

COLUMBIA TENNIS LEAGUE (CTL)

2026 TRI-LEVEL LEAGUE – LOCAL RULES

WEBSITE: <https://sctennis.com/columbia-tennis-league/>

***USTA League Tennis National, Southern, and South Carolina Regulations shall apply to USTA Leagues and take precedence over Columbia Tennis League (CTL) Rules, if a conflict arises. The purpose of the Rules and Regulations is to assure that fair play and good conduct is always maintained and to assist the tennis league in rendering equity to all teams and players.

CTL Local League Coordinator

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The CTL Local Area encompasses tennis facilities located in Richland and Kershaw counties. The Local League Coordinator (LLC) implements and administers CTL tennis programs and interprets the CTL Local Regulations. The LLC organizes, coordinates, and supervises all USTA League tennis activities at the local league level.

TEAM CAPTAIN. Each team shall appoint a captain to handle administrative affairs and to represent the team in all CTL matters. It is recommended that the team captain be a playing member of the team, but he/she can be a non-playing captain. The team captain, or an acting team captain, must be present at every match. Each team may also appoint a co-captain. The ***Duties of a Team Captain is a document that is appended to these rules. See PAGE 13.*** The *Duties of a Team Captain* are herein incorporated into CTL Rules.

AGE REQUIREMENTS & LEAGUE TYPES:

18 & Over – Player must be at least 18 years of age to participate in a USTA league

40 & Over – Player must reach at least 40 years of age during the calendar year

55 & Over – Player must reach at least 55 years of age during the calendar year

NUMBER OF TEAMS. To have a Local Season in CTL, a minimum of two teams must be registered in a specific Level and Age division. To accommodate scheduling considerations, CTL may establish two or more flights within a division, as determined by the LLC. If there are two or more flights within a division, the make-up of a flight will be the result of either a random selection or based on geographical location. The LLC may also schedule alternate match dates, as needed, to accommodate scheduling conflicts.

CTL LOCAL LEVELS OF PLAY. CTL Tri-Level League has the following levels available:

18 & Over Women – 3.5, 3.0, 2.5

18 & Over Men and Women – 4.0, 3.5, 3.0

18 & Over Men and Women – 4.5, 4.0, 3.5

40 & Over Women – 3.5, 3.0, 2.5

40 & Over Women – 4.0, 3.5, 3.0

- Roster must have a **minimum of six (6) players** who are able to combine to form an eligible pairing for each of the three (3) lines for a team match.
- **CTL Tri-Level teams will be capped at a Maximum of 20 players.**
- **Match Format:** each Tri-Level team match will consist of 3 Doubles courts at different NTRP levels.

LLAS LEVELS OF PLAY (LOCAL LEAGUE AT STATE. Teams that register in CTL for the levels shown below will play their local season at the State Tri-Level Championship. The winner of each level will advance to Sectionals. **In 2026, the Tri-Level State Championship (and LLAS) will be held on September 18-20 in Sumter, SC.**

18 & Over Men and Women – 5.0, 4.5, 4.0

40&Over Men – 4.0, 3.5, 3.0

40 & Over Men and Women – 4.5, 4.0, 3.5

55 & Over Men and Women – 4.0, 3.5, 3.0

SINGLETON TEAMS. If any level in the **18 & Over, 40 & Over, or 55 & Over** consists of only one team (singleton team), AND that level must play a local league to advance to the State Championship, then the Local League Coordinator has the option to:

(1) Contact the State League Coordinator who can transfer an individual team with no local league play to another area's league tree only if it is agreed upon by both local league coordinators and accomplished before that recipient area's deadline.

- Teams that are moved to play in a location other than their home local league area must secure home courts in the area in which they will participate, unless both LLCs agree on something different.
- If an individual team is transferred into an already existing league of at least 2 teams, then the transferred team must secure home courts in the host local league. If the transferred team wins that league, then they will represent the host league at the State Championship.
- The transferred team must follow all the rules and regulations of the host league.
- The host league is responsible for all awards, state championship fees (if applicable) and state championship registration.
- If LLCs agree to combine singleton teams from more than one area to form a local league so that those teams have an opportunity to qualify to advance to State, then the advancing team will be allowed to represent their local league.
- Rules and regulation issues that occur during league play for the combined league will be handled by the State League Coordinator in consultation with the LLCs who are involved.
- The area that is represented by the winning team will be responsible for all awards, state championship fees (if applicable) and state championship registration for that team.

(2) Offer to move that team to another age division in the same local area at the same NTRP level, if applicable.

