

## USTA Louisiana: (JTT) Middle School League

**2025 Championship Year Regulations (August 1, 2024 - April 15, 2025)**

**State: May 3 & 4**

### **General Information** (Potential Edits: Highlighted)

#### **I. USTA LOUISIANA: MIDDLE SCHOOL JUNIOR TEAM TENNIS**

USTA Louisiana Middle School Junior Team Tennis consists of team competition for boys and girls of specific levels of play and age categories. This league provides an opportunity for advancement from local competition to the Louisiana State Middle School Championship. All players must be active members of the USTA. USTA junior memberships are free of charge.

#### **II. MIDDLE SCHOOL: LOCAL DEFINITION**

All students of the team(s) participating must be in Middle School. Middle School [defined] is 6th - 8th grade. Players must be a student at the participating school. Schools must offer tennis in their PE classes or existing tennis programs for students. If there is a homeschool participating, players on that specific team must be ages 11-14 at the time of the league's registration. No exceptions.

**EXCEPTIONS-** Additional rules and regulations can be applied locally to restrict exceptions. Additional local rules and regulations must be approved by the State coordinator.

If a player/team attends a school, or lives in an area, where their Middle School grades are defined differently than this league's definition [6th - 8th], the local coordinator can allow the participation for players/teams at that school after checking with the State Coordinator (Ex: Feeder schools or a sport program make-up specific to one area that differs from other areas). This will not apply to 9th grade or higher. 5th grade players, that are 10 y/o, need a special waiver from a coach for participation in yellow divisions. If there is one team for a multitude of schools in an area (Ex: smaller areas with smaller school populations), the State coordinator and local coordinator must be notified and approve a waiver of participation (Ex: a Parish-wide team and no exclusions for players participating on the team). Schools can not pull specific players from specific schools (Ex: Parish teams open for all or none).

\*This does not need to be a physical waiver for each player/ or team, only an email with details to the State coordinator explaining why you are waiving the school(s).\*

A physical waiver is accepted, please contact the State coordinator for the waiver

Middle Schools can have a maximum of 2 teams competing in each division locally [14 & Under-Green and 14 & Under- Yellow].

Each Middle School participating is encouraged to have a USTA Net Generation school partnership before the 2026 Championship season.

### **III. TEAM CAPTAINS**

Each USTA Louisiana Middle School league team shall have a team coach/captain responsible for the team and its administrative duties during the season. Each team coach/captain must be safe play approved. For more information and to become safe play approved, go to [www.usta.com/safeplay](http://www.usta.com/safeplay).

### **IV. INCLEMENT WEATHER/CANCELED MATCHES**

Each local league shall develop and publish a make-up policy.

### **V. PLAYER AGREEMENT**

All players participating in USTA Louisiana Middle School league agree to abide and be bound by the USTA Constitution and Bylaws; the FRIEND AT COURT - The USTA Handbook of Tennis Rules and Regulations including THE CODE and Wheelchair Rules of Tennis (unless modified by these USTA LOUISIANA JUNIOR TEAM TENNIS LEAGUE REGULATIONS) and the standards of good conduct, fair play and good sportsmanship.

### **VI. WAIVER OF CLAIMS**

Local coordinators, please contact the State office for the “Waiver of Responsibility and Media Release” form that all players’ parents must submit.

Players participating in the USTA Louisiana Middle School league acknowledge the risks associated with playing tennis, accept those risks voluntarily, and in consideration of their acceptance in the program assume all risks of injury whether property or bodily, waive all claims for any and all injury or damages and agree to release and hold harmless the USTA, any host facility, all officials, employees, volunteers, and agents with respect to any injury or loss caused by negligence or otherwise to the fullest extent permitted, whether in law or equity.

### **VII. SUSPENDED PLAYERS OR TEAMS**

Any junior player who is suspended from USTA competition is ineligible to participate in the USTA Louisiana Middle School league for the duration of the suspension.

Any team who has a player on their team that is not a student at the school, unless the player/ or team received a local and State approved exception, receives a 1-year suspension from participating in the USTA Louisiana Middle School league.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL JUNIOR TEAM TENNIS: STATE & LOCAL

### I. LOCAL MIDDLE SCHOOL JUNIOR TEAM TENNIS

Local League Coordinators should develop additional rules & procedures, which must not become inconsistent with USTA Louisiana's regulations and will be approved by the State Coordinator before play begins.

