

2019 ATTA Singles Ladder Rules

Schedule of Play

The singles ladder runs from March 29 through September 24, 2019, followed by playoffs. There are six segments of play; each segment is about four weeks long (see schedule below). The Ladder Chair will provide weekly score updates on google sheets during each segment. During the last week of each segment, all players are responsible for checking their scores and immediately email the ladder chair (and include the appropriate opponent) of any score conflict. The Ladder Chair will notify all ladder participants of the finalized version for the next segment of play. If a player cannot access the google sheet online, the player must contact the ladder chair (via email) for the pdf copy.

| Segment | Play Dates | Resolved Scores | Finalized Segment |
|-------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1 | 3/29 – 4/23 | 4/24 | 4/26 |
| 2 | 4/26 – 5/21 | 5/22 | 5/24 |
| 3 | 5/24 – 6/18 | 6/19 | 6/21 |
| 4 | 6/21 – 7/16 | 7/17 | 7/19 |
| 5 | 7/19 – 8/13 | 8/14 | 8/16 |
| 6 | 8/16 – 9/10 | 9/11 | 9/13 |
| Semi-finals | 9/13 – 9/30 | | |
| Finals | 10/02 – 10/14 | | |

Matches

Ladder matches use the standard rules of the United States Tennis Association (USTA). Matches are best of three sets, with a standard 12-point tiebreak (first to 7 points, win by 2) at 6 games all.

If both players agree, it is permissible to play a match tiebreaker (first to 10 points with a win by 2) in lieu of a full third set; in which case, the third set would be scored as 1-0, e.g. a completed match with a match tiebreaker may be 6-4, 4-6, 1-0.

Required Matches:

1. Each player must play two required matches each segment.
2. For the required matches, each player must play the player two above and the player two below his/her position on the ladder. For the top two players on the ladder, required matches are as follows: player #1 on the ladder plays player #2 and player #3; player #2 plays player #1 and player #4. For the bottom two players on the ladder, required matches are as follows: the bottom player

plays the player one above and the player two above him/her; the player second from the bottom plays the player one below and the player two above him/her.

3. For Segment 1, play is within divisions only (i.e., Open players play only against other Open players; 4.0 players play only against other 4.0 players, etc.). Thus, for the first segment, each division follows the rules for required matches for the highest and lowest players within the division (see #2). After Segment 1, all players are arranged in order of total points, collapsing across divisions, and play continues for the rest of the ladder season accordingly.
4. Required matches utilize a “home court” concept. The player who is higher on the ladder is considered the home court player (e.g., the player on row 10 is the home player when scheduling with the player on row 12, but the away player when scheduling with the player on row 8). The home court player decides on the location of the match and reserves the court, when possible. All efforts should be made to agree on the location, but the home court player has the final say. **Both** players should bring a new can of tennis balls to the match. The home player opens a can for the match. After completion of the match, the winner receives a new can of tennis balls and the defeated player receives the played balls (similar to ALTA and USTA leagues).
5. The date, time, and location of the match must be agreed by both players for it to be considered a scheduled match. Only then can the match be considered a default match when applicable (see Defaults). The court fees (if any) should be mutually agreeable to both players. **Court fees should be shared.**
6. Should a player know in advance that they will be absent for 14 or more days during one full segment, he/she is permitted to arrange 2 make-up matches to replace their required matches for that segment, provided it is sanctioned by the Ladder Chair in advance. For segment 1, the opponents must be from the same division (as per rule 3 above), and for the remaining segments the opponent must be of the appropriate playing level.

Challenge Matches:

1. Challenge matches are “partial-value” matches; fewer points are at stake than in required matches (see Scoring System below).
2. A player may play several challenge matches per segment but only one of these will receive points in each segment. The Ladder Chair will award the player points based on their best challenge match result. Therefore, no more than six challenge matches will be awarded over the entire season (one per each segment).
3. Challenge matches may only be between players in the same division. [Exception: Players from different divisions can play a challenge match if the player in the lower division is above the player in the higher division on the ladder.]

