

Lake Oconee Tennis Association

Local USTA League Regulations

2020 Championship Year

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www.lotatennis.com

The Lake Oconee Tennis Association's purpose for USTA League Tennis is to promote league play, in a team format, for men and women at established ratings of the National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP). This includes play in the areas of Greene, Putnam and Baldwin counties.

I. Regulations

The Lake Oconee Tennis Association (LOTA) agrees to the league tennis rules and regulations of USTA National, USTA Southern, and USTA Georgia as published. In addition, LOTA also sets forth the following rules to apply to local team matches.

This document and all references contained within constitute the general rules and regulations as defined by LOTA for tennis play within the membership. Where not specifically covered within this document, play shall be in accordance with the current rules of play as defined by USTA National, USTA Southern and USTA Georgia. All players and teams have the responsibility of playing within the Rules of Tennis and the principles of The Code. In situations not covered or provided for within these general rules and outside the responsibility of the leagues program, the LOTA board of directors shall have the authority to take the necessary actions, make the necessary rulings or to impose the appropriate penalties.

II. Player Eligibility

- A. **Players must be 18 years of age prior to participating in the USTA League program.** All team members must be paid members of the USTA through the current league season, which includes the playoffs. Each member must pay local league fees, as applicable and they must be current LOTA members.
- B. Players must play at or above their current computer rating, **but cannot play more than one level above their rating (3.0 rated player may play 3.0 or 3.5, but cannot play 4.0).** Any player without a computer rating must self-rate using the self-rating form on TennisLink, and following the guidelines set forth by the USTA.
- C. **If a player successfully appeals their rating after registering for their team, they must notify their LLC to have the rating adjusted on their roster. Until the appealed rating is reflected on the roster, the player must play with the rating they registered with.**
- D. Players may play on more than one team within the LOTA USTA League as follows:
 - A player may play on a weekday and a business team at the same NTRP level
 - A player may play on a weekday and a business team at different NTRP levels
 - A player may play at two different NTRP levels
- E. **Playing on two teams at different NTRP levels may increase the player's risk of being disqualified.**
- F. A player may not register for more than two teams per league season. (Example: A player may register on a 3.0 and a 3.5 Weekday women's team but not a 4.0 as well. The same player could however also register for a 3.5 and a 4.0 Business women's league, as these are two different leagues.)
- G. **NTRP RATING LEVELS FOR ENTRY INTO LEAGUE PLAY IN GEORGIA IS DEFINED IN 1.04F OF USTA GEORGIA REGULATIONS**
- H. **LOTA will have no residency requirements for local league play.**

III. Captain: Team Registration Responsibilities

- A. The captain should read and be familiar with the rules and regulations of USTA National, USTA Southern, USTA Georgia and LOTA.

- B. Team Registration - Captains of *men's, women's, (18+, 40+, 55+), combo and mixed doubles* teams MUST establish a team number through TennisLink by the designated date. The Local League Coordinator has the discretion to make changes to deadlines as he/she determines necessary. Team captains must provide a current email address to receive all information pertaining to the league during the season. If the captain does not utilize e-mail then the captain must designate a player on the team as co-captain in order to receive e-mail information. **Email will be the predominant way of communication between the coordinator and the captain.** Captain must also provide a current phone number when creating the team via TennisLink.
- C. Once a player has played a match for a team, they cannot be removed from that TennisLink roster.
- D. **It is recommended that** all men's and women's teams should have a minimum of **10** players. The exception is 2.5 and 5.0 teams, which should have a minimum of **6** players. All mixed (**18 & Over and 40 & Over**), combo and **55 & Over** teams should have a minimum of **8** players. Teams must register the required number of players to field a team by the initial roster deadline or they will not be included the schedule.
- E. Additional players may be added throughout the regular season schedule, up until midnight the night prior to the last scheduled match. No addition of players will be allowed for playoffs. **The player's name must be listed on the team roster, as shown on TennisLink, prior to participation in any team match.**
- F. **Two Team Leagues.** If any Adult Division Age Group consists of only two teams in a level of play, each team must *maintain* its roster with at least 40 percent of its players at the designated NTRP level of play. The exception is the Adult 55 & Over Age Group that uses combined NTRP rating levels and will not be required to comply with this Regulation. In the Southern Section, this will not apply to the Adult 65 & Over Age Group.