**TEAM CHALLENGES-** \*CTAs, local coaches, & PE teachers should provide Red, Orange, & Green ball 'Team Challenge' opportunities for 5th grade players & lower that would like to eventually play in the league\*

### II. LOUISIANA MIDDLE SCHOOL TRACK DIVISIONS

The following chart is used for the USTA Louisiana State Championship formats and is required for local programs: USTA play-tracker points are NOT awarded.

Division:	Level:	Court:	Ball:
14 & Under	Beginner	78'	Green
14 & Under	Intermediate	78'	Yellow

### III. SCORING FORMATS

The following scoring formats are to be chosen from. Any not on the list cannot be used.

- In TennisLink as "Pro Set (8 Games)"
  - One set to 8
  - Deciding game is played at 7-7
  - AD or no AD scoring
  - (Players can serve however they need to serve to get the ball over the net)
    - Example score (Input in TennisLink as): 8-7
      - Result "Completed"
      - Choose the winner in the drop down menu
      - Winner's score is listed first
- In TennisLink as "Short Set 2 of 3 sets MatchTieBreaker 4 Games"
  - 2 short sets to 4
  - Deciding game is played at 3-3
  - If sets are split, a 10pt. match tie-break is played (win by 2)
  - AD or no AD scoring
  - (Players can serve however they need to serve to get the ball over the net)
    - Example score (Input in TennisLink as): 4-3, 3-4, 1-0
      - Result "Completed"
      - Choose the winner in the drop down menu
      - Winner's score is listed first
- In TennisLink as "Short Set 2 of 3 sets MatchTieBreaker 6 Games"
  - 2 sets to 6

- Deciding game played at 5-5
- If sets are split, a 10pt. Match tie-break is played (win by 2)
- AD or no AD scoring
- (Players can serve however they need to serve to get the ball over the net)
  - Example score (Input in TennisLink as): 6-5, 5-6, 1-0
    - Result “Completed”
    - Choose the winner in the drop down menu
    - Winner’s score is listed first
- In TennisLink as “3rd Set Tie Break”
  - 2 sets to 6
  - Deciding game played at 6-6
  - If sets are split, a 10pt. Match tie-break is played (win by 2)
  - AD or no AD scoring
  - (Players can serve however they need to serve to get the ball over the net)
    - Example score (Input in TennisLink as): 7-6, 6-7, 1-0
- In TennisLink as “Short set (6 games)”
  - Deciding game or tiebreak is played at 5-5
  - AD or no AD scoring
  - (Players can serve however they need to serve to get the ball over the net)
    - Example score (Input in TennisLink as): 6-5
      - Result “Completed”
      - Choose the winner in the drop down menu
      - Winner’s score is listed first

#### **IV. TEAM COMPOSITION: LOCAL / STATE**

Teams are co-ed and are required to have a minimum of 6 players on each team locally to be considered for State competition. If there are not 6 players on the team, they can play locally but cannot be considered for advancing to State competition.

If a team competes locally with the minimum 6 players and they are the State bound team, they may have 2 substitutions if they do not have the minimum of 6 for State. To fill the State team, substitutes can only be students from the school OR from their other team, within the same division, if a team has multiple teams competing. \*If they have 6 players, no substitutions are allowed.\*

If the teams cannot find substitutions, or fill the 6 minimum (even with their 2 substitutions), they can still compete at State but must forfeit each match they cannot fill.

#### **V. INDIVIDUAL MATCH**

An individual match is any singles match, doubles match, or mixed doubles match played as part of a team match.

#### **VI. STATE / LOCAL COMPETITION FORMAT**

State competition format will be 2 doubles and 2 singles (co-ed).

State scoring format: Pro Set (8 Games)

One set to 8; Deciding game is played at 7-7; no AD scoring

Local competition format can vary. However, each team needs to have 4 courts of matches that count towards determining the top 2 local teams. If a team cannot make 4 courts of play, they default those courts. Players can play more than 1x to make 4 courts of play (Ex: 2 rounds of play). If the teams mutually agree to play more than 4 courts of matches, only the first 4 played will count. Players must play at least 1 match and 1 default match [locally] to be eligible for State.

The format can be a league format or a qualifying tournament. Areas can offer up to 2 leagues / or qualifying tournaments at any point between August 1, 2024 - April 15, 2025. If 2 are offered, the top team from each shall be invited to State. If only 1 is offered during the season, the top 2 teams shall be invited.