4. Challenge matches only count toward a player's point total when a player has also completed his/her two required matches for the segment. Alternatively, if only one required match was played in a given segment, a challenge match played during the same segment may be used as the second required match (subject to the Ladder Chair's approval), in which case it will count as a make-up match. Challenge matches can be played and reported before required matches.
5. Players are not required to accept a challenge match.
6. The date, time, location, and court fees (if any) should be mutually agreeable to both players. **Court fees should be shared.**
7. Two players can receive points for a challenge match against each other only once during the ladder season.

Make-Up Matches:

1. A make-up match may be played in lieu of a required match in either of the following circumstances:
 - a) A player has attempted at least two emails and a phone call/text **and** four days have passed without hearing from his/her required opponent.
 - b) Despite both players' best efforts to schedule their required match, a mutually agreeable date, time, and/or location cannot be reached.
*** *Players must email the ladder chair that both players cannot agree on a schedule and hence, make-up matches will be reported by the players.***
2. For the player seeking a make-up match to replace a required match, the make-up match counts as "full-value"; it is scored as if it were a required match (see Scoring System below). For the player's opponent, the match may be a challenge match, a make-up match (if he/she needs one), or no recorded match (if he/she has already completed both required matches and has another higher scored challenge match).
3. There is no limit on the number of times a player can serve as a make-up opponent. However, only one of these matches will count. Specifically, if a player plays one or more matches as a make-up opponent and/or a challenge match during a given segment, the match that earns him/her the most points will count.
4. Make-up matches must be against a player in the same division as the original required opponent. For example, a 4.0 player whose required match was to be against an Open player should schedule a make-up match against another Open player.
5. If a player must schedule a make-up match against a player in a different division than his/her required opponent, the match must be approved by the Ladder Chair **before** it is played. The Ladder Chair will ensure that fair and suitable make-up matches are played.

6. In rare cases, it may be necessary for a player in need of a make-up match against a player in a higher division (e.g., a 4.0 player whose required match was to be against an Open player) to play an opponent who is also higher on the ladder (e.g., if no Open players below the 4.0 player on the ladder are available to play a make-up match). In such cases, the match will be scored as partial-value for the higher-division opponent; it cannot replace a required match. Note that such matches are typically not permitted and must be approved by the Ladder Chair **before** they are played, on a case-by-case basis.

Unfinished Matches: All matches must be completed before the end of the relevant segment for that match and cannot be completed in the following segment (for scoring of unfinished matches see Scoring System below).

Default Matches: When two players have mutually agreed on a date, time, **and** location for their match, one player may elect to take a default if his/her opponent either (a) cancels with less than 24 hours' notice, or (b) is more than 20 minutes late to the match. In either scenario, the player may also opt not to take a default, choosing instead to reschedule with the same opponent for later in the segment. If that rescheduled match fails to take place before the end of the segment for any reason whatsoever then the original default stands.

If a player cancels more than 24 hours prior to a scheduled match time, the match should be rescheduled and no default is awarded. A match is not considered "set" (and hence no default applies) until a date, time, and location have been agreed upon by both players. **Note:** *If two players cannot agree on a date, time, and/or location, neither is eligible for a default. Instead, each must play a make-up match (see Make-Up Matches above).*

Retired matches: If a player must retire during a match for any reason, the score should be reported as it stands at the time of the retirement. When match points are calculated, the winning player is awarded all remaining games. For example, if Player A retires while leading 6-2, 2-3, Player B is recorded as the winner. The score should be reported as Player B winning, 2-6, 3-2 (ret.). For purposes of point allocation, the match is recorded as a win for Player B, 2-6, 6-2, 6-0 (i.e., Player B is awarded all remaining games).

Reporting Scores

All players are responsible for reporting the results of the match within 24 hours via the ATTA website or by emailing the Ladder Chair at ladderchair@atta.org. The following information should be provided: date of match, type of match (required, challenge, or make-up), winner's name, loser's name, and match score. When reporting the results of a make-up match, the name of the original required opponent should also be provided. Check your scores online after a week of the reported match and notify the Ladder Chair immediately of any discrepancy.

