. \$17 per player for players on teams that did not compete locally as they have already paid part of the entry fee via tennis link. **Registration fees are non-refundable.**
- The captain or team representative must submit the security deposit of \$150 (1 per team) if one is not already on file with the local coordinator for the current championship year. Checks should be payable to MTA and mailed to P.O. Box 5388, Jackson MS 39296 (Attn: Jean Seale)
- The deposit check will be held until the conclusion of the championship year. If a team withdraws before the schedule is published, the deposit will be refunded. If a team withdraws after the schedule is published or if a team does not complete all scheduled matches, the deposit may be forfeited.
- Players should be registered and pay applicable fees on both TennisLink and the championship web site. In the case of administrative oversight by USTA Mississippi, the Tournament Committee has the right to add a player to TennisLink or Championship registration after the deadline.
- The minimum number of players to field a full team match is required for team entry for a championship unless a waiver is granted. Where combined or multiple NTRP levels are present, the minimum must include the proper combinations to field a full team match
- In fairness to all participants, teams are expected to play each match with a full complement of players. All effort should be made to insure a full team for each match. Teams that share players must have enough unique players registered for the event per team to field full team matches.
- Teams are not eligible to register with less than a full team without a waiver from the Tournament Director.

**Championship Rules-** *all USTA, STA, and MTA regulations, Friend at Court, and The Code apply except where noted in regulations or this document*

### **Format of Play**

- The State League Coordinator and Championship Official shall determine the format for the competition. USTA Mississippi Championship format shall use round robin or un-flighted matches against randomly selected opponents in all levels of competition.
- Round Robin format:
  - Each team shall play every other team in its flight. Depending on the total number of teams multiple rounds may be played.
  - Levels with multiple flight winners will offer a semi-finals and/or finals (single elimination)
  - Levels with three flights will have a blind draw from second place teams to determine the fourth semi-finalist.
  - A blind draw will be used to determine opponents for the semi-final matches.
  - If a local league has two teams in the same level, the referee will place those teams in separate flights provided there are two flights in that level.
- For un-flighted matches against randomly selected opponents
  - Each team shall play at least 3 team matches against randomly selected opponents.

- The top 2 teams, based on standings and national procedures on tiebreakers, will be entered into a Final. (Exception: Should 3 or 4 teams finish their un-flighted matches undefeated, the top 4 teams, based on standings and national procedures on tie-breakers will be entered into a semifinal playoff to be followed by a final. For semi-finals, the draw will be #1 vs #4 and #2 vs #3.)
- Levels with multiple groups: The top 2 teams, based on standings and national procedures on tiebreakers, will be entered into a Final. (Exception: Should 3 or 4 teams finish their un-flighted matches undefeated, the top 4 teams, based on standings and national procedures on tie-breakers will be entered into a semifinal playoff to be followed by a final. For semi-finals, the draw will be #1 vs #4 and #2 vs #3.)

**Scoring -all scores will be entered into Tennis Link. Tennis Link is the official scoring system (The USTA app is not considered to be an official record)**

- All matches will be the best of two tiebreak sets with a 10-point match tiebreak in lieu of a third set. There will be a two minute set break at the end of each set with no coaching. The Match tiebreak shall be scored as 1 set and 1 game for tiebreak procedures. In the event of shortened formatting, matches will be converted to a compatible scoring format using the Alternative Scoring document (found on championship web site).
- Each team will receive 1 point for each team match won. To comply with national regulation 2.03H, in the event of a tie, the tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures that does so:
  - winner of the most individual matches,
  - then winner of head-to-head match,
  - then least sets lost, then least games lost,
  - then a coin toss.
  - Please see national regulation 2.03H(1) for further information.
  - All scores are final 48 hours after the conclusion of the tournament.
- Results will be entered into Tennis Link throughout each day and can be viewed on this website.
- All teams are expected to play all scheduled matches. Any team not complying may be subject to grievance procedures in addition to forfeiting the team deposit check. Teams are also expected to provide full line-ups for all team matches. If player participation on more than one team results in a team defaulting a court, the defaulting team may be subject to grievance procedures. Penalties may include but are not limited to monetary fines and/or suspension from league play. In accordance with USTA League Tennis Regulations, any team forfeiting an entire team match for any reason will result in all matches of that team previously played or to be played to be declared null and void. If all teams in contention for the Championships have already played the forfeiting team in good faith, the matches stand as played.
- If any team is released from the State championships due to inclement weather and certain individual matches in their team match have already been started, it will be recorded in TennisLink as a “retirement” with the leading team in the individual match as the “winner.” (For example, team leading 6-4, 0-4 would be considered the leading team. If a 2nd set is not completed, the team winning first set is considered the leading team.)

