I. GENERAL

Unless specifically modified or superseded by USTA Middle States in the following Rules & Regulations, USTA Tournament Regulations govern all USTA Middle States (MS) sanctioned matches and tournaments. Players and parents are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the “USTA Tournament Regulations” which can always be found in the most recent edition of Friend at Court. This handbook can be purchased online at USTAShop.com or viewed in PDF form on the USTA Middle States website or click here:

https://www.usta.com/content/dam/usta/officiating/2019%20Friend%20at%20Court.pdf

Interpretation of the USTA MS Rules and Regulations are made by the Junior Competition Committee subject to appeal to the Grievance Committee and final appeal to the Board of Directors, if appropriate.

General Regulations Governing Junior Tournaments

1. Membership
   a) All current USTA Middle States members in good standing may enter SR-L5, SR-L4 and SR-L3 Sectional events.
   b) All current USTA members in good standing may enter Sectional SR-L6 and District DR-L7 and Level 8 (non-ranking) events.
   c) All non-members with a USTA Account number may enter a Level 8 (non-ranking) event.

2. Age Eligibility (Month of Birth)
   For the ranking year January 1st through December 31st, all junior players may play in an age division until their birthday month (the month in which they age up). For example, if a player turns 13 on May 22, that player can compete in 12s tournaments through April 30. Starting on May 1st, the player’s birthday month, he/she would “age up” and be required to compete in 14s tournaments. The starting date of a tournament determines the player’s eligibility for that tournament. For example, a player who turns 15 in April is eligible to play the 14-and-under age...
division in a tournament that starts in March and continues into April.

3. Players/Parents implicit consent when entering a tournament

Players competing in USTA Middle States sanctioned events are expected to comply with The Code of the USTA (see Friend at Court) and to avoid acts that are detrimental to the game of tennis. It is a player's responsibility to know and understand the rules of tennis. It is also the player’s responsibility to know and understand these Rules and Regulations.

By accepting entry into a USTA Middle States sanctioned event, parents/players and their entourage shall hold harmless the USTA MS Section, its volunteers, USTA MS staff, as well as its Tournament Directors, Referees, Organizational Members and Tennis facilities from all liability which might result from errors that were made in the running of such sanctioned events. If a player is improperly permitted to enter a tournament and subsequently is forced to be disqualified due to ineligibility, the only remedy available to the player/parent or entourage shall be the return of their entry fee.

4. Tournament Entries

Under no circumstance can a player play in more than one (1) USTA sanctioned tournament and/or (1) ITF sanctioned tournament when the scheduled dates are the same or overlap.

Multiple Entry Procedures for all USTA Middle States Sanctioned Junior Tournaments:

- A player seeking to enter more than one USTA MS Tournament with overlapping dates must send their request via email to the Section Office at jrcomp@ms.usta.com prior to the close of the tournament and identify their 1st, 2nd or 3rd preferences. The maximum number of tournaments a player can enter is three.

- Players may enter any ONE AGE Division of up to three separate USTA MS Tournament locations on a given weekend (you may not enter a different age division on that given weekend).

- If a player has not been accepted into any tournament, they may remain on the alternate lists of all tournaments, but upon acceptance into one, they may not withdraw from that tournament to play in another.

- If a player enters more than one tournament with overlapping dates and does not notify the Section office with their intentions and preferences, they may be selected into more than one tournament and the credit card may be charged for more than one tournament. Refunds may be not required in this circumstance.

- Under no circumstances may a player after being accepted into one tournament withdraw and play in another. Doing so may result in the assessment of 5 suspension points.

5. Payments and Refunds of Entry Fees

Once the tournament entry deadline has passed and a player has been accepted into a tournament,
the credit/debit card used to apply for the tournament will be charged for the tournament entry fee upon acceptance. **If a player withdraws from a tournament after he/she has been accepted, the tournament is not required to refund the entry fee even if replaced by an alternate player.** All withdrawals from tournaments must be done online or by notifying the Tournament Director **before** the closing date of the event to avoid being charged the entry fee.

An online entry must always be accompanied by a valid credit/debit card. Failure to follow these rules may result in an application being deemed invalid. Furthermore, the Junior Competition Committee reserves the right to deny entry to all future tournaments if it can be proven that a previous form of payment such as a check or credit card was denied and proper restitution has not been made for that previous tournament. If a player was denied entry into the tournament in question for not having paid in a timely manner for a prior tournament, there shall be no debt for the tournament in question.
II. TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS

a. GENERAL Tournament Regulations

Draws
The Junior Competition Committee shall reserve the right to cancel a tournament if it deems to be in the best interest of the section.

When draws are made for all of our junior Sectional events, players must be separated by district (or more limited when appropriate such as a district tournament where the majority of players are from the same area) in order to help ensure that players from the same town or club greatly decrease their chances of playing in the first round. For District and Sectional events, siblings playing in the same singles event will not play each other in the first round.