IV. Captain: Match Responsibilities

- A. **LOTA encourages playing positions by order of strength, as established by fair play practice in "The Code"**. However, a player may play any position at any time. There are no restrictions on the movement of the players from position to position, week to week.
 - 1. A player's name must be listed on the team roster, as shown on TennisLink, prior to participation in any match. Each local league shall establish deadlines and procedures for registering teams on TennisLink. Players who submit an appeal of their self-rating through the TennisLink system before their local league deadline for registering players will be permitted to register up to seven days after the notification of their final self-rating.
 - 2. **If a player successfully appeals their rating after registering for their team, they must notify their LLC to have the rating adjusted on their roster. Until the appealed rating is reflected on the roster, the player must play with the rating they registered with. ** Captains of Mixed Doubles and Combo teams are advised to review their players' ratings before each match.**
- B. If the captain listed on the schedule will not be present at the match he/she should notify the opposing captain the name of the person who will be acting captain.
- C. Court scheduling is currently arranged through the Local League Coordinator and the partnering facilities. A minimum of 2 courts with the same surface are to be arranged for league play.
- D. **If both captains agree:**
 - 1. It is acceptable to use more than two courts at a time **arranged by the Local League Coordinator (LLC) and as approved by the management of the facilities.**
 - 2. The team match or individual match may be changed to an earlier start time on the same scheduled day (coordinator must be notified) and the LLC will coordinate arrangements for the courts.
 - 3. The team match or individual match may be changed to an earlier day and time during the regular season schedule (coordinator must be notified) and the LLC will coordinate arrangements for the courts.

* Once an agreement has been made, all participants must be present at match time, or forfeit. Forfeits may not be called if additional courts become available and their use was not agreed upon beforehand.
- E. The captains may agree on the order of play. However, if no prior agreement is made then the order of play will be (for 18+ and 40+ leagues): #1 singles and #1 doubles at the scheduled start time; #2 and #3 doubles must be present one hour later; (for combo and 55+ leagues): #1 and #2 doubles at the scheduled start time, and #3 doubles must be present one hour later.
- F. Team captains must simultaneously exchange scorecards with completed line-ups BEFORE the scheduled *match time*. Scorecards are to be printed from TennisLink and a player's name or USTA number will be used to identify a player.

Comment: If a team will not provide a written lineup within the default time, the opposing team may claim a default of the positions that were to start first. The remaining positions may play at the next scheduled time(s), provided a written lineup has now been exchanged.

- G. Recording of Scores - **It is the responsibility of the winning captain to report scores to TennisLink within 24 hours of completion of the match.** The losing captain should confirm or dispute scores on TennisLink within 48 hours of completion of the match. If scores are not confirmed or disputed within 48 hours of completion of the match, the team will lose the right to dispute the match score. TennisLink will confirm scores after the 48-hour period has passed.
- H. TennisLink does not accept partial match results. All positions' scores must be entered at the same time. If you are disputing the scorecard that has been entered, you must dispute the match via TennisLink and notify your coordinator within 48 hours. You must provide what the discrepancy is along with the corrections.