(3) Move individual players to another team in that area, if applicable, or move them to an "Extra Players" flight to hold for future play in other leagues, e.g., Combos or Fall league.

(4) Issue a credit/coupon for the registration fee in accordance with CTL policy.

OUT OF AREA TEAMS. If teams are moved from other leagues and/or tennis associations to play in CTL, then those teams will have home and away matches on the same basis as regular member teams in CTL. Teams that are moved to play in CTL must obtain home courts at one of the CTL facilities or will be assigned home courts at a CTL facility by the LLC and must pay any associated court fees to the facility for their home matches.

COURT FACILITIES. Each team participating in the CTL Tri-Level League must guarantee the use of at least two courts at one location for all regularly scheduled and make-up matches that consist of three individual matches per team match. Any approved USTA surface is

permissible, including indoor and outdoor (clay or hard) surfaces. The choice of surfaces is the prerogative of the home team, and more than one surface may be used for a single team match. If more than one surface is available at the site of the match, the home team must identify which individual matches will be played on which surfaces prior to either team exchanging the line-up for the team match. The home team is responsible to have courts available and playable at match time.

PLAYING ON MULTIPLE TEAMS

- a. A player may play at the same NTRP Tri-Level team in SEPARATE Local Leagues in South Carolina during the same season. If a player is on two such teams (e.g., a team from CTL and another from LATA) and both teams advance to the State Championships, then the player must choose only ONE team in which to participate at that level at State.
- b. A player may participate in more than one NTRP Level in the same local league during the same season (e.g., a 3.0 player plays on an 18+ 3.5, 3.0, 2.5 Tri-Level team and an 18+ 4.0, 3.5, 3.0 Tri-Level team, both in CTL).
- c. A player **may not** play on two teams at the same NTRP level and the same age division in the same local league.
- d. NO accommodations will be made for scheduling conflicts during the local season or during any championships for players on multiple teams.

ROSTER REGISTRATION

- a. **Once a player registers and pays fees on TennisLink, there are no refunds.** Credits may be given for future league play in the CTL at the discretion of the LLC.
- b. Each Tri-Level team's roster must have a minimum of six (6) eligible players, who are able to combine to form eligible pairings for each of the three (3) lines for a team match, must be submitted in TennisLink by the deadline date published in the Captain's letter. Team rosters that do not meet this requirement may be deleted. If teams do not meet this requirement, they may contact the LLC BEFORE THE DEADLINE to discuss their options. The decision to delete the team or allow players to add on is left up to the discretion of the LLC.
- c. Players may be added to a roster on TennisLink until 11:59PM on the day announced for the Tri-Level league in the Captain's Letter.
- d. A player may not play for a team until the player has registered on the TennisLink roster. If he/she does play a match when not on the roster, the individual match will be considered a default.
- e. Players may not switch from one team to another after the start of the league season unless approved by the LLC.
- f. Player must have a USTA membership valid through the local season and SC state championships.

NTRP RATING AND TEAM PLAY

- a. Players with a valid computer rating in TL must play at that NTRP level or higher.
- b. Players with a valid self-rating in TL must play at that level or higher.
- c. Players who do not have a valid computer rating or self-rating on file in TL, shall self-rate in accordance with the National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) Guidelines and complete the self-rating process on TennisLink when registering for a team. **Failure to provide accurate information regarding a player's tennis history will subject the player, the captain and/or others who condoned inaccurate self-rating to possible sanctions and disqualification.**
- d. A player may play only one NTRP level above the player's current NTRP level in each Age Division (18 & Over, 40 & Over, 55 & Over)
- e. Once a player self-rates, they may not self-rate lower for another league.

NTRP APPEALS. All players are eligible to submit an appeal through the TL automated appeal system. Players may appeal their year-end ratings online at any time during the following league year. TL will allow only one granted appeal per league year. Only players within the applicable range for an appeal will be approved.

Medical appeals must be submitted on the appropriate medical appeal form along with a physician's statement filled out by the attending physician. These forms must be sent by email to PJ Fulmer, USTA SC State League Coordinator, at fulmer@sctennis.com. Medical Appeal forms and procedures can be found on the USTA SC webpage at www.sctennis.com and on the CTL webpage at <https://sctennis.com/columbia-tennis-league/>

A \$100 filing fee will be required for all Medical Appeal submissions. The filing fee will only be returned to the filing party if the medical appeal is submitted to the USTA National Medical Appeals Committee.