Withdrawals, Walkovers and Defaults
The USTA MS Junior Competition committee requires that players withdrawing from a tournament after the draw has been made must notify the tournament director or referee after determining that they will not be playing; Violation of this rule will most likely result in suspension points and the player will be designated as a default no show (def-ns) on the draw sheet. A refund of entry fees is not required if a player withdraws after the closing date of the tournament even if replaced by an alternate player. All withdrawals, walkovers and defaults recorded on a draw will receive 2 suspension points per tournament (except a default no show will be awarded 5 suspension points).

The Difference Between A Withdrawal, Walkover, Default, and Retirement
A withdrawal is when a player withdraws due to an acceptable reason as determined by the referee and/or tournament director from a match or tournament after the draw has been made, but before the first match involving the player in question has been started (one point has not been played). A walkover occurs when a player pulls out of a tournament after having completed a match but not before starting another match for reasons accepted by the tournament director and/or referee.

A player retires from a match already in progress for reasons such as injury or illness. A default no show occurs when the tournament director or referee determines that the reason for not playing a match is unacceptable and may be listed by the tournament director/referee on the published draw or when the tournament director/referee determines that ample notification was not given prior to the player not playing his scheduled match.

Off Site Matches
A match may be played off site only if the tournament director and both players and a parent or coach for each player who is present agree. If a match is agreed to off site and is not played, both players shall be defaulted. For a match played off site, the responsibility of officiating rests entirely with the players and not the tournament director or tournament referee.
b. DISTRICT Tournament Regulations

District Level 7 (DR) Tournament Entry Restrictions: 12 & Under Players ranked in the top 20 in the Sectional Rankings will not be allowed to participate in 12&U DR-L7 tournaments. 14, 16 and 18 & Under Players ranked in the top 40 in the Sectional Rankings will not be allowed to participate in ANY district tournament at ANY age level (excluding Designated DR-L7 events in Allegheny Mountain and Delaware Districts).

All DR tournament entries must be done online prior to the registration deadline. The deadline for ALL DR-L8 and Level 8 tournaments will be the Sunday prior to the start of the tournament at 11:59 pm (Midnight). No late entries accepted – no exceptions.

No tournament will start before 4 pm on Fridays during the entire year EXCEPT the Day after Thanksgiving and the Day after Christmas. On these two days, tournaments may not start before noon.

It is mandated that no match should start prior to 8AM on Saturday or Sunday. No match shall be scheduled to start after 9 pm for the 12s and 14s divisions and 10:30 pm for the 16s and 18s divisions.

All players shall be offered a minimum of three matches in all singles events if the draw size permits for the 12U divisions. For the 14U, 16U and 18U divisions, a minimum of two matches in all singles events will be offered if the draw size permits.

All draws must have a minimum of 3 registered players/teams to run a division.

All draws in DR-L7 events will be a compass draw. If there are 4 or less registered players, a round robin will be used with no less than 3 rounds. All matches in the 12U Divisions will be short sets (all sets will start at 2 games all), with no ad scoring and a 10-point match tiebreak in lieu of a 3rd set. All matches in the 14U, 16U and 18U Divisions will be full sets with no ad scoring and a 10-point match tiebreak in lieu of a 3rd set. All doubles matches will be an 8-game pro set, no ad scoring, and a 7-point tiebreak at 8 games all.

It is mandated that all DR Level tournament draws be offered with a maximum of a sixteen-player compass draw. Tournaments with 2 or more age divisions may be limited to 8 player compass draws. The tournaments must be concluded by the end of their sanction date unless authorized by the Chair of Junior Competition Committee or Director of Junior Competition.
Order of Selection:

**All DR-L7 tournaments will select players from the “bottom up”:**

1) Middle States unranked players who reside in the district where the tournament is held
2) Middle States lowest-ranked sectionally ranked players who reside in the district where the tournament is held
3) Middle States unranked out-of-district players
4) Middle States lowest-ranked out-of-district sectionally ranked players
5) All other eligible USTA members

For tournaments with a doubles event, doubles sign up must be online preferably with a confirmed partner. Both players should indicate the partner’s name online. Late entries will not be allowed. If a partner is not indicated online, you must contact the tournament director with the name of your partner by the entry deadline. Players who are selected for doubles but not singles, and who do not wish to play just doubles, must notify the Tournament Director by email before the entry deadline. If a player(s) does not notify the Tournament Director of their intent, it is assumed the player(s) will play doubles.

To seed players in District events, the Middle States Office shall use the most recently published Sectional standings list. The number of seeded players shall equal the power of two (1, 2, 4, 8, 16, etc.), except that any draw may have 1 or 2 seeds.