V. Format of Play

- A. **The Local League Coordinator arranges for the courts under current facilities' use guidelines.** Home team members pay any court fees should that become required. The home team provides balls to be used for the match.
- B. A point will be awarded to the team who wins the majority of the individual matches.
- C. Defaults:
 1. The 15-minute default clock begins at the scheduled match time, when a court is available and a player has not arrived.
 2. When a player does not show up within the 15-minute default time, or a player becomes ill or injured during warm up and there is no substitute available, only the affected position is defaulted. Players already listed in the lineup cannot be moved to another position. **However two players already in the lineup will play together in the higher position when both of their partners do not show in order to avoid two defaults.**
 3. If a substitute player, not already in the lineup, is available within the 15 minute default time, then that player may substitute for an absent, sick or injured player, at the affected position ONLY. If a substitution is made during the warm-up, the substitute player is entitled to a 10-minute warm up.
- D. Players should be ready to take the court when the previous match is finished. For example, if a match begins at 9:00 am and ends at 9:45 am, default time for the next match on that court is 10:15 am, since 10:00 am is the scheduled time of the next match. If the first match ends at 10:20 am, then players must take the court immediately since the next time slot players must have been available at 10:00 am. Captains should communicate and agree ahead of time which positions will take the court and in which order. If the captains cannot agree, refer to IV. E (Captains: Match Responsibilities).
- E. If you know you must default one or more positions at the start of the match, follow the guidelines stated in the *USTA Regulations* handbook. You must default from the bottom of the line-up e.g. either #2 singles or #3 doubles. In the case of 2.5 and 5.0 leagues, you can forfeit either the #1S or the #2D.
- F. If a team defaults an entire team match or defaults a number of individual matches greater than or equal to the number of scheduled team matches in a season, the team may (State ALC's decision) be removed from competition immediately. Should this occur in a 2-team league where only 3 team matches are scheduled, the team will immediately be removed from competition. Under either scenario, If removed, then all matches that team has played, or matches to be played shall be null and void and a grievance may be filed. If all teams in contention for the playoffs have already played the defaulting team in good faith, the matches stand as played. The defaulting team may be placed on probationary watch or not permitted to play as a team the following season. In the event a team is playing a Modified Schedule and defaults all lines of the last match of the season, the team matches that the defaulting team has played during the season will stand as reported.
- G. **If during the match it is discovered that a player is on the wrong court in an individual match during the first game of both matches affected, then the players are to go to the correct courts and begin their matches over (example: line 1 players start play with the opponent's line 2 players). Both matches MUST still be in the first game, if either match is in the second or third game, the matches will be completed as started and count as matches played in good faith. Both scorecards should then be adjusted, leaving the names of the home team unchanged.**
- H. After the first game of each set, play shall be continuous and the players shall change ends without a rest period. The rest period during all other changeovers is 90 seconds. There is no rest period during changeovers of a tiebreak. The rest period between the first and second set is 2 minutes. There is a 10-minute rest period allowed between 2nd and 3rd sets. Should the match be played using a match tiebreak instead of a third set, a 2 minute break is allowed prior to the beginning the tiebreak. Coaching is allowed ONLY during the rest period between the 2nd and 3rd set. Coaching is not allowed between 2nd and 3rd sets if the 3rd set is determined by a match tiebreak.

- I. Play must continue as specified in USTA Regulations. When and if the score in a set is 6-6, the winner will be decided with a 12-point tiebreaker. Leagues in the LOTA USTA will play a third set tiebreak **or the best 2 out of three sets (to be decided by the captains involved and the LLC)** before the season starts.
- J. LOTA does not provide linesmen, umpires, court monitors, etc. for matches.
- K. The following statements are excerpts taken from the amended USTA Regulations regarding medical time-outs and toilet visits:
 - Medical conditions include, but are not limited to injuries, illnesses, heat-related conditions and cramping.
 - A medical time-out consists of evaluation time plus a maximum of three minutes treatment time.
 - A player with a pre-existing condition, sustained prior to the match in progress, may receive one medical time-out if the condition is aggravated during match play.
 - Only one medical time-out shall be permitted for cramping and other heat-related conditions in any match, even if the cramping occurs in different parts of a player's body.
 - A player may request a suspension of play for a toilet visit at one or more times during a match.
 - No coaching shall be permitted during suspension of play for either a medical condition or a toilet visit.
- L. Water should be furnished for matches by the home team.
- M.
 1. **Competition Format- Round Robin.** Each NTRP level within a local league shall play at least one round robin competition wherein every team plays every other team. When any NTRP level consists of only two teams, each team is required to play a minimum of three team matches which is a triple round robin. When any NTRP level consists of only three teams, each team is required to play a minimum of four team matches which is a double round robin. Any NTRP level may be divided into flights and each team shall play every other team in its flight. The flight winners may enter a playoff structure to establish a local league champion for that NTRP level.
 2. **Team Match.** Each team match in a local league shall consist of such number of individual matches of singles, doubles, or any combination thereof as determined by the local league. For each team match, a majority of the individual matches must actually be played to constitute a valid team match. Each State shall establish a procedure to determine the actions to take when the combination of individual match defaults given by the two teams in the team match results, or would result in a situation where the majority of the individual matches would not be played. USTA/LOTA will adopt the guidelines set in the USTA Georgia State Regulations.
 ** See USTA Georgia State Regulations 2.01C(2) for further format breakdown