COMPETITION FORMAT

- a. Each division shall consist of one or more flights with a minimum of two teams per flight.
- b. **FULL ROUND ROBIN:** Each NTRP level within a local league may play one or more full round robins, wherein every team plays every other team. Any NTRP level may be divided into flights, where each team plays every other team in their flight. The flight winners would then enter a playoff structure to establish a local league champion for the NTRP level.
- c. **PARTIAL ROUND ROBIN:** Each NTRP level within a local league may play a partial round robin competition wherein every team plays the same number of matches against randomly selected opponents. A minimum of the top two teams shall progress to a single elimination playoff to establish a local league champion for that NTRP level.
- d. Each team must play a minimum of three team matches.
- e. All team matches will be the best of three sets with a 10-point match tiebreak played in lieu of the third set. (i.e., the first team to win at least 10 points and with at least a two-point margin over the opponent). Set tiebreaks (i.e. first team to win at least 7 points and with at least a two-point margin over the opponent) are played at 6 games all in the 1st and 2nd sets, as needed. The set tiebreak and the 10-point match tiebreak played in lieu of a third set will use the Coman tiebreak system.
- f. **Players must report to scheduled matches on time. There are no time penalties, but there is a fifteen (15) minute default rule, which means that if a player is not on site and ready to play by 15 minutes after the scheduled match time, then the affected court may be defaulted. The opposing captain may elect to allow an extension of time but is not required to do so. If an entire team does not show by the 15-minute deadline, refer to the rule regarding a full team default.**
- g. Warm-ups should be limited to 10 minutes. All individual matches should begin match play (i.e., the first serve will be made) within 15 minutes of the scheduled match start time. An individual match starts when the first ball in that position is put in play.
- h. There will be a changeover, but no break, at the end of the first game of each set.
- i. There will be a 2-minute break at the end of the 1st set, with a 10-minute break allowed after the 2nd set, if needed.
- j. The home team is responsible for court fees and providing new balls.
- k. If there are multiple playing surfaces at a site, the visiting captain is entitled to know which specific match will be played on which surface before line-ups are exchanged.
- l. Each team must have a Captain or acting Captain present at every match. Each Captain should have a scorecard printed from TennisLink and exchange written line-ups.
- m. Cell phones must be turned off. If a cell phone or smart phone rings during a point, the opponent wins the point based on a hindrance.
- n. Sending or receiving texts on cell phones or smart watches during match play is not allowed.

TEAM LINEUPS. The two team captains shall exchange their team lineups in writing simultaneously prior to the beginning of the team match - no later than the scheduled start time of the match. This means that both teams should have their lineups written down on a piece of paper that they exchange with the opposing captain to fill in their lineup.

- a. No substitutions may be made in an individual match after the lineup has been presented, except for injury, illness, disqualification, or no-show of a player prior to the start of an individual match.
- b. Once the lineup has been exchanged, a team may substitute a player in the affected position within the 15-minute default time, using a player not already listed in the lineup. If no valid substitution can be made, then the affected position will be defaulted. **EXCEPTION:** if two players in the lineup who are not playing with each other do not show, then the two partners who did show will form a partnership. In this case, they would play together in the higher lineup position. If no such substitution can be made, then the affected position will be defaulted.
- c. Default will be written on the score line and will count as one of the team's defaults.
- d. Players who have received a default on the lineup card may not be substituted in other positions.
- e. Players may not be changed in an individual match that has begun. After the start of an individual match, if injury, illness, or disqualification of a player occurs, the opponents will be awarded a retirement for that individual match only.

SCORECARD PLACEMENT AND PLAYING "UP" ON A TRI-LEVEL TEAM. Players may play "up" one level (0.5) within a Tri-Level match line-up. For example, a 4.0, 3.5, 3.0 team may place a 3.0 player in the #2 (3.5) position or in the #3 (3.0) position. A 3.0 player would not be able to play in the #1 (4.0) position.

DEFAULTS AND FORFEITS

- a. A default occurs when a team captain cannot field positions for a team match. Defaults must be given "from the bottom" except as provided for in the paragraph above. That is, the #3 doubles must be defaulted before the #2 doubles.
- b. To receive a win by default, the non-defaulting players must be present on court, ready to play; however, if a team captain advises his/her opponent in advance of the default, he/she waives the requirement for the non-defaulting players to be present to receive the default.
- c. If a captain is advised prior to a match that the opponent must default a position and that captain knows that he/she would also have had to default a position, it is incumbent upon the notified captain to demonstrate good sportsmanship and declare a double default rather than to accept the win.
- d. If a team defaults an individual match during or prior to the line-up exchange, and inclement weather forces the match to be postponed before a point is played in any individual match, the default is cancelled.
- e. If both teams default a court, then neither team will receive a win, and the scorecard will indicate a double default.
- f. Each team will be allowed an average of one individual match default per team match. For example, if a team has 7 matches on the schedule, they will be allowed no more than 7 individual match defaults for the season. If a team exceeds the allowed number of defaults, the LLC may file a grievance against that team. Penalties could include barring the team and/or its players from participating in future CTL tennis play for some specific period of time.
- g. **Full Team Default (that is, forfeiting enough courts to lose the match regardless of the outcome of non-defaulted courts)** during the CTL Local Season or LLAS competition:
 - 1) Ineligibility to Advance: The defaulting team is ineligible to advance beyond local league play but **must** continue to play the remainder of the scheduled matches.