**Coaching is not permitted at any time during a championship match.**

**Tournament Referees will not be used to make line calls or call foot faults.**

**Toilet Visits**-a player may request one or more time-outs for a toilet visit. No coaching is allowed.

**Cell Phones/Electronics**-Once a player goes on court, the use of cell phones or other electronic devices is prohibited. A player’s cell phone or electronic device that rings or alarms during a point will result in the loss of the point

**Medical Conditions/Time Out**

- Medical conditions include but are not limited to an injury, illness, and heat-related condition or cramping.
- A medical time-out consists of evaluation time as determined by the referee plus a maximum of three minutes treatment time. No coaching is allowed.
- A request for a medical time-out may be made by a player to the court monitor or at the tournament desk.
- During the match or warm-up, if a player suffers from a medical condition or believes that medical diagnosis or treatment is required, the player may request a one-time medical time-out for that medical condition.

**Inclement Weather**

- If play is suspended, players should report their score in progress to the site desk.
- If players feel on-court conditions are unsafe, this should be immediately reported to the tournament referee or site director.

- Players should not leave the site until released by the Site Director.
- If needed, play will continue under lights if necessary, to keep on schedule.
- Format, scoring and surface are subject to change at the tournament committee's discretion due to inclement weather.

#### **Lateness**

- A fifteen minute default time and point penalty system for lateness will be in effect
- The referee is responsible for issuing any penalties.

#### **Line-ups**

- Line-ups can be changed through substitution in the event of injury to, illness of, or disqualification of a player prior to the start of a match, and under such further circumstances as the Championship Committee may authorize. If substitution is made during warm-up, the substitute player is entitled to a five-minute warm up. If no substitution can be made, the affected position only will be defaulted.
- The following applies to the Adult 2.5 and 5.0 teams at the Mississippi Championships: If a player is injured or becomes ill after the lineup has been submitted and the captain must change the lineup in order to prevent a team match default, the opposing captain may also change their lineup. This only applies to the 2.5 and 5.0+ levels as the lineup change will affect both singles and doubles positions.
- In the event of a **known default**, the opposing team will have the opportunity to revise their scorecard once both scorecards are turned in and the default has been announced by the site director.
- If a captain duplicates a name in error on a scorecard, a team may be allowed to substitute a player for the duplicate name in the lower position (at the discretion of the Tournament Director), using a player not already listed on the line-up. A substitution may only be made in the lower position if the error is discovered before the match begins. If no such substitution can be made, the affected position only will be defaulted.
- If a team match is postponed following the exchange of line-ups, the original line-up will stand for the make-up match UNLESS teams are released from the site by the Site Director, Tournament Director and/or Referee. If teams are released, the line-up would stand only for those positions that have already started (first service attempt) and all other positions (even those that were in warm-up) may be changed including defaulted courts.

#### **NTRP Dynamic Disqualification**

- USTA Mississippi follows national regulation 2.04E(2)c in that dynamic ratings will be generated following the State Championships. It is possible for any self-rated (S) or appealed (A) to be dynamically promoted at his or her NTRP level. Points earned by promoted players will stand. The promoted player will not be eligible to advance to the next level of competition.