VI. Rescheduling

- A. Inclement Weather
 1. The following weather conditions authorize the cancellation of a scheduled match: rain, lightning, or severe weather (32 degrees F or below (not wind chill) or 95 degrees F or above (not heat index), as reported by the weather channel or www.weather.com at the time of the match).
 2. If teams have reported for play and the match is delayed or interrupted by rain, teams must wait **30 minutes** to determine if courts are playable. If courts are still not playable after **30 minutes**, teams are free to leave and reschedule unless both teams agree to wait longer. Any player may deem a court unsafe to play.
 3. If inclement weather occurs after play has begun, completed matches will stand as played and incomplete matches must be resumed by the same players at the exact point, game, and set that existed when play was halted. **Substitutions may be made in any individual matches that had not begun. Points awarded for defaults when the original line-up was exchanged will stand. All players involved in such defaults cannot participate in the rescheduled match. Forfeits offered verbally prior to the original written lineup exchanged are nullified when the match is rescheduled due to rain or inclement weather.**
 4. Arrangements for make-up matches must be agreed upon within 48 hours of the original match start time. If no agreement can be reached, the match must be played no later than the make-up default time (see below). Default will result if one party cannot play. Once a make-up match time has been agreed upon by both parties (different positions do not have to make up at the same place or time), that make-up **match may not be cancelled** by either party for any reason other than inclement weather. However, available players not already listed on the scorecard and/or players that have not played in that match may be substituted **into the agreed match time** if necessary.
Default make up times:
For the current seasonal leagues: The day before the **second week's** scheduled match, at the same time. If it rains that day it becomes the day after the regularly scheduled match and continues weekday to weekday at the same time.

5. If inclement weather occurs on the final day of the regular season (and there are playoffs scheduled for the league), play must be completed within the next 2 days by your normal match time on the 2nd day, and continues day to day until weather permits the match to be played.
- C. Any team involved in a USTA League State, Sectional or National Championship, regardless of the league, must notify their coordinator and request from their opponent consideration in rescheduling their LOTA (USTA League) matches prior to the originally scheduled date of the match. A team with this concern must notify the coordinator and affected opponents at least two weeks prior to the scheduled match to reschedule individual matches. Opponents are required to help the opposing team in the rescheduling of any matches that will conflict. If a rescheduled date prior to the originally scheduled date cannot be agreed upon, the coordinator has the ability to extend the deadline.

VII. Dynamic NTRP

- A. If a player does not have a computer rating, that player will self-rate themselves in accordance with the USTA NTRP guidelines.
- B. If a player with a self-rating (S), a computer rated appeal (A) or an Early Start League dynamic rating (E) is disqualified for that particular level of play, no matches will be reversed, but the player will be promoted immediately.
- C. **Players with a Year-end computer (C) rating are not subject to dynamic NTRP disqualification.**
- D. Players not disqualified by conclusion of local league round robin play will be eligible to compete in the entire local playoff if one is played. Dynamic ratings will be calculated at the end of the local playoff to inform any disqualified players that they may not advance to the State Championships. Points earned by disqualified players will stand.
 1. A player's exact rating (dynamic) must reach a predetermined level THREE times to be disqualified.
 2. Ratings are calculated every day. Disqualifications are determined at the national, not at the local or state level. Players will not be notified that they are nearing the level of disqualification.
- E. Note that an individual player playing in men's (18+ or 40+ or 55+), women's (18+ or 40+ or 55+) and/or mixed doubles must play a minimum of two matches within a league year to generate an individual year-end rating. Combo leagues do not generate computer ratings. Players only playing mixed doubles will generate a mixed exclusive rating to be used in mixed doubles, men's (18+ or 40+ or 55+), women's (18+ or 40+ or 55+) the following year.