- 2) Recording Matches: All matches played by the defaulting team will be recorded in TennisLink for the purpose of satisfying match play requirements for opponents only.
- 3) Removal of Matches: At the end of the local season, all matches of the defaulting team will be removed from the stats and standing in TennisLink, UNLESS:
 - i. More than one full round was played in a flight. If more than one round was played, only the matches in the affected flight will be removed.
 - ii. All teams with a mathematical chance to advance have already played the defaulting team in good faith; the matches shall stand as played when determining standings.
 - iii. The final standings would not be impacted by the matches played against the defaulting team.
- 4) Grievance Filing: A grievance may be filed against the defaulting team.

h. If a situation arises in which one team is considering defaulting the majority of the courts in a match, the team captains should contact the LLC to determine whether a compromise could be reached. A team that receives a Full Team Default does not receive credit for the win, as the match will be null and void. It is in the best interest of both teams to work it out to play at least the minimum number of positions.

i. Teams are expected to play all matches on their schedule. A grievance may be filed against any team that commits a Full Team Default. The situation will be assessed by the Statewide Local League Grievance Committee and sanctions imposed as appropriate. Penalties could include barring the team and/or its players from participating in future CTL tennis play for some specific period.

j. A match is not considered legal when: One team defaults a doubles court, and the other team defaults a different doubles court. If possible, the 4 players from each team should be paired so as to play whichever of the two highest courts possible. If not, then the teams should play one doubles court and reschedule at least one other court. If needed, one court should be scored as a double default.

For example, in a 4.0, 3.5, 3.0 match, the first team has a 4.0 player, a 3.5 player and two 3.0 players available for the match. The second team has two 4.0 players and two 3.5 players available but no 3.0s available. In that case, the #3D court could be a double default and the 3.5 from the first team would play with the 4.0 at #1D and the 3.0s from that team would play #2D. Alternatively, both teams could decide to reschedule the #3D, but both of the other courts should be played on the original match date.

COACHING AND SPORTSMANSHIP. USTA rules govern play. Also, “Friend at Court,” which contains “The Code” as a handbook of ethics and fair play should be understood and followed by every player. The 2025 version can be found here:

<https://www.usta.com/content/dam/usta/2025-pdfs/2025-friend-at-court.pdf>

- a. No coaching will be permitted once play has begun.
- b. There are no linesmen or referees for CTL matches. Players are responsible for their own calls and should abide by The Code. Every player is expected to call shots on his side, as he would expect his shots to be called on the other side and loud enough for the opponent to hear. If a conflict occurs during match play over line calls that cannot be resolved, the players involved may request their captains to appoint a lines person for the remainder of the match.
- c. Foot faults are illegal. Constant and blatant foot faulting giving the server a definite advantage should be politely brought to the attention of the server. If the foot-faulting continues, the players involved may request the captains to appoint a linesperson for the remainder of the match.
- d. Players should call the score after each point to avoid confusion. If there is disagreement over the score, players should go back to the last agreed upon point.

e. Spectators may not aid players in making a line call or determining the correct score. Spectators should not participate in the match in any way and should refrain from doing so even if asked by the players.

f. Spectators may quietly watch a match in progress. They should not sit or stand at the end of the court immediately behind the servers or receivers as it can be distracting to the players. Spectators may quietly clap for points well played. It should be remembered that the well-played point should be applauded regardless of who won the point. It is poor tennis etiquette to clap for unforced errors.

g. It is the responsibility of each team to control the noise and behavior of its spectators. Also, respect players on neighboring courts. Loud, boisterous, and unsportsmanlike behavior is unacceptable. If a problem arises with a spectator, the player(s) should confer with his/her opponent(s) and should ask the spectator to refrain from the offensive behavior. If the behavior persists, the team captains should be summoned to handle the situation.

h. Coaches and club professionals must not interfere in discussions or negotiations between players or captains unless specifically asked by both captains for advice. Even then, it is the responsibility of the two captains, not the coach or professional, to decide on the appropriate resolution.

i. Disputes should be settled between players as soon as they arise. All points played in good faith stand. Players should be able to resolve any dispute by themselves. If, however, they cannot, they should do the following:

(1) The player should inform the opponent of the problem and the intention to leave the court to obtain the assistance of the team captain. When leaving the court, the racket should be left on the court.

