



# 2026 USTA Adult 65 & Over Sectional Invitational Championships Procedures

November 13-15, 2026

[Leftwich Tennis Center](#) (Hard Courts): 4145 Southern Ave, Memphis, TN 38117

## Contents

Team Qualification .....	2
Eligibility .....	2
Invitational Format.....	2
Round Robin format.....	2
Partial round robins (Matches Against Randomly Selected Opponents).....	2
Registration, Entry Fee, and Deposit Requirements .....	2
Scheduled Matches.....	3
Scoring.....	3
Grievances .....	4
Invitational Cancellation Policy .....	4
Round Robin Format (Flighted Format).....	4
Partial Round Robins Matches Format.....	5
Administration .....	5

## Team Qualification

- Each USTA Southern state may send one team from the following 65 & Over NTRP level divisions: 3.0, 3.5, 4.0 & 9.0.
- The USTA TN Local League Coordinator Liaison and Manager of Adult Tennis shall determine if a wildcard is necessary for a specific flight. In the event a wildcard is offered, it will be randomly drawn from the eligible teams from each state. In the event an area receives a wildcard but must decline, the wildcard goes to the next randomly selected team to offer the wildcard to, if available.

## Eligibility

All players must possess current USTA memberships through the conclusion of the Southern Sectional Invitational.

- A player is eligible to advance to the Southern Sectional Invitational 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 there is a "local at state" Invitational, a player must play one match or have one default to advance.
- If there is just one team in a state at a given NTRP level, a team may advance directly to the Southern Sectional Invitational without any match requirement.
- The one match requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Tournament Committee. Only two players may receive a waiver per team.
- A minimum of six team members (three eligible pairings) who were on the final roster of their local league team at the conclusion of local league play must be available and eligible to combine and compete. The Invitational Committee, by majority vote, may reduce that number to not less than four, if an eligible wildcard team cannot be found. The defaulted courts are still subject to a \$100 administrative fee.

## Invitational Format

- Adult 65 & Over Sectional Invitational format shall use a "round robin", "round robin with a Invitational playoff", or "partial round robins (matches against randomly selected opponents) with a Invitational playoff" in all levels of competition.

### Round Robin format:

- A full draw is comprised of two flights with five teams each.
- Each team shall play every other team in its flight. (Exception: Please see Invitational Cancellation Policy)
- Levels with two flight winners will offer a single elimination finals match to determine the champion.
- If a local area has two teams in the Invitational at the same level, those teams will be placed in separate flights provided there are two flights in that level. If a local area has more than two teams in a two-flight division, those teams will be randomly placed such that they are dispersed as equally as possible between the two flights.
- If a Invitational playoff is used, the top two teams from round robin play, based on standings and sectional procedures on tiebreakers, will advance to the Invitational playoff.

### Partial round robins (Matches Against Randomly Selected Opponents):

- Each team shall play four team matches against randomly selected opponents. (Exception: Please see Cancellation Policy)
- The top 4 teams, based on standings and sectional procedures on tiebreakers, will be entered into a semifinal playoff to be followed by a final. For semifinals, the draw will be #1 vs #4 and #2 vs #3.

## Registration, Entry Fee, and Deposit Requirements

- All teams must have a legal roster registered by the legal team roster deadline prior to the Invitational start date.
- The Invitational entry fee schedule will be as follows:
  - If registering prior to the day that the Invitational Schedule is published, the registration fee will be \$55. The Invitational Schedule will be released one week prior to the Invitational start date.
  - If registering the day the Invitational Schedule is published and prior to the Invitational start date, the registration entry fee will be \$80.
  - If registering on or after the Invitational start date, the registration fee will be \$150. Invitational t-shirts may not be available for players registering on or after the Invitational start date.
  - Individual player registration refunds may be requested by emailing [championships@ustatn.com](mailto:championships@ustatn.com). Individual player registration refunds may only be processed if the player did not attend and participate at the Invitational and if requested via **email by the last day of the Invitational**.
- Players must be registered on both TennisLink (for the local league roster) and the USTA Sectional Invitational registration site. In case of administrative oversight or to prevent a default from occurring at Invitationals, the Invitational Committee may permit the addition of a player to Tennis Link and/or the USTA Sectional League Invitational after the deadline. Players should download the USTA Tennessee Invitational App (available for iPhone and Android) prior to attending the Invitational to receive all Invitational updates and alerts.
- Any player found to be competing in the Invitational without having registered on both TennisLink and the Invitational Website may be subject to disqualification and their match results being reversed.