VIII. Local Scheduling & Playoffs

- A. See the "Scheduling Guidelines" below for explanation of groupings and the number of teams who make the playoffs.
- B. When a playoff occurs, the team who loses in the finals will be considered the finalist (2nd place team) when it comes to receiving a wildcard berth(s).

IX. State Championships

- A. The winner of the local league season (playoff winner where applicable) will progress to the State Championship. Any tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures:
 - 1.
 2. **TBD**
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
- B. In order for a player to be eligible to progress to State Championships, that player must have played twice during the season (not including league play-offs) **with the exception of Southern Combo or Tri-Level which only requires one match to be played.** One default (where two are required) received by the player during local competition shall count for advancing. A retired match shall count toward advancing for all players involved.
- C. 18+State Championship Berths
 1. One berth per season for 2 to 15 teams in any given level.
 2. Two berths per season for 16 to 30 teams in any given level.
 3. Over 30 teams, up to each additional 15 teams, an additional berth is given.
 4. If the total number of teams in both, the Women's day/night and the weekend/business leagues should reach a minimum of **16 teams and each league has a minimum of 6 teams**, the local league **will receive additional berth** at the State Championships.

- D. 40+State Championship Berths
 1. One berth per season for 2 to **15** teams in any given level.
 2. Two berths per season for **16** to **30** teams in any given level.
 3. Over **30** teams, for **up to** each additional **15** teams, an additional berth is given.
 4. If the total number of teams in both, the Women's day/night and the weekend/business leagues should reach a minimum of **16 teams and each league has a minimum of 6 teams**, the local league **will receive additional berth** at the State Championships.
- E. Mixed State Championship Berths
 1. One berth per season for a maximum of **15** teams in any given level.
 2. Two berths per season for a maximum of **30** teams in any given level.
 3. Up to each additional **15** teams, one more berth is given.
- F. Combo State Championship Berths
 1. One berth per season for a maximum of 9 teams in any given level.
 2. Two berths per season for a maximum of 19 teams in any given level.
 3. Over 19 teams, for each additional 10 teams, an additional berth is given.
 4. At a given level where there is a Weekday Women's and Business Women's league, both leagues must reach a minimum of five (5) teams in order to each receive a berth. If both leagues do not have at least five (5) teams, a playoff may be necessary to determine which team receives the berth.
- G. In the event the same team should win both seasons, that team may choose which season's roster they would like to take to the State Championship and the league shall send a second place team as the other state entrant. If the same team placed second both seasons, they may choose which season's roster they would like to take to the state championship as well. If the 2nd place teams in each season are different, they will playoff to determine a State entrant. The home team will be decided by the best winning percentage from their season's round robin. If one team declines a playoff, the other team is automatically chosen. If both 2nd place teams decline, the State playoff offer will be extended to the 3rd place teams. If the 3rd place teams in each season are different, they will playoff to determine a State entrant. Playoff teams must use the roster from their qualifying season.
- H. In the event LOTA receives a wildcard berth to the State Championships, it will be awarded to the season and NTRP level stipulated by USTA Georgia.
- I. If a player is on two teams that qualify for the state championship, the player must choose which roster to play on – the player may not register for both teams.

X. NTRP Grievances

An **NTRP** grievance may be filed against a player and or a captain who commits or condones entering a self-rating **one level or more below the actual skill level of the player**. All grievances should be filed with your local league coordinator. If a grievance is filed, the player/captain needs to provide proof that this player is above two levels. All grievances are sent to the USTA Southern NTRP Grievance Committee. Decisions can be appealed to the USTA Southern NTRP Grievance Appeals Committee.