(2) The captain should contact the captain of the opponent(s), and they should try to resolve the dispute. If the captains are involved in playing a match, the players may have to postpone their play until the captains are available to assist them.

(3) If the captains and players cannot agree on a resolution to the conflict, the offended player(s) may either:

(i) Continue to play the match but do so in protest. The score and who was serving at the time of the protest should be indicated on the scorecard with the annotation, "played under protest." At the conclusion of the match, the captain of the offended player(s) may or may not file a grievance. If no grievance is filed, the results of the match stand as completed.

(ii) Stop playing, ensuring both captains and the opponent know why. Indicate on the scorecard that the match was stopped in protest and indicate the score and who was serving at the time the match was stopped. The captain of the offended player(s) may file a grievance. If no grievance is filed within the required time frame, the match will be scored as a retirement by the offended player.

ENTRY OF MATCH SCORES INTO TENNISLINK

a. Either captain may enter the scores and it is the responsibility of BOTH captains to ensure that scores are entered within 48 hours of match completion.

b. If match scores are not entered within 48 hours, both captains may receive a warning. Any additional occurrences of not entering scores within 48 hours of match completion may result in the match being excluded when determining the division/flight standings, and/or may result in the captains having a grievance filed by the LLC for violation of this rule.

c. The captain that did not enter the scores must either confirm, through TennisLink, that the scores and player(s) as reported are accurate or must dispute the score if he/she believes an error has been made or that the reported score is incorrect. If disputed, the captain is to immediately notify the Level Coordinator and LLC via email, with a copy to the opposing captain, the basis for the dispute. Refer to the match number when reporting a dispute and provide specific information about the dispute.

d. The verification of the match score must be completed within 48 hours of the score being entered into TL. After 48 hours, the reported score will be assumed to be correct, and there will be no opportunity to correct a score even if it is wrong, unless authorized by the LLC.

e. Captains or acting captains should confirm scores with players AND the opposing Captain/Acting Captain at the end of the match, to avoid incorrect scores and/or names being entered into TennisLink.

INCLEMENT WEATHER AND MAKE-UP MATCHES

a. It is the responsibility of the Home captain to notify the visiting captain if weather conditions warrant the postponement of a regular season team match due to unplayable courts. In addition to rain, we also have a CTL EXTREME TEMPERATURES POLICY, which can be found here: <https://sctennis.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/CTL-EXTREME-TEMPS-POLICY.pdf>

b. If teams have assembled and have started to play or are waiting to start play, they should be prepared to wait one hour to determine if the courts are playable. It is recommended that the Home captain consult with the Visiting captain prior to making the “play/no play” decision, especially if match play has already begun. New balls may be opened by any player on the court to replace damaged or wet balls.

c. The home or visiting facility should be used for a make-up match. If neither facility is available, the Home captain should seek an alternative site that is satisfactory to the Visiting captain. The Level Coordinator may be contacted to help find a neutral site.

d. If no individual match has begun for a match that must be postponed due to inclement weather, then, within 48 hours, the team captains or designees will arrange a mutually agreeable make-up schedule. The home team captain is to notify the Level Coordinator (or LLC) the make-up schedule with a copy sent to the visiting captain).

The make-up date(s) must be within two weeks (14 calendar days) of the original match date.

- Once the make-up schedule is set, the new schedule is considered official and may not be changed, unless there is inclement weather on the make-up date(s), or unless approved by the LLC.
- Team lineups for make-up matches do not have to be the same as they were on the day of the postponement, even if the lineups had already been exchanged.
 - If, after assessing the weather and agreeing that the match must be postponed, the captains (or acting captains) agree on a LINE-UP for a make-up match, then no substitutions may be made in an individual match, except for injury to, illness of, or disqualification of a player prior to the start of such match. In that event, the substituted player must be one who was not in the original line-up for the make-up. (That is, after agreeing on lineup for the make-up, players may not be moved around between lines.)
 - If a player is unavailable for their assigned make-up match, and no valid substitution can be made, then the match will be considered a default, unless the opposing captain agrees to allow that court to be rescheduled.
- Defaults given prior to a match being postponed due to inclement weather are considered cancelled.