- Captains of teams advancing to a Invitational are required to submit a team deposit hold of \$300 via Match Team Tennis. The Team Deposit must be submitted by the Invitational Security Deposit and Invitational Legal Team Registration deadline for the given State Invitational or Invitational.
- If a team pulls out before the schedule is published, the team deposit and individual player registrations will be refunded. If a team pulls out after the schedule is published or if a team does not successfully complete the Sectional Invitational, the deposit and all individual player registrations will be forfeited, a grievance may be filed by the Invitational committee against the forfeiting team. All funds collected from forfeited teams and defaulted court administrative fees will be given to Community Outreach programming.
- Awards and amenities at the USTA Sectional League Invitational will be given to all players on the Invitational roster that have paid to participate in the USTA Sectional League Invitational.

## Scheduled Matches

- The captain is responsible for checking his/her team in at the site of the match. When all players are present and ready to play, the captain will submit their lineup to the site desk, using the digital submission system. We ask that captains please try to turn in lineups 30 minutes prior to the start of their scheduled match to expedite play. Lineups must be turned in by the scheduled match time or the Point Penalty System will take effect for the team.
- Once a court has been assigned via text, email and/or app notification, players are to report immediately to the assigned court.
- The Point Penalty System, which includes the 15-minute default time rule, will be strictly enforced. The Invitational referee may be used to time warm-ups and changeovers.
- All defaulted courts are subject to a \$100 defaulted court administrative fee. If a team has a default, the opposing team will have up to five minutes to revise their line-up once both line-ups are submitted, and the default has been announced by the site director. A default is defined as submitting a line-up with no player name(s) at the defaulted position. Only players who are present and ready to play, may be submitted into the defaulted line by the opposing team and they will be credited with a "win by default". If a team defaults an individual court/line during a Invitational, the \$100 per individual court will be deducted up to the full amount of the team deposit of \$300 via MTT and a grievance may be filed by the Invitational Committee.
- Teams may choose to double default their last match of a Invitational and the default fine may be waived, only if doing so does not impact the winner of the Invitational, both teams are in complete agreement, and the Invitational Director has verbally agreed and approved it with both teams.
- Individual matches in a team match must be put on in the correct order to ensure that any default is taken at the correct position. The order that matches are put on court is:
  - 3 Doubles Format – 1D, 2D, 3D.
- A player may play on more than one team at the USTA Sectional Invitational. However, captains are responsible for ensuring a full team lineup for every match. Absolutely no scheduling accommodations will be made for players playing on multiple teams. Delays in the schedule, including weather delays, do not constitute a valid reason to waive the administrative fee for a defaulted court.
- No substitution may be made in an individual match after the line-up has been presented, except for injury to, illness of, ineligibility or disqualification of a player after the lineup has been turned in, but prior to the start of such match, and except in other circumstances listed in procedures. If a substitution is made during warm-up, the substitute player is entitled to a five-minute warm-up. If no such substitution can be made, the affected position only will be defaulted.
- Team captains are responsible for thoroughly reviewing their lineup before submission. Captains should ensure the accuracy of their lineup to prevent errors.
- Team members should always introduce themselves to their opponents to be sure they are playing the correct players. Example: "We are the #2 doubles team on the 3.5 Georgia team." This practice helps to prevent any confusion or disputes regarding match positioning.
- Final scores will be submitted online using the Match Tennis Team App. The winning team is encouraged to submit the final score immediately following the completion of the match and prior to leaving the court. Both players and captains are permitted to submit scores.
- Captains, or captain's representatives, are expected to verify the result of each team match after each team match is completed and before leaving the tennis facility and "signing off" on the completed scorecard. Team match results are assumed to be correct unless a captain disputes the results within one (1) hour of the team match's completion. A captain may dispute a result by emailing the Invitational Director at [championships@ustatn.com](mailto:championships@ustatn.com).
- 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 Invitational by the Invitational Director. 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. A match being moved to a different site does not qualify as a team being released.
- Invitational Referee may assist with medical time-outs and scoring disputes but will not be used to make line calls or call foot faults. If a player feels line calls and/or foot faults are an issue, said player may request a Referee (if available) to assess the problem.
- In the event of significant weather challenges, the Invitational Committee may use an alternate scoring match format to complete the Invitational.