In a planned alternate scoring tournament for Level 7 DR events approved by the Director of Junior Competition, postings to the Internet must occur before entries open so as to give the players an opportunity to withdraw from the tournament without penalty if the player does not want to enter a tournament that uses alternate scoring.
c. **SECTIONAL Tournament Regulations**

All SR tournament entries must be done online prior to the registration deadline. No late entries accepted – **no exceptions**. All sectional level tournament registration will end Wednesdays at midnight (EST), except SR-L5 Friday doubles events, which close Sundays at midnight (EST). All SR Level sectional tournament directors are required to use the online entry system ONLY through Tennislink ([https://tennislink.usta.com](https://tennislink.usta.com)) for all sectional events. Mail and phone entries cannot be used for any sectional tournaments.

Doubles sign ups must be online preferably with a confirmed partner. Both players should indicate the partner’s name online. Late entries will not be allowed. If a partner is not indicated online, you must contact the tournament director with the name of your partner by the entry deadline. Players who are selected for doubles but not singles, and who do not wish to play just doubles, must notify the Tournament Director by email before the entry deadline. If a player(s) does not notify the Tournament Director of their intent, it is assumed the player(s) will play doubles.

It is mandated that all SR Sectional Level tournament draws with one age division at a location be offered with a thirty-two-player draw except for the Summer Level 3 Sectional Championship draws that will offer a sixty-four-player draw. Only the Junior Competition Committee may authorize increased draw sizes. Tournaments with 2 or more age divisions may be limited to 8 or 16 player draws.

**Tournament Formats - SR-L5 AND SR-L6 Tournaments:**

Each tournament will have the following:
- One Boy’s and One Girl’s Singles - 16 player singles draw limit for each singles division
- One Boy’s and One Girl’s Doubles - 8 team FMLC draw limit for each doubles division (two matches guaranteed).

**DOUBLES SCHEDULE - FRIDAY:**
- Entire doubles tournament will be completed on Friday night – NO SINGLES
- All doubles matches are an 8 game pro set with no-ad scoring and guaranteed two matches.

**SINGLES SCHEDULE – SATURDAY & SUNDAY:**
- Only singles matches will be played
- All singles matches will be played with a 10-point match tiebreak in lieu of the 3rd set with regular scoring
- NO 3rd and 4th place playoff

All organizations that run outdoor Section Level 3 and 4 tournaments must provide indoor backup for their tournaments and by accepting these tournaments acknowledge that they will provide indoor backup. If a sectional tournament is forced indoors due to inclement weather, the
tournament director may charge no more than 10 dollars per player per singles match.

Order of Entry for SR-L6 Events:
1) With a maximum of only three, consideration will be given to players with rankings of 50 or better on the most recently published National Standings list in the division one level beneath the division in question, and secondly, to players ranked in the top 10 on the most recently published Sectional Standings list in the age division one level beneath the division in question
2) Players on the most recently published Sectional Standings list of the age division
3) All other USTA Middle States Players
4) Any eligible USTA member

Order of Entry for SR-L5, SR-L4 and SR-L3 Events:
1) Players with rankings of 100 or better on the most recent National Standings List
2) With a maximum of only three, consideration will be given to players with rankings of 50 or better on the most recently published National Standings list in the division one level beneath the division in question, and secondly, to players ranked in the top 10 on the most recently published Sectional Standings list in the age division one level beneath the division in question
3) Players on the most recently published Sectional Standings list of the age division
4) All other USTA Middle States Players

To seed players in Sectional events, the Middle States Office shall use the most recently published Sectional standings list. The number of seeded players shall equal the power of two (1, 2, 4, 8, 16, etc.), except that any draw may have 1 or 2 seeds.

No tournament will start before 4 pm on Fridays during the entire year EXCEPT the Day after Thanksgiving and the Day after Christmas. On these two days, tournaments may not start before noon. Saturday and Sunday matches may not start before 8 am. No match shall be scheduled to start after 9 pm for the 12s and 14s divisions and 10:30 pm for the 16s and 18s divisions.

Doubles shall precede the playing of singles for Level 3 and 4 events on Friday nights. Doubles is mandatory in all SR-L4 and SR-L3 sectional tournaments.

An SR Level tournament requires a minimum of 4 players/teams to make up a draw.

On Friday nights for Level 3 and 4 tournaments, all doubles matches are played with an 8 game pro set with a 7-point tiebreak at 8-games all, NO-AD scoring. All singles matches are played with a 10-point match tiebreak in lieu of a third set. All matches singles matches will be regular (ad) scoring.

For tournament days other than Friday night for Level 3 and 4 tournaments, all main draw singles matches for Level 3 and 4 events (other than 12s divisions) are played with three full sets, regular scoring. If the players split sets, there is a mandatory 10 minute rest period, off court,
where coaching is allowed. For all consolation draw singles matches (including the 3th & 4th place playoff), they are played with a 10-point match tiebreak in lieu of the third set with regular scoring. If the players split sets, there is a 3-minute rest period (on or near the court) where coaching is allowed. For doubles, all matches are 8 game pro sets, NO-AD scoring, with a 7 point tiebreak at 8 games all.