Scores must be reported by the end of the segment (see Schedule of Play above) to be counted for that segment.

Score Updates: Scores are updated weekly and finalized by the Finalized segment date. Players can verify their scores online after a week of reporting their match. All scores must be reported and resolved by the Resolved Score date for that segment.

The ladder operates on an honor system. There is a **zero-tolerance policy** for reporting a score for a match that has not been played. If a score is discovered to be fabricated, it will not count and the player(s) who reported it will be removed from the ladder immediately. Whether the player(s) will be permitted to return in a subsequent segment is up to the discretion of the Ladder Chair, in consultation with ATTA's Ladder Committee.

Scoring System

Each player begins the season with a designated number of points based on his/her division:

| Ladder Division | Initial Point Total |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Open | 2000 |
| 4.0 | 1750 |
| 3.75 | 1500 |
| 3.5 | 1250 |
| 3.25 | 1000 |
| 3.0 | 750 |
| 2.75 | 500 |

[Note: One or more of the divisions listed above may be eliminated, depending on how many players sign up at the beginning of the season.] Initially, each adjacent level will only be separated by 250 points.

Similar to USTA league rules, a player may only register for a division that is 0.5 above his/her NTRP rating. No player may play below his/her NTRP rating, unless approved by the Ladder committee.

Required Matches: A total of 100 **match points** are allocated among the two players for each required match, according to the final game score. [For example, in a 6-0, 6-0 match, the winner receives all 100 points. In a 6-1, 4-6, 6-1 match, the winner receives 67 points (since he/she won 66.67% of the games played) and the loser receives 33 points.] Decimals are rounded to the nearest integer.

In addition, the winner of each match receives 75 **bonus points** and the loser receives 25 bonus points. In the case of a default (see Defaults below), the "winner" receives a standard total of 125 points (match + bonus). The player who defaulted receives 0 points.

Challenge Matches: A total of 50 match points are allocated among the two players for each challenge match, according to the final game score. [For example, in a 6-0,

6-0 match, the winner receives all 50 points. In a 7-6, 6-7, 7-6 match, the winner receives 26 points (since he/she won 51% of the games played) and the loser receives 24 points.] Decimals are rounded to the nearest integer.

In addition, the winner of each challenge match receives 15 bonus points and the loser receives 5 bonus points. In the case of a default (see Defaults below), the “winner” receives a standard total of 40 points (match + bonus). The player who defaulted receives 0 points.

Unfinished Matches: If a match is unfinished by the end of a segment (e.g. due to rain, loss of light, etc.) then the match points are divided according to the number of games played. For example, a match score of 6-4, 2-4, would result in the match points being split 50/50 between the two players. A match score of 6-3, 4-2, would result in a 67/33 match points split. Bonus points are split 50/50 between both players in all cases.

Additional Information

Selecting a Division: When signing up for the singles ladder, players will be placed in a division that closely matches his/her most recent NTRP level. No player will be placed in a level below their NTRP rating, unless approved by the Ladder committee. The Ladder Chair in consultation with Ladder committee may take into consideration results from previous ATTA ladders, GLTA tournaments, ALTA, and other leagues to determine placement of players without NTRP rating. USTA publishes updated ratings in late February/early March each year, so these are the ratings used for division placement. Women’s USTA ratings are adjusted to men’s ratings using the following scale:

| Women’s Rating | Ladder Division |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 5.5+ | Open |
| 5.0 | 4.0 |
| 4.5 | 3.75 |
| 4.0 - 4.25 | 3.5 |
| 3.75 | 3.25 |
| 3.5- | 3.0 |
| 3.0 | 2.75 |

For players without a USTA rating, the Ladder Chair (in consultation with ATTA’s Ladder Committee) reserves the right to change a player’s division after two segments, if his/her results suggest that a higher division is more appropriate. In this case, the player will be placed in the new division for the next segment, under the Joining the Ladder Mid-Season policy (see below).