XI. General Grievances

- A. A complaint against an individual or team may only be filed by a team captain of the team who has competed in the match where the alleged violation occurred or by a league coordinator. All complaints alleging a violation by an individual or a team during local league competition shall be filed in writing with the local league coordinator. The complaint must be filed prior to the commencement of the next team match in that flight involving such individuals or team, or within twenty-four hours after the end of local league play, whichever occurs first.
- B. Any party to the complaint may appeal the decision of the Grievance Committee within the time fixed by the Grievance Committee in its findings.
- C. If unsure of procedure, contact the Local League Coordinator.
- D. **Administrative Grievance.** Any grievance pertaining to administration of the League Program at any level shall constitute an Administrative Grievance. Captains and committee members are not subject to Administrative Grievances.

Grievance Committee

Name #1 (Chairperson) the LOTA President
Name #2 one additional board member
Name #3 one local Pro
Name #4 one member at large

Grievance Appeals Committee

Name #1 (Chairperson) the LOTA Vice-President
Name #2 another board member
Name #3 a second local Pro
Name #4 another member at large

* Committee members are subject to change do to a conflict of interest.
New committee members can be appointed on a case by case basis by the local league coordinator.

Scheduling Guidelines								
No. of Teams	No. of Flights	Teams per Flight	No. of Round Robins	No. of Matches	Weeks of play	Rounds of playoffs	Advance to Play offs	Notes
1 to 3	1	1-3	2	4-5	5-6		Top team	
4	1		2 or 3	6 or 9	6 or 9	-		Captains will be asked to vote on the number of round robins to play
5	1		2	8	10	-		
6	1		2	10	10	-		
7	1		1	6	7	1	Top 2 teams	
8	1		1	7	7	1	Top 2 teams	
9	1		1	8	9	1	Top 2 teams	
10	1		1	9	9	1	Top 2 teams	

Adult 18 & Over Leagues (Men, Weekday Women and Business Women)

The format for each team match shall be three (3) doubles and two (2) singles.

The minimum number of players required for a team shall be eight (8) players.

Players must be 18 years of age prior to participating in the USTA League program

Play shall be scheduled as teams are formed to participate.

Adult 40& Over Leagues (Men and Women)

The format for each team match shall be three (3) doubles and 1 singles with a 10-point match tie break in lieu of a 3rd set.

The minimum number of players required for a team shall be eight (8) players.

All players must have reached the age of forty (40) prior to or during the calendar year in which such player plays their first senior league match.

Usual play shall be in the Fall and Spring seasons days and times TBD by 40+ League Coordinator and published before the season starts

Leagues shall be added as membership allows.

Any tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures:

1. Sets: Loser of the fewest number of sets in the match.
2. Games: Loser of the fewest number of games in the match.
3. Winner of line 1D.
4. If double default on line 1D, winner of line 1S.
5. If no singles, winner of line 2D

Mixed 18 & Over Leagues
Mixed 40 & Over Leagues

The format for each team match shall be three (3) doubles.

The minimum number of players required for a team shall be six (6) players.

Players must be 18 years of age prior to participating in the USTA League program or for 40 & Over must be forty (40) years prior to or during the calendar year in which such player plays their first league match

The NTRP difference between members of an individual doubles team may not exceed 1.0. The minimum NTRP Level for 6.0 is 2.5; 7.0 is 3.0; 8.0 is 3.5; 9.0 is 4.0

Play shall be scheduled as teams are formed to participate.

Southern Combo Doubles

The format for each team match shall be three (3) doubles.

The minimum number of players required for a team shall be six (6) players.

All players must have reached the age of eighteen (18) years prior to or during the calendar year in which such player plays their first adult league match

Play shall be scheduled as teams are formed to participate.

Levels are 5.0, 5.5, 6.5, 7.5, 8.5.

Adult 55 & Over Leagues (Men and Women)

The format for each team match shall be three (3) doubles with a 10-point match tie break in lieu of a 3rd set.

The minimum number of players required for a team shall be eight (8) players.

All players must have reached the age of fifty-five (55) prior to or during the calendar year in which such player plays their first senior league match.

Usual play shall be in the Fall/or Spring seasons days and times TBD by 55+ League Coordinator and published before the season starts

Leagues shall be added as teams are formed to participate.