NOTE: If the two captains cannot mutually agree on a make-up date that will be within 14 calendar days OR if matches have not been reported in TennisLink within 14 calendar days of the original match date, Captains should contact the LLC who will intervene and establish a make-up date for the match.

e. If match play has begun (i.e., at least one point played in one individual match), completed matches stand as played, incomplete matches must be resumed by the same players at the exact set, game and point as when play halted, and matches not started may

change the players listed on the lineup. Defaults given prior to or during the lineup exchange will stand. The matches do not have to be played at the same time and date and can be mutually arranged by the individuals involved in each match. HOWEVER, the decision about when to resume matches must be made and relayed to the team captain(s) within 48 hours, and matches must be played within 14 calendar days of the original match date. Also, within 48 hours of the original match date, the home captain must notify the LLC or Level Coordinator of the rain-out make-up dates/times by e-mail (e-mail must also be copied to visiting captain). Once the make-up date is set and the appropriate coordinator is informed, the make-up date is considered the official match date and may not be postponed unless there is inclement weather on such date, or unless approved by the league coordinator.

NOTE: If the two captains cannot mutually agree on a make-up date that will be within 14 calendar days OR if matches have not been reported in TennisLink within 14 calendar days of the original match date, Captains should contact the LLC who will intervene and establish a make-up date for the match.

f. If there is a CTL play-off or if match results are needed to determine which teams will advance to the State Championship, **then the LLC may require an earlier time for completing make-up matches. In that case, the LLC will set a date/time for completion, which will be binding on the teams. Any matches not completed by the deadline set by the LLC may be excluded in determining standings.**

INCLEMENT WEATHER DURING PLAYOFFS

a. During CTL playoffs, it is the responsibility of the LLC to decide when a match must be postponed due to inclement weather. There is no maximum wait time, and it is at the discretion of the LLC to decide when players should be released.

b. Make-up times and dates will be determined by the LLC. Completed matches stand as played. Incomplete matches must be resumed by the same players at the exact set, game and point as when play halted. If postponement begins prior to the start (playing at least one point of an individual match), line-ups may be changed, and defaults given during or prior to the line-up exchange are cancelled. Every effort will be made to play the matches no later than the following day, or as soon thereafter as the LLC can arrange for playable courts. (It may be necessary to shift playoff sites and court surfaces.)

PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF A TIE

a. In an individual Tri-Level match, the tie shall be broken by the first of the following comparisons that produces a winner:

1. Individual wins
2. Loser of the fewest number of sets
3. Loser of the fewest number of games
4. Games won percentage (%) Total games won divided by total games played.

b. In an individual Tri-Level match where one court was a double default and only two courts were played, and each team wins one court, the tie will be broken by the first of the following comparisons that produces a winner:

1. Loser of the fewest number of sets
2. Loser of the fewest number of games
3. Games won percentage (%): Total games won divided by total games played.
4. Team winning the highest NTRP rating court.

c. In the event of a tie at the end of the season in Mixed Doubles team standings, the tie shall be broken by the first of the following comparisons that produces a winner:

1. Individual wins
2. Head-to-head
3. Loser of the fewest number of sets
4. Loser of the fewest number of games
5. Games won percentage (%): Total games won divided by total games played

NOTE: Third set tiebreakers are considered as one (1) Set and one (1) game; and TL is already programmed to properly show the order of teams given the tie-break rules above.

CTL CITY CHAMPIONSHIP FORMAT

- Single Flight for level of play:
There are no CTL championship playoffs when there is a single flight for the level of play. The flight winner is the CTL city champion. The 2nd place team in the flight is the CTL runner-up. EXCEPTION: if matches were scheduled using a Partial Round Robin, then the top 2 teams in the standings at the end of the season will playoff to determine the CTL city champion and runner-up.
- Two Flights for level of play: (If there are less than 12 teams in total for the level including day and night teams):
There will be a CTL city championship playoff as follows:
Flight 1 Winner vs. Flight 2 Winner to determine CTL Winner and Runner-up or
Day Winner vs. Night Winner to determine CTL Winner and Runner-up.
- Two Flights for level of play: (If there are 12 or more teams total for this level including day and night teams) AND each flight has 5 or more teams:
The top 2 teams in the standings for the flights (perhaps day and night) will participate in a CTL city championship as follows:
1st round - Day Winner vs. Night 2nd place team and Night Winner vs. Day 2nd place team
2nd round – Winner vs winner of 1st round matches
- Two Flights for level of play: (If there are 12 or more teams total for this level including day and night teams, but LESS THAN 5 teams in one of those flights)
 - ◆ The top team in the flight with less than 5 teams and the top 2 teams in the flight with more than 5 teams will advance to the city playoffs. The 3 teams will play one round robin and the top team in the standings at the end of the round robin will be the winner for that level.