## **VII. INDIVIDUAL DEFAULTS**

An individual default occurs when a player fails to appear or is over 15 minutes late. This results in a default win on that court for the opposing team. If the team is only one player short and two are available, singles shall be defaulted first, as to affect the least amount of players.

## **VIII. TEAM MATCH**

Matchplay is co-ed. Captains must, to the best of their ability, make sure the players are as equally matched as possible.

The coaches/managers for each team shall exchange their team lineup cards simultaneously prior to the beginning of the team match. The local coordinator shall make the rules regarding substitutions after the line-ups have been made and presented.

## **IX. PLAYER PARTICIPATION ON MORE THAN ONE TEAM**

Strictly prohibited. One player cannot play on more than one team or cross divisions during the season. A player cannot play on a school team that they do not attend as a student (See exceptions for waivers from local coordinators / the State coordinator in: Section II "Exceptions").

## **X. MORE THAN ONE INDIVIDUAL MATCH**

Local league programs may or may not allow a player to play up to two individual matches within the same team match. This must be established in the local regulations. (Ex. The girl/boy who plays doubles for her team can also play the girls/boys singles match.)

## **XI. COACHING**

Coaching at State can only be done without interrupting play and only done by a Safe Play approved individual / or PE coach. No more than 2 coaches (Captain / Co-Captain) can coach at one time. Coordinators can choose to apply these rules locally.

## Coaching Regulations for each division:

### 14 & Under Beginner (Green Ball)

- SafePlay Approved Captains/Co-Captains/ or Coaches can:
  - Help players with rules if asked/ or there is mutual confusion between players
  - Help players keep score (only if asked)
  - Stand on court if players need assistance
  - Coach on changeovers & between sets
- SafePlay Approved Captains/Co-Captains/ or Coaches cannot:
  - Disrupt play
  - Call lines/ "foot faults"/ or "lets"
  - Stop points after they have started
  - Override players on the score if called incorrectly (unless asked and both parties/captains agree)
- Parents are not allowed on the court
- Parents cannot disrupt play

### 14 & Under Intermediate (Yellow Ball)

- SafePlay Approved Captains/Co-Captains/ or Coaches can only:
  - Coach on changeovers & between sets

## XII. TIEBREAK

If there is a tie between local champions/ teams: Tennislink tie-break format

- Game Won: Most Game Won -> Sets Won -> Individual Match Won -> Least Games Lost -> Least Sets Lost -> Least Individual Match Lost
- Sets Won: Most Sets Won -> Games Won -> Individual Match Won -> Least Sets Lost -> Least Games Lost -> Least Individual Match Lost
- Individual Matches Won: Most Individual Match Won -> Games Won -> Sets Won -> Least Individual Match Lost -> Least Games Lost -> Least Sets

## XIII. LOCAL CHAMPIONS

At the conclusion of the local competition, the Local League Coordinator shall certify to the Louisiana State Coordinator the results of the competition and provide contact information for the qualifying teams' coaches/managers. All local competition must be concluded prior to the deadline set by USTA Louisiana which is April 15, 2025. The top 2 teams from each area can advance to State. If a State bound team cannot attend, the next team in-line should be asked to attend.

## **General Information/ common questions:**

### **WTN vs. UTR:**

A player's WTN is a rating given by the USTA to players playing in USTA tournaments and programming. Every match played in the USTA system will increase or decrease this rating (40 is the lowest & 1 is the highest).

- There is no WTN range to compete in this program

A player's UTR (not affiliated with USTA) will not change— junior USTA matches in TennisLink do not count for UTR ratings.

### **Who plays Green Ball? Who plays Yellow Ball?**

An evaluation sheet will be provided for coaches seeking more information on where to place players.

- All players should know how to score, switch sides, which side to serve on, etc.

### **USTA ranking points:**

Not given

### **Safe Play Certification:**

All coaches or parents acting as Team Captains must be Safe Play certified

All court monitors (if applicable) must be Safe Play certified

### **USTA NetGeneration contracts:**

Through these contracts with schools, the USTA can give tennis equipment and lesson plans to PE teachers.

They also receive a school partner that can help teachers make connections within the tennis community to guide students interested in pursuing tennis as a sport.

- This can be for clinics, lessons, match play opportunities, etc.

### **Team Challenges:**

Offered by the CTAs (& pros working with the CTA) to these participating schools to introduce tennis outside of school.

- Pathways to USTA & tennis opportunities outside of school are what we are striving for with this Middle School program.