**Captain Responsibilities** *it is the responsibility of the captain to notify the team of championship information and insure players' adherence to all regulations and requirements during the event.*

- **Submit Security Deposit**-Captains must submit the \$150 security deposit by the deadline noted in the registration instructions if not already on file with the local coordinator for the championship year.
- **Attend Captains' Meeting/Registration**-The captain or a representative for the team should attend the captains' meeting and/or team registration to receive any new information, final schedules, and team hospitality items.
- **Team Check-In**- The captain is responsible for checking his/her team in at the site of the match.
  - To assist in keeping the tournament on schedule, please check in **30 minutes before** your scheduled match time with all players for the match present and ready to play.
  - **Do not turn in a score card with the site desk until ALL players are present and ready for play or until match time.**
  - To check in for your match, report to the site desk to obtain a score card. **Scorecards must be completed and turned in by match time or penalties for lateness will apply.**
    - Refer to the schedule online to identify home/away status and fill out the corresponding side of the card.
    - Please check your scorecard carefully to insure that you have made no errors in the lineup and that all information is legible.
    - If a team has a known default, the opposing team will have the opportunity to revise its scorecard once both scorecards are turned in and the default has been announced by the site director.
  - A fifteen-minute default time will be strictly enforced, as will the **point penalty system**.

- **Confirm Opponents-** Captains should confirm opponents are paired properly.
- **Report/Confirm Scores-** Have scores reported as individual matches are completed. Have players (whether they won or lost) report/confirm their scores with the site desk immediately following the completion of the individual match so that the site desk is aware of open courts
- **Confirm Match Results-** Confirm scores/lineup on the scorecard and sign scorecard; check results on Tennis Link; and report any discrepancies immediately to the tournament headquarters.
  - Please check the accuracy of the scores before signing the card. If a discrepancy is reported later, both parties must be contacted before any changes can be made.
  - For each match, check results using Tennis Link. Report any discrepancies immediately.
- **Play all Matches-**All teams are expected to play all scheduled matches.
  - Any team not complying will be subject to grievance procedures.
  - In accordance with Mississippi League Tennis Regulations, any team forfeiting an entire team match may forfeit the team deposit. Additionally in accordance with USTA League Tennis Regulations a team forfeiting an entire match is no longer eligible for the championship and all matches played or to be played will be null and void in the team standings. If all teams in contention for the Championships have already played the forfeiting team in good faith, the matches stand as played.
- **Grievances-Captains are required to complete grievance forms.**
  - Filing fee for Championship Grievances (General, Administrative) will be \$50.00 made payable to MTA. Fee will only be given back to filing party if all matters in the grievance are upheld
  - Forms are available at the host site at the tournament desk. Completed grievance forms are to be presented to the Tournament Director or designee within **30 minutes** of the completion of the team match.
  - The committees involved will handle all Grievances as promptly as possible once payment is submitted. In most cases, grievances will be heard after the conclusion of the championship.
  - NTRP Grievances filed within 21 days of the start date of the player's and/or captain's state championship will be administered after the event unless the section authorizes the administration of the grievance prior to that time. If the grievance is not administered until after the event, points won by players will stand.
  - A team forfeiting an entire team match during championship play may receive further penalties imposed by the Championship Grievance Committee.
  - Players who exhibit inappropriate behavior and/or unsportsmanlike conduct towards tournament staff and/or volunteers will be subject to championship grievance and may be subject to automatic ejection from the event.

### **Cancellation Policy**

Should inclement weather or other circumstances prevent the completion of tournament play at the State Championships during the published dates of play, the Tournament Committee will determine whether the matches played at the point of cancellation will be used to determine round robin group winners and a champion and finalist in any of the levels. If the Tournament Committee determines that there was a lack of "equal opportunity" for all teams in a level due to the schedule of play, the Tournament Committee may place all teams in a drawing or choose another method to determine the champion and finalist in each level. If any team (s) in a round robin flight is mathematically out of contention at the time of championship cancellation it will be excluded from any drawing.

The tournament committee reserves the right to alter format, scoring, surface, site location, and scheduling as it deems necessary.

Tournament Committee will use proper and fair judgment with regard to all state tournament-related issues.

Tournament Committee: To be appointed by Mississippi Adult League Committee Chair with Tournament Director serving as Chairman.

Championship Grievance Committee: To be appointed by Mississippi Adult League Committee Chair or designee.

Championship Procedures may be amended at Tournament Committee's discretion.

The Tournament Committee may release a team from a state championship.