## Scoring

- Each team will receive 1 point for each team match won. The official score will be posted in TennisLink. All scores are final 48

hours after the conclusion of the Invitational.

- In the event of a tie ("[Team Score](#)" in [TennisLink](#)), the tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures that does so:
  - 1) Individual Matches. Winner of the most individual matches in the entire competition.  
\*An individual match ("[Individual Score](#)" in [TennisLink](#)) is defined as any singles or doubles match played as part of a team match. The total individual matches can be found in the official standings in [TennisLink](#) under "[Team Standings](#)" and under "[Individual Score](#)".
  - 2) Head-to-Head. Winner of head-to-head match **only if all tied teams have played each other** and one team defeated all the teams that are tied.
  - 3) Sets. Loser of the fewest number of sets.
  - 4) Games. Loser of the fewest number of games.
  - 5) Game Winning Percentage: Total games won divided by total games played.
  - 6) #1 Doubles: The team that wins the #1 Doubles line.
- If a team match consists of an even number of lines, and the two teams are tied with individual matches won, the tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures: least sets lost, then least games lost, then highest game winning percentage, then the winner of the #1 Doubles position.
- All teams are expected to play all scheduled matches. Any team not complying may be subject 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 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 any team is released from the State Invationals due to inclement weather and certain individual matches in their team match have already 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 2<sup>nd</sup> set is not completed, the team winning first set is considered the leading team.)

## Grievances

- Filing fee for State Invitational Grievances (General/Sportsmanship, Administrative) will be \$100, made payable to USTA Tennessee. The fee will only be refunded to the filing party if the grievance is upheld.
- Forms are available at each of the sites at the Invitational desk or may be available via email by the Invitational Tournament Director. Completed grievance forms must be presented to the Site Director at the site of the match within 30 minutes of the completion of the team match.
- The Tournament Referee may assess code violations. The Tournament Committee may assess suspension points under the USTA League Suspension Point System. There is no direct right of appeal. However, the captain (of the player assessed suspension points) may file an administrative grievance (against the Section League Coordinator) with the Southern League Grievance Committee within the permitted timeframe. Please note that administrative grievances will not be reviewed until after the championship.
- The committees involved will handle all grievances as promptly as possible. Unless requested by the committee, only the captain and the player(s) involved will be permitted at any hearings.
- NTRP Grievances filed within 7 days of the start date of the players and/or captain's local league playoff and/or 14 days of the start date of the player's and/or captain's State or Section Invationals 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.
- All local league grievances within 14 days of the start date of the state Invitational will be administered after the event unless USTA Tennessee 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.
- Disqualified players and/or captains that are suspended will not be eligible to advance to Sectional and/or National Invationals.
- USTA Southern follows national regulation 2.04E(2)c in that dynamic ratings will be generated following the State Invationals. Points earned by disqualified players will stand. The disqualified player will not be eligible to advance to the next level of competition.

## Invitational Cancellation Policy

### Round Robin Format (Flighted Format)

- Should inclement weather or other circumstances prevent the completion of a State Invitational or prevent round robin matches from starting by 5:00 PM (local time) on Sunday, the round robin winners will be determined by the first of the following procedures that does so:
  - In the event a level or flight within a level consists of multiple round robins, the 1st place team will be determined by [TennisLink](#) standings at the conclusion of the most recent full round robin. If no full round robin is completed, the below-mentioned procedures would apply.
  - If only one team in a round robin has a mathematical chance of finishing first, that team will be declared the winner of