For all boys and girls 12s divisions in ALL Level sectional tournaments, ALL matches (both main draw and consolation draw) are to be played with regular scoring sets and a third set 10 point match tiebreak in lieu of a third set throughout the entire tournament.

For Level 5 and 6 events, ALL singles matches in both main draw and consolation draw are played with a 10-point match tiebreak in lieu of the third set with regular scoring. If the players split sets, there is a 3-minute rest period (on or near the court) where coaching is allowed. For doubles, all matches are 8 game pro sets, NO-AD scoring, with a 7 point tiebreak at 8 games all.

All players are required to play at least two matches whenever possible at all of our sectional tournaments. This includes players having a bye in the first round and then losing in the second round, thus having only played one match. The tournament directors will use their best effort in non-full draws to pair up all players so that everyone plays at least two matches.

Rest Periods: At least 60 minutes shall be mandatory between singles matches in the same division.*

*Recovery Rule: Extended length of rest between singles matches in Junior Divisions: in all singles matches in Junior Divisions in which the match format is two out of three standard tiebreak sets or more, a rest period of two hours shall be offered by the Referee before the player’s next singles match. This Rule does not apply to short set matches and matches that play a tiebreak in lieu of a final third set, or to any match played indoors where the duration of the match is less than 120 minutes.

At least 30 minutes shall be mandatory between doubles matches in the same or different divisions.

At least 30 minutes shall be mandatory between a singles match following a doubles match.

Up to a 60 minute rest period should be offered between a doubles match to be played following a singles match.

All players should be given at least 12 hours of rest between the completion of their last match of any day and the start of play of their first match of the following day.

All Level 3, 4, 5, and 6 Tournaments must use regular scoring for singles matches unless extenuating circumstances such as inclement weather occurs. If inclement weather dictates that alternate scoring must be used in a SR tournament, approval must be issued by a member of the Junior Competition Committee or the sectional staff office. The cancellation of Doubles in SR Level tournaments must also be approved by a member of the Junior Competition Committee or
the sectional staff office. A minimum of 4 players or teams are required in order for a division to run. Tournaments must be concluded by the end of their sanction date unless an extension has been approved by either the chair of the Junior Competition Committee or the Director of Junior Competition.

III. Junior Ranking System

1. The Ranking and Standings Process

Our section uses the Points per Round tables via the USTA Ranking Program. If the data submitted into this program is correct and the parameters entered by the Junior Competition Coordinators are correct, then all data is final. The Points Per Round calculations themselves cannot be appealed. Sectional Rankings will be a “Combined” Singles and Doubles rankings in a ratio to be determined by the Junior Competition Committee. A limited number of national tournaments may be used to calculate the sectional rankings and standings lists. The exact points tables are to be determined by the Junior Competition committee and shall be posted to the Middle States Website and have other appropriate forms of distribution.

Once a ranked standings list has been published to the Internet, there is a 7-day appeal period. If no objections to the data entry are raised in writing within this 7-day period, the results may be considered final. If no objections to data entry of a published ranked standing list to the Internet have been raised by the end of the Junior Competition endorsement meeting, the results may be considered final.

Policy Regarding Publishing of Ranked Standings Lists to the Internet

1. Weekly ranked standings lists will be published to the Internet for each division. The timing of this publishing may vary depending on current events such as an upcoming level 3 sectional championship or level 4 SR tournaments or the need to show recent results as determined by the Junior Competition Committee.
2. This ranked standings list covers matches in the previous 12-month cycle as is the rules with rollover rankings.
3. A player aging out in the month in question will not show up on this list as an eligible player. For example a 14-year-old player turning 15 years old in April will not show up on the April ranked standings list since they are ineligible for play during the month of April.
4. This is not to be confused with a final rankings list, which is published only at the end of the calendar year which includes any player that earned points during that calendar year in that age division. This is used primarily for recognizing the highest ranked player in each division at the Middle States Annual Awards Banquet.
5. To be on either the weekly ranked standings list or the final rankings list, a player must have accumulated a minimum of one point.
6. When more than one player has the same number of total Ranking Points in an age division list, the player whose best event with the highest number of Ranking Points shall be listed first. If this does not break the tie, the next highest event through the fourth highest event will be used.
Policy Regarding Publishing of the Year-end Rankings List to the Internet

The final year-end rankings should be posted by January 15th of the following year. Once a player record of any kind has been published to the Internet, the player has one week to notify the ranking coordinator in writing of any errors. Otherwise the corrections may be considered final.

2. General Ranking Regulations

A. Ranking Period
The ranking year will be rolling rankings (previous 12 months) for purposes of endorsement or weekly ranked standings lists. Rankings shall be calendar year (January 1st to December 31st) in regards to final year rankings, which are used for the annual awards.