The winners of each division from the previous year’s singles ladder are automatically moved up to the next highest division.

Joining the Ladder Mid-Season: Any player who signs up mid-season will be added to the ladder at the start of the next segment. His/her starting point total will be the initial point total for the player’s division (see Scoring System above), plus 100 “borrowed” points for each required match missed to date. Borrowed points serve the

function of placing such players at a position on the ladder closer to their skill level than the initial division point total. For example, say John (a 4.0 player) joins the ladder for Segment 3. His starting point total will be 2150 (i.e., 1750 initial points for the 4.0 division, plus 400 borrowed points for missing four required matches during Segments 1 and 2).

Borrowed Points: Borrowed points are designed to place a player within their skill level on the ladder, when

- 1) a player joins the ladder mid-season,
- 2) a player does not play a required match in a segment,
- and 3) a player receives a “default loss” for a required match.

In determining playoff berths at the conclusion of the regular season borrowed points are partially “paid back.” At the end of the ladder season, a player’s Final Point is equivalent to Total Points - Borrowed Points/[(1200-Borrowed Points)/200].

In other words, the number of borrowed points is divided by the number of segments in which the player was active on the ladder, and the result is deducted from the players final point total. See the chart below:

| Matches played | Matches not played | Borrowed points awarded | Borrowed points Deducted from Total |
|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 11 | 1 | 100 | 18 |
| 10 | 2 | 200 | 40 |
| 9 | 3 | 300 | 67 |
| 8 | 4 | 400 | 100 |
| 7 | 5 | 500 | 143 |
| 6 | 6 | 600 | 200 |
| 5 | 7 | 700 | 280 |
| 4 | 8 | 800 | 400 |
| 3 | 9 | 900 | 600 |
| 2 | 10 | 1000 | 1000 |

Under this policy, players are playing within his/her skill level during the season and penalized for any missed required matches; conversely, a player playing all of his/her required matches are always playing opponents of an appropriate skill level.

Ladder Inactivity: A player will be removed from the ladder if either (a) he/she plays fewer than two full-value (required or make-up) matches for two consecutive segments, or (b) he/she plays no matches during any given segment, without prior approval from the Ladder Chair. In either case, the player will be removed from the ladder for the next segment but may return for subsequent segments. If the player returns, his/her new point total is the number of points he/she previously accumulated, plus borrowed points based on the number of required matches missed (see Joining the Ladder Mid-Season above). These borrowed points are partially paid back at the end of the season in the manner described above.

Players who play just one required match during a given segment are placed on “probation” for the next segment. To remain active on the ladder, he/she must play

two full-value (required or make-up) matches during the next segment. In addition, 100 borrowed points are added to the player's point total for missing one required match, correcting for the player's inactivity. As in the above cases, the borrowed points are partially paid back at the end of the season.

During the season, if a player decides not to continue playing the ladder for whatever reason, he/she should inform the Ladder Chair and his/her required opponents for the current segment immediately so that make-up matches can be arranged.

Breaking Ties: If, at the start of any segment, two players have the same number of points, the player listed higher on the ladder will be the one who:

1. Has the better head-to-head match record against the other player during the current ladder season.
2. Has won the greater percentage of individual games against the other player during the current ladder season.
3. Has been active in more segments.
4. Has played more required matches.
5. Has played fewer challenge matches.
6. Was higher on the ladder in the previous segment.

The tiebreaking criteria above will be applied in the order listed.

Playoffs: At the end of the final Segment, the top **four** players in each division qualify for the playoffs, which take place after the Peach tournament. Within each division, the ladder semifinals will be as follows: #1 player vs. #4 player, #2 player vs. #3 player. The two semifinal winners will meet in the finals for the division championship. Note that in order to qualify for the playoffs, players must be active (i.e., play at least one full-value match) during the final segment of play. If one of the top four players in a division is unable to play in the semifinals (due to injury, lack of availability, etc.), the #5 player in the division will take his/her place in the playoff draw.