- the round robin.
- If more than one team has a mathematical chance of winning their round robin, and the 1st place team has already beaten the other teams with a mathematical chance of winning, the 1st place team would be considered the round robin winner as the head-to-head winner.
- If a round robin winner cannot be determined, and each team in a round robin has been given the opportunity to complete a minimum of one team match, only teams with a mathematical chance of finishing first will receive an entry into a drawing. Undefeated teams will receive a second entry into the drawing.
- If a round robin winner cannot be determined, and each team in a round robin has not been given the opportunity to complete a minimum of one team match, each team will receive one entry into a drawing to determine the round robin winner.
- The following procedure will take place when two round robin winners (in a specific age group and NTRP level) have been determined by the above-mentioned procedures and/or cancellation occurs after the finals have begun:
  - Both teams can agree to meet at a mutual location and time to play for the State Invitational. A deadline will be given by the Invitational Committee to complete the match. If both teams cannot agree to a mutual location and time prior to or on the deadline set forth by the Invitational Committee, both teams will receive an entry into a drawing to determine the State Champion. USTA Tennessee will not be responsible for providing an official or for expenses relating to this match.

### Partial Round Robins Matches Format

- If inclement weather or other circumstances prevent the completion of a State Invitational or prevent partial round robins matches from starting by 5:00 PM (local time) on Sunday, the winners will be determined by the first of the following procedures that does so:
  - If a minimum of 3 full partial round robins rounds have been completed by all teams, any undefeated teams will receive an entry into a drawing to determine a winner. In this instance, unfinished partial round robins rounds in fourth segment will not count.
  - In the event only one team (after the most recent full partial round robins round) has a mathematical chance of finishing first, that team will be declared the winner.
  - If more than one team has a mathematical chance of winning, after the most recent full partial round robins round, and the 1st place team has already beaten the other teams with a mathematical chance of winning, the 1st place team would be considered the winner as the head-to-head winner.
  - If a winner cannot be determined, and each team has been given the opportunity to complete a minimum of one team match, only teams with a mathematical chance of finishing first will receive an entry into a drawing. Undefeated teams will receive a second entry into the drawing.
- The following procedures will take place when cancellation occurs after the semifinal playoffs have begun:
  - Teams that have clinched (won majority of individual matches) in their semifinal playoff will be considered the winner of their semifinal match.
  - Teams that have not clinched (not won majority of individual matches) in their semifinal will be put into a drawing to determine the winning semifinalist.
  - For each individual line won by a team, said team will receive an additional entry into the drawing. (For example, the #2 doubles match was finished. The winning team of said #2 doubles match would receive an additional entry into the drawing.)
  - Both winning semifinalists (now finalist teams) can agree to meet at a mutual location and time to play for the State Invitational. A deadline will be given by the Invitational Committee to complete the match. If both teams cannot agree to a mutual location and time prior to or on the deadline set forth by the Invitational Committee, both teams will receive an entry into a drawing to determine the State Champion. For each individual line won by a team, said team will receive an additional entry into the drawing. (For example, the #2 doubles match was finished. The winner of said match would receive an additional entry into the drawing. If teams agree to meet at mutual location, USTA Tennessee will not be responsible for providing an official or for expenses relating to this match. The Invitational Committee may keep both finalist teams at the tennis center past 5:00 pm to see if play can continue later that evening.

### Administration

- The Invitational Committee will use proper and fair judgment regarding all state Invitational-related issues.
  - The Invitational Committee will be appointed by Tennessee Adult League Committee Chair.
  - The Invitational Grievance Committee will be appointed by Tennessee Adult League Committee Chair.
  - These Invitational Procedures may be amended at Invitational Committee's discretion.
  - The Invitational Director and the Invitational Committee have the authority to interpret the USTA Tennessee Invitational Procedures.
  - The Invitational Committee: Hayley Carter (Tournament Director), Sara Barnett (Chair-USTA TN ALC), Roger Ross (Committee Member) and Kathy Bull (Referee)
  - The Invitational Grievance Committee: Terryann Nelson (Chair), Jackie Mills, Bryce Curry
- \*Invitational Committees may be amended at the discretion of the USTA Tennessee Adult League Committee Chairperson\*