B. Residency
Only Players with a legal USTA MS domicile are eligible for a ranking. Domicile is defined as:

Domicile
A player's residency shall be the domicile of that player's parents, custodial parent, or the player's legal guardian. Domicile is hereby defined as the bonafide true and permanent home of the player's parents, custodial parent, or the player's legal guardian. In the event of a dispute as to the eligibility of a player under this section, the following factors shall be used to determine domicile:

1. Where the parent files a state tax return.
2. Where the head of household (primary wage earner) resides and is employed.
3. Address on the parents' federal income tax return.
4. Affidavit of domicile executed by the head of the household.
5. Intent to permanently reside in the USTA MS Section notwithstanding the eligibility of the player to qualify for closed tournaments.
6. Siblings declared residence for higher education tuition aid.
7. Residence of dependent children of player's parents.

The above list is not intended to be definitive or all inclusive and other factors may be considered by the USTA MS Section Junior Competition Committee, or may be submitted by the player's parent, to assist in determining the players’ domicile. The USTA MS Junior Competition Committee may request any documents reasonably believed to be necessary in the determination of a player's eligibility.

In the event that the player's parents are divorced or legally separated, the custodial parent or the legal custodian who in fact resides with the player shall be presumed to be the player's parent for determining domicile.

A player or the parent or guardian of the player may request a reconsideration of domicile determination to USTA MS Junior Competition Committee. All reconsideration requests shall be
in writing and filed with the Committee Chair within 10 days after the receipt of notice of ineligibility. Any additional documents requested by the Committee shall be submitted within 30 days after their request. The player and/or parent may submit any additional documents at any time prior to the reconsideration review by the Committee or its appointed subcommittee. The reconsideration shall be considered based upon all documents submitted to the USTA MS Junior Competition Committee.

Under no circumstances may a player claim 2 domiciles at the same time. A player with a USTA card that does not specify Middle States and/or a player who is in the USTA database as being from another section (checked by calling the National USTA Office or accessing the TDM Membership section) shall not be allowed in an SR Level Sectional Tournament and shall not be eligible for a ranking. Simply having a USTA card that states Middle States as the section of record of the player of and by itself shall not be satisfactory to determine that a player has a Middle States domicile since the national office issues these cards based on the address they are given with no domicile verification.

C. USTA Membership
Players must be registered USTA members in good standing at the close of the ranking period in order to be considered for final ranking, ranked standings, endorsement or selection.

D. Birth Certificates
All players wishing to play in any of our USTA Middle States SR Level Tournaments in addition to having a valid domicile as described above must have a copy of a valid birth certificate or other document of Government Issue available for review in the USTA Middle States office at all times. Failure to have produced such a document may result in removal from an SR Level Tournament and may result in failure to be endorsed or selected for national events even if the player has otherwise qualified.

E. Sectional Ranking Requirements
Only one national tournament or team event on the National schedule may be counted in the USTA Middle States Sectional rankings. Level 3 and level 4 tournaments count at both the sectional and national level. Level 5 and 6 tournaments count at the Sectional level and district level 7 tournaments count at both the district and sectional level.

F. Sectional Ranking/Standings Requirements by Age Division

Combined Singles and Doubles Rankings

One point will place a player on the rankings lists for the age division in question. The final rankings are based on the calendar year of January 1st to December 31st of the year in consideration for ranking. The exact formula to determine combined singles and doubles rankings will be determined by The Junior Competition Committee and will be appropriately publicized. The criteria for what is to be eligible to be counted as a tournament for points eligibility has been determined by the Junior Competition Committee.
Sectional Combined Rankings are structured so that 100 percent of the top four singles events are counted and 15 percent of the top four doubles events are counted. The rankings and standings lists are calculated using a player’s top four tournament finishes according to point value set by the Junior Competition Committee. Section ranking players must compete in a minimum of one tournament with one match win. Byes do not count as a win. The tournaments used to calculate a player’s sectional ranking and standing may include: SR-L3, SR-L4, SR-L5 & SR-L6, DR-L7 and/or one National Scheduled event on the USTA National Calendar, if it is in fact one of the player’s highest four tournament finishes.

If two players have the same ranking in an age division list, the player whose best event has the highest number of Ranking Points shall be listed first.

**Ranking Multiplier – Counting Points Up:**

The singles and doubles results (points) for each player earned in a division for the previous 12-month period shall be counted as results in the next older division at 20%. For example, if a player has a singles result of 100 points on the Sectional Standings List in the 14 division, it shall appear as 20 points in the 16 division.

• Results in a younger division shall count in only the next-older age division. For example, 14 division results will count only in the 16 division not also in the 18 division.

• Results in the younger division shall appear in the older division, regardless of whether a player has won a match in the older division.

• A player’s results in the younger division that count in the older division shall be considered the same as all results that are actually played in the older division. They shall be eligible for the Best of 4 results if they are among the best four results in either singles or doubles.

• When this begins the first Standings List shall include all results in the older division that were played in the younger division during the previous 12-month period.