ADVANCEMENT TO STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

- The winning team from each specific NTRP level in each age division in the CTL Tri-Level league competition shall be entitled to advance to the State Championship.
- **The top team will be automatically invited when a level has two (2) to eleven (11) teams. The top two teams will be automatically invited when a level has twelve (12) to twenty-three (23) teams. If there are 24 or more teams, then then top three teams will be invited.** If the winning team is unable to attend, an alternate team, preferably the 2nd place team, can be asked to advance. Should the 2nd place team not be available to attend, then, a 3rd place team from the Local League affected may be invited to advance to State Championships if approved by the State League Coordinator. If the 3rd place team from the affected Local League is unable to attend, then the wild card procedure will be utilized to complete the draw.
- **WILDCARDS:** If CTL has 4-11 teams for a particular level, then the 2nd place team will be invited to apply for a Wildcard. The State League Coordinator will determine if wildcards

are needed to balance out the flights at the Tri-Level State Championships. If needed, Wildcards will be chosen by a weighted random draw (i.e., one entry per local league team in that local league division). Local leagues receiving a wildcard for the Championship will remain eligible for a wildcard at the same level/flights the following year.

- The State League Coordinator will notify the LLC of each league if any wildcards are being offered to their area. Wildcards will not be offered to CTL levels that automatically receive 2 berths, nor to ones with less than 4 Tri-Level teams.
- A team with a local CTL season must play at least three (3) matches to qualify for championship play.
- Players playing in a local CTL Tri-Level season must have played in at least one (1) regularly scheduled match to play in city, state or sectional championships. One match may be a default received; and a retired match would also count as a match for this requirement.
- Players who qualify for a Tri-Level 18 & Over, 40 & Over, and/or 55 & Over team may advance on more than one team within an age group only if they are at different NTRP levels but with NO schedule accommodations.
- The championship draw is a random draw done by the championship referee once the local league competition is completed in all USTA SC areas. If possible, teams from the same local league will be put in separate flights. The number of flights at a given level will depend on the number of teams eligible.

SCHEDULING ACCOMMODATIONS OF CTL LOCAL MATCHES FOR TEAMS PLAYING AT STATE OR SECTIONAL OR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS. CTL will schedule matches during State or Southern functions, to minimize the interruption in CTL scheduling. However, should a CTL team progress to a State, Sectional or National Tennis Championship that conflicts with a local CTL match, then team captains must make accommodations for the affected positions upon request of the captain with player(s) playing in the championships. The captains **MUST** notify the LLC and **should make every effort to reschedule the match to a date PRIOR to the originally scheduled match date. If that is not possible and if time permits,** then the rescheduling procedures are the same as the inclement weather guidelines and the team captains must notify the Level Coordinator and LLC of the agreements.

RESCHEDULING DUE TO CONFLICTS WITH OTHER EVENTS. Other than conflicts with State, Sectional, or National Championships, as discussed in the preceding section, all other matches scheduled by the LLC are expected to be played as scheduled, unless inclement weather forces postponement. Rescheduling of a match may be permitted at the discretion and agreement of **BOTH** team captains if it can be scheduled **and is completed PRIOR** to the scheduled match date. The team captains **MUST** notify the Level Coordinator and LLC of their agreement, specifying the details and dates(s) for playing all or part of the match early.

During the season, it is quite possible that a team will have a scheduled match that conflicts with **other events that do NOT require accommodation**. These might include events such as the Credit One Charleston Open, school holidays or spring breaks, extended holiday weekends, etc. Requests for accommodation for such other reasons should only be made by a captain if a team has a problem fielding a complete team for a match. The team requesting to reschedule a match for such other reasons should do so at the beginning of the season and give the other team several available dates prior to the match date. **If the other team does not agree to accommodation, the match must be played at the original scheduled time.** If both captains agree to an accommodation, the captains should, if possible, reschedule the match to a date **PRIOR** to the original match date. If the reschedule date is after the original match date, the

teams MUST contact the LLC who will make the decision to grant or deny the request for rescheduling. If denied, the match must be played at the original scheduled time.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES and GRIEVANCE COMPLAINTS

1. Grievance complaint forms, procedures and rules are posted on the USTA SC website and CTL website and are incorporated herein by reference. There are specific time limits, procedures, and rules for filing a grievance. Grievance complaints may be filed not only for infractions of the regulations but also for failing to abide by good conduct, fair play, and good sportsmanship. Such grievances must be filed by the captain in writing and emailed to the CTL LLC prior to commencement of the next team match involving such player or team or within 24 hours after the end of local league play, whichever occurs first, except a complaint based on ineligibility may be filed at any time after learning the player is ineligible.