3. Endorsements

**General Information**

Definition of Endorsement: Endorsement is a formal process of player nominations as described elsewhere in this document, which is used for USTA Level 1 National Championship events (exclusive of the National Spring Championships) whereby a set of players are determined and sent by Middle States to these events. While the process is for the most part non-discretionary, under extraordinary circumstances and with a majority vote of the Junior Competition Committee, the endorsement list may be changed at the discretion of the Junior Competition Committee.
Definition of Selection Process- This is a process used by the Junior Competition Committee to select players for the national team competitions (Zonal Team, BG 14 and 16 Intersectional, and BG18 National Team). Selection of these teams is at the discretion of the Junior Competition Committee and will be determined by what is felt to be in the best interests of the section. The selection of our teams will be based on the top 100 players for the age division in question based on the most recent published National top 100 list followed by the Sectional ranked published standings of the age division in question. No more than half of any team should be taken from the national lists of the age division in question.

USTA Zone Team Championships are non-elimination, round robin team events and are held in the 12, 14, and 16 and under divisions. USTA MS selects twelve (12) boys and twelve (12) girls in the 12’s and 14’s age division Zonal Teams and eighteen (18) boys and eighteen (18) girls in the 16's age division Zonal Teams who participate under the guidance of USTA MS selected coaches.

Boys and Girl’s 14 and 16 Intersectional Championships is also a team competition. Three (3) boys and three (3) girls will be selected from the USTA MS to participate and represent the Section. USTA MS will select six (6) boys for the Boys 18’s National Team Championship and (6) girls for the Girls 18’s National Team Championship to participate and represent the Section. The Junior Competition Committee reserves the right if it is deemed in the best interest of the Section to select one (1) alternate for the BG 14 and BG16 Intersectional and one (1) alternate BG18 National Team Championships. In the selection of an alternate the Junior Competition Committee reserves the right to deviate if it so chooses from the selection process above if it deems it appropriate to do so in the best interest of the Section.

Wildcard Available for National Team Events: One wild card per gender will be available for National Level 1 and Level 2 Team events (not for the Boys/Girls 12s Zone Team). Players must apply for the wildcard – the application is available here:

https://form.jotform.com/ustams10s/msjrwildcardapplication

This is a selection process which is made by the Junior Competition Committee. ANY APPEAL OF THIS PROCESS IS TO BE SENT DIRECTLY TO THE USTA MS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WHO WILL MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO HANDLE THE APPEAL. The appeal must be received by the Executive Director within five (5) business days of the completion of the selection process.

An example of the Junior Competition Committee choosing not to select a player during its selection process is described below:

The player in question has qualified for a national team representing our section but has a history of unsportsmanlike behavior as documented by a tournament director or directors and/or referees. It may be determined that it is not in the best interest of the section to “select” such a player for national team competition. One act of bad behavior may be felt by the Junior Competition Committee to have reached a level
egregious enough as to warrant non-selection to a future team competition or competitions.

The Endorsement System
Player endorsement is a primary responsibility of the Junior Competition Committee of Junior Competition. The committee is comprised of at least three members of the Junior Competition Committee, the Junior Competition Committee chair, and a staff member (the Director of Junior Competition).

Endorsements are made based on specific dates and the creation of ranked standings lists on these dates or thereabouts.

Endorsed events:

- National Clay Court Championships - lists done on 6/18/2020 (After L3 12s & 16s)
- USTA National Championships (Hard Courts) - lists done on 7/2/2020 (After L2)
- National Indoor Championships - lists done on 10/21/2020
- National Winter Championships - lists done on 11/24/2020 (After L4s)

Team Selected Events:

The dates for selecting the National Teams are as follows:

- Intersectional Teams – June 4th, 2020
- Zone Teams – June 25th, 2020
- Boys 18s National Team – June 25th, 2020
- Girls 18s National Team – June 25th, 2020

The Junior Competition Committee reserves the right if it is deemed in the best interests of the section to extend these dates if a tournament is in progress on these deadlines to wait for the tournament in progress to end. These dates may also be made earlier if national deadlines make it necessary to do so.

Appeals to the decision of the Junior Competition Committee must be made in writing to the Staff liaison for junior competition within five (5) days of the endorsement lists being posted to the internet, or if national tournament application deadlines conflict with the five-day rule, within the time frame directed by the chair of the Junior Competition Committee. SUCH APPEALS ARE REFERRED TO A REVIEW COMMITTEE COMPRISED OF THREE USTA MS BOARD MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE USTA MS PRESIDENT. THE DECISION OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE COMPRISED OF THREE USTA MS BOARD MEMBERS IS FINAL.

Specific Endorsement Requirements

A. Residency/Membership

Only junior players who fulfill the domicile requirements as described previously in these rules and regulations, hold a current USTA membership card assigned to the USTA MS section,
and who satisfy U.S. citizenship or resident alien requirements for national ranking may be eligible for endorsement. Furthermore, a valid copy of a birth certificate or other government issued document must be on file in the USTA-Middle States office.

**B. Sportsmanship - Endorsements**

Good sportsmanship is an essential element of all junior sports and junior development. A player who has exhibited poor sportsmanship, as defined by the USTA MS Suspension Point System, may not receive USTA MS endorsement (anywhere on any list) to USTA national championships or selection to a team competition. In addition, the Junior Competition Committee may refuse selection to a team competition or endorsement to a national championship to a player who may not have accumulated 10 suspension points, but whose behavior as defined by the Junior Competition Committee otherwise justifies denial of endorsement to a national tournament or selection to a team competition.

**C. Waiver from Endorsement Requirements**

It is not the general practice of the Junior Competition Committee to grant waivers for rankings or endorsements except under exceptional circumstances as determined by the Junior Competition Committee.

**D. USTA National Top Player Selection List**

Any player with one point in a division will appear on our section’s endorsement list. This means that a player who has played one level 1 through 7 tournament in a specific division and has accumulated one point within the last twelve months will appear on a specific divisional endorsement list. If a player does not meet these requirements and still wishes to apply to be on an endorsement list for a specific age division and meets all other requirements such as domicile and is in good standing, they may apply to the Junior Competition Committee for a wild card to the endorsement list up until two weeks before the closing date of the national championship in question.
IV. The USTA MS Suspension System and Point Suspension System

Suspension System: This is a system under which junior players are assessed points for unsportsmanlike behavior in district, sectional or national tournaments. A player who accumulates 10 or more points is suspended from all district, sectional and all national play regardless of the level of the tournament.

In addition, players or persons who appear to be associated with a player (including, but not limited to, parents and coaches), officials, and organizers of any tournament are under a duty to encourage and maintain high standards of proper conduct, fair play, and good sportsmanship. They are under an obligation to avoid acts which may be considered detrimental to the game of tennis. Players or their supporters who act in an unsportsmanlike manner may be banned by the USTA/Middle States Grievance Committee from attending future tournaments for a time period to be determined by the committee based on the severity of the act.

Furthermore, at least 5 suspension points shall be assessed by the Junior Competition Committee against the player associated with the party or parties committing the infraction. Penalty points in addition to being cumulative between divisions shall be cumulative with regards to penalty points issued at the national level or others sections as reported by these entities to the Middle States Office. The dates for which these penalty points shall count will also be rolling in 12 month increments as they are for Middle States tournaments which can be either sectional or district.

Falsifying of a birth certificate as required in these rules and regulations shall be worth a one year’s suspension including all endorsement during the one year interval and will be reported to the national office and all USTA sections. As an example, a player suspended on February 10th cannot return to sectional play until the following February 10th. Failure to have a birth certificate on file may result in the immediate removal of that player from any and all Middle States tournaments. If a player has produced a valid birth certificate after being removed from a tournament, the player may be let back into the tournament at the discretion of the tournament director and/or the Junior Competition Committee.

No abuse of players or officials.
1. No person shall abuse an official or player. The Chair Umpire, referee, and any other official responsible for ensuring that a match is played under conditions which are fair to all players shall make certain that no parent, relative, coach, or other person associated with a player abuses an official or player.

2. Official may request the abusive person to desist or leave tournament area. A player who enters a sanctioned tournament or match consents to being penalized under the Suspension and the Point Penalty System for abusive conduct by a person who appears to be associated with the player. If the official observes such conduct, the official shall suspend play and request that the
person desist. If the abuse continues, the official may direct the person to leave the tournament area. In a flagrant case the official may immediately direct the person to leave without requesting the person to desist.

3. **Point Penalty System applies to abuse.** If the person refuses to follow the instructions to leave, the official may penalize the player associated with the person under the Point Penalty System and may warrant a default of the player. *Player shall not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct.* During the course of a match a player or persons who appear to be associated with a player shall not engage in:

- **Verbal abuse:** Swear at an official, a spectator or an opponent in a voice that can be heard by any person
- **Visible or audible profanity:** Use profanity or insulting, abusive or obscene language in any way that may be heard by any person or use obscene, insulting or abusive gestures
- **Racket abuse:** Throw a racket in any manner
- **Ball abuse:** Deliberately throw or hit a ball in the direction of an opponent, an official or the spectators
- **Physical abuse:** Threaten or inflict bodily injury to anyone
- **Other unsportsmanlike conduct.**

**The Suspension Point System** shall apply to all district, sectional and national junior tournaments. It applies to conduct during all matches (main draw, compass draw, consolation, qualifying, and doubles); during tournament activities; at tournament facilities; and at facilities such as hotels, dormitories, and homes where players stay.