2. **A \$100 filing fee will be required for all General/Sportsmanship, Championship and/or Administrative Grievances. The filing fee will only be returned to the grieving party if the grievance is upheld.**

USTA SC Local League Grievance and Grievance Appeals Committee – 2026

James Teal – Co-Chair Grievance Committee

Scott Zobrist – Co-Chair Grievance Committee

Debby Bosselman – Chair – Grievance Appeals Committee

Local League Representatives

Jonathan Watkins (BBTL)

Toni Odom (CTL)

Lauren Demosthenes (FTA)

Abby Martin (GATA)

Jessica Holmes (GSTL)

Sue Cook (HHTL)

Thea Salmonson (LATA)

Art Welling (LCTA)

Becky Williamson (LCTA)

Chris Jones (LCTA)

Stephanie Stanton (MCTL)

Linda Freeman (PD)

Frank Thompson (SATL)

Terri Kent (UPTA)

One of the co-chairs and two committee members will be assigned to handle each grievance or grievance appeal, but members will not be assigned to any grievance or grievance appeal from their local area.

The decision of the League Grievance Committee may be appealed to the League Grievance Appeals Committee.

3. **NTRP Grievance.** Self-rated players who enter the USTA League Tennis Program by misrepresenting their actual skill level are considered to have violated the standards of good conduct, fair play, and good sportsmanship, and may be subject to a grievance complaint and possible disqualification. Grievances against such self-rated players may be filed by a team captain or the Local League Coordinator. NTRP grievance complaints against a self-rated player must be filed using the same grievance complaint form as is used for other grievances, which can be found on the USTA SC website and CTL website. However, there is no fee for an NTRP Grievance and the complaint form should be emailed to the PJ Fulmer, USTA SC Director of Team Play to review and begin the process of adjudication.

DUTIES OF TEAM CAPTAIN

1. Secure at least six players (preferably more) for your roster, including at least 2 from each NTRP level. For example, a 4.0, 3.5, 3.0 Tri-Level team needs to have at least two NTRP-rated 4.0 players, at least two NTRP-rated 3.5 players, and at least two NTRP-rated 3.0 players.
2. Secure permission from facility for home courts and pay any court fees to facility.
3. Register your team in TennisLink. Type your team's name in TL utilizing the accepted team code, which is the following format: Area and age division/Captain's last name/home court facility code, e.g., CTL18/Salzberg/SEP.
4. Ensure that you have a 'legal team' roster by registration deadline.
5. Check roster printed from TennisLink to be sure each player has registered before allowing them to play in a match.
6. Report scores through TennisLink immediately after the match. BOTH captains should ensure that the scores are entered within 48 hours, and non-entering captain confirms scores within 48 hours. Confirm player names and match scores with opposing captain/players at the conclusion of the match to avoid mistakes!!! If disputing scores on TennisLink, captain must notify LLC by email (ctl.llc@sctennis.com) of details/basis for dispute and copy opponent captain with email. Accurate and timely score reporting is the responsibility of BOTH captains.
7. If you have made a mistake in entering scores, promptly contact the Level Coordinator and LLC and request a correction. Please make sure to give the match #, age/division and level of your team. Copy the opposing captain.
8. Be sure that each team member is notified of the schedule posted on TL. Copies of USTA National, Southern, South Carolina and CTL League rules should be available to team members if requested. Rules are posted on the [CTL website](#).
9. **Home captain should contact Visiting captain by email, text or phone three (3) days prior to match date to confirm match time, court location, and number of courts.** Home captain is responsible to confirm with facility the number of courts (at least 2!) that will be provided at the start of the match. Home captain should communicate to the Visiting captain the number of courts that will be available and discuss plans to start any matches early or late. **NOTE:** Contact information for the other captains in your flight can be found on your team's home page in TL. Click on the tab "Captain's Report" and you will find phone #s and email addresses for every captain in your flight.
10. **Home captain should convey to visiting captain, at time of match and before exchanging lineups if they are using multiple surfaces AND which positions will play on each surface.** If the home captain neglects to do so, then the visiting captain should request the information from the home captain prior to exchanging line-ups.
11. Team captains are responsible for representing their teams at all league meetings, including meetings at Championships. Team captain is responsible for notification/communication to each team member all of the needed information from the League.
12. Be sure that you, as captain, and your team practice good sportsmanship.