**Suspension points** - The Middle States Sectional Office shall record suspension points upon being notified of the following violations:

I. **Point Penalty System.** For each violation under the Point Penalty System (excluding time violations for delay between points, after warm up, after a 90-second changeover, and after a Set Break), two points shall be assessed for the following:
   - Point - 2
   - Game - 2
   - Default - 2

II. **Defaults.** Suspension points shall be assessed for the following:
   - Default for any reason - 2
   - Default for a flagrantly unsportsmanlike act on or off the court - 8 to 10
   - Default for no-show - 5

III. **Withdrawals/Walkovers.**
   - Withdrawal or Walkover for any reason – 2
   - Entering two or more tournaments, matches, or exhibitions scheduled to take place at the same time, in whole or in part, unless each Tournament Committee involved approves the multiple entries in writing - 5
• Unsportsmanlike or inappropriate conduct off court at locations such as the tournament site, hotel, or housing - 5
• Not using best efforts to win – 2

IV. Gross misconduct.
• Physical act of violence against another person on or off the court by a player, parent, relative, coach, or other person associated with a player - 10
• Illegal use of drugs or possession of illegal drugs – 8
• Possession or consumption of alcohol beverages – 8
• Gambling activity – 8
• Destruction of property – 8
• Improper conduct by a parent or other person(s) associated with the player and may, if warranted, cause the player to be defaulted - 5

Persons who appear to be associated with a player who engage in the gross misconduct may cause the players to receive points for gross misconduct.

V. Playing while under suspension. Competing in any sanctioned tournament while under suspension by the USTA or one of its Sectional Associations - 10

Persons authorized to file suspension point reports with the Referee:

The following persons are authorized to file suspension point reports with the Referee for offenses they personally witness:
• Tournament Committee members
• Chief Umpire
• Deputy Referees
• On-court officials (including Roving Officials)
• Court Monitors, if specifically authorized by the Referee
• Club or facility managers
• Hotel or dormitory managers
• Families housing players
• Player development staff

Notification to Middle States Sectional Office
The Tournament Committee shall promptly inform the Middle States Sectional Office of any points levied against any player.

Player Suspension

In addition to the schedule listed below, a player may be suspended regardless of the point system if the player’s behavior is determined by the Junior Competition Committee to warrant such suspension.
The Junior Competition Committee shall suspend players according to the following schedule:

I. *First suspension.* If a player receives 10 suspension points within a 12-month period, the player shall be suspended from competing in any USTA-sanctioned tournament at any level for three months. If no USTA National Championship falls during the 3-month period, the player shall not be accepted or endorsed into the USTA National Championship immediately following the 3-month suspension period. Upon suspension these 10 points shall be cleared from the player’s record. All other suspension points shall remain on the player’s record and count towards a second suspension.

II. *Second suspension.* If a player receives 8 suspension points within the 12 months immediately following the first suspension, the player shall be suspended from competing in any USTA-sanctioned tournaments at any level for six months. Upon suspension these 8 points shall be cleared from the player’s record. All other suspension points shall remain on the player’s record and count towards a third suspension.

III. *Subsequent suspensions.* If a player receives 6 suspension points within the 12-month period immediately following the second suspension (and any suspension subsequent to the second suspension), the player shall be suspended from competing in any USTA-sanctioned tournament at any level for a period to be determined by the Junior Competition Committee. The suspension period shall not be less than one year and may be up to the remainder of the player’s junior career. These 6 points shall be cleared from the player’s record.

IV. *Written notice to player.* After the Junior Competition Committee has determined that a player should be suspended, the Administrator of Junior Competition shall send a notice by email (if known), first class mail and by certified mail (return receipt requested) to the player at the address shown on the records of the USTA Membership Department. The notice shall set forth:

- that the player is being suspended;
- the length of the suspension;
- the player’s right to appeal the suspension
- the procedure for appealing the suspension
- a statement that if the player chooses not to appeal the suspension, then the suspension shall begin 21 days after the date the notice was mailed.

V. *Player may request that suspension start immediately.* When a player accumulates sufficient points to be suspended, the player may request that the suspension period begin immediately. The player shall mail the request by certified mail or e-mail, return receipt requested, to the Administrator of Junior Competition. If the Administrator confirms that the player has accumulated sufficient points to be suspended, the suspension shall begin on the date that the certified notice was mailed.

VI. *Right to appeal suspension to USTA-Middle States Grievance Committee.* A player shall have the right to appeal a suspension to the Grievance Committee. Absent good cause shown,
any appeal shall be barred unless it is made in writing within 21 days of the Administrator’s mailing the notice of suspension and shall be mailed first class, certified, or registered mail to the Administrator of Junior Competition for Middle States.

VII. **Effective date of suspension.** If an appeal of a suspension is not made to the Grievance Committee, the suspension begins 21 days after the Administrator mails the certified notice of suspension to the player or such earlier date as may be requested in writing by the player. If an appeal of the suspension is made to the Grievance Committee and if the initial decision affirms the suspension, the suspension begins on the date the decision is mailed unless the decision states otherwise or unless a stay is granted. A stay is granted when the player elects to appeal to the Middle States Board of Directors.