

National Ranking Tournament (NRT)

Rules and Procedures



Ranking Procedures

National rankings will be updated and published after each event. As of 12/31/24, national rankings will be calculated using a player's top 4 tournament results.

The current ranking period includes NRT points earned during the previous 52 weeks. However, if a tournament date falls within one week prior or one week after the previous season's tournament, points earned at the previous season's tournament will be replaced with the results of the current tournament. For the 2025-26 season, Grand Prix points from the prior season's 4 Grands Prix will roll off in order, regardless of a change in name, location, or exact date from the prior year's Grand Prix schedule, until the 5th Grand Prix of the 2025-26 season is played and these points will then be available to factor into current NRT points.

Removal of any earned NRT points due to rules infractions or punishment for player behavior will be enforced as instructed by the National Tournament Committee (NTC).

Based on odd size draws, last chance play, and feed-in draws, NRT points may have to be adjusted slightly to correctly award teams for their final placement.

Ranking points earned in a NRT event will follow the published National ranking point schedule multiplied by the tournament weighting designated by the NTC after the event is completed.

The National Tournaments Committee (NTC) reserves the right to make adjustments to ranking, seeding, or weighting procedures should any anomalies arise.

Additional Seeding Procedures

Seeding and instructions for pulling the draw for all NRT events will follow the guidelines of the Entry, Seeding, & Ranking Table.

The number of teams participating will determine the number of seeds (and number of seeds to be listed vs. non-listed (placed teams) in the draw sheet). See the chart - Seeds & Placements by Draw Size.

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When the number of teams on the waitlist exceeds the number of available spots and there is a tie in ranking (either matching NRT points or no NRT points) for the last available spot or spots, the team(s) with the lowest combined PTI will be moved into the tournament. In the event of a tie in both NRT points and combined PTI, teams will be entered in chronological order based on date of registration.

If a first-round match has three players from the same club or the same out-of-town area, the NTC will adjust the match/draw if possible.

Draw Adjustments: If the seeding list changes once the draw has been pulled, the NTC will adjust it as needed. The draw will stand as is after 4:00 PM the day before the event is scheduled to start unless a team drops out or there is a partner change and the NTC is able to make and communicate changes to the draw according to seeding and placement rules in a timely and fair manner.

Wild Cards: A wild card will be available for every 16 teams allowed in a draw in all tournaments. In a 32-draw, two wild cards would be allowed. Following this example, in a 32 draw, the top 30 teams, based on their combined individual national ranking points, will be guaranteed a spot in the draw once the registration closes. The remaining teams will be placed on a waitlist by combined individual national ranking points. Once the registration is closed, the waitlist is closed. A wild card team must be registered for the tournament by the registration deadline. For all draws, if no wild card spots are used, the next team or teams, based on highest combined NRT points, will be allowed in the draw. The National Tournament Committee, with guidance from the local Tournament Director, will make the decisions on all wild cards. Wild card requests may come from tournament directors, the APTA, or players themselves, and should be requested prior to the close of registration.

Tournament Procedures

All participants must be APTA members.

All NRT events must schedule at least three matches for all teams unless approved by the NTC. Optional back draw matches (as described below), as well as walkovers created by no-shows, late cancellations the day before the tournament, and retirements or defaults during the tournament, are counted as matches for the purposes of the guarantee.

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Optional Back Draw Rules: Any player who finishes his/her previous match and loses is responsible for playing his/her next scheduled back draw match, except in NRT Quarterfinal or Semifinal Reprieve back draw matches detailed below, which include all Grand Prix events and the Men's and Women's National Championships. Players who choose not to play must communicate their intent to default to the Tournament Director or APTA Tour Director prior to their scheduled match time.

Additional details on Quarterfinal Reprieve back draw matches: The Quarterfinal Reprieve in draws over 16 teams is OPTIONAL. In one day 16 draws, the Quarterfinal Reprieve is MANDATORY. Optional matches are counted for purposes of a 3-match guarantee.

If all four teams choose not to play, all four teams will receive 7th place points. If a team loses or defaults in the semifinal of the Quarterfinal Reprieve, the team will receive 7th place points. A team in the final of the Quarterfinal Reprieve is guaranteed to receive 5th or 6th place points.

A team that wins the Quarterfinal Reprieve final, either by walkover or by playing and winning the match, will receive 5th place points. A team that loses the Quarterfinal Reprieve final, either by choosing not to play or by playing and losing the match, will receive 6th place points. If both teams choose to not play the final, they will each receive the average of 5th and 6th place points. If one team wants to play the Quarterfinal Reprieve semifinal match and the other three teams do not, that team will receive 5th place points and the other three teams will receive 7th place points.

Additional details on Semifinal Reprieve back draw match: The Semifinal Reprieve will be MANDATORY for both men's and women's draws with fewer than 16 teams, unless it would be the 4th match for both teams, in which case one, or both teams, may choose not to play. For the 2025-26 season, the Semifinal Reprieve will be scheduled for all women's Tour draws with more than 16 teams, but is an OPTIONAL match. If both teams agree to play, the winners will receive 3rd place and 19 points, while the losers will receive 4th place and 18 points. If one or both teams decide not to play, both teams receive 18 points. Players must communicate their intent to the Tournament Director or APTA Tour Director prior to their scheduled match time.

Default Penalties: In all National Ranking Tournaments, players who do not play a required main draw or back draw match for reasons other than injury or emergency will receive a

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default from the tournament and lose all points for that tournament. (See above for exceptions.)

Injuries: In the event of an accident or injury, up to a 10-minute suspension of play may be authorized by a tournament official or umpire. A retirement will be mandatory if play is not resumed immediately after the suspension.

Play shall never be suspended, delayed, or interfered with for the purpose of enabling a player to recover his/her strength or to receive instruction or advice. No allowance may be made for natural loss of physical condition such as cramps, faintness, or loss of wind. Tournament officials or umpires will be the sole judge of such suspension, delay, or interference, and after giving due warning, the umpire may disqualify the offender.

Time Between Matches: All previous matches are deemed to have ended when the score is entered into Live Scoring.

1. A tournament official, which may include the APTA Director of Tournaments or an APTA Tour Director in APTA Tour events, may allow up to 30 minutes between matches.
2. If travel is required, the tournament official will add a reasonable amount of time between matches.
3. Each team will be allowed up to a 1-hour break after completion of the round scheduled before lunch and their next match.
4. For Tour events, a break of one hour will be allowed before main draw semi final matches if they are scheduled to be the last match of the day. A break of one hour will be allowed between the semifinals and finals when both rounds are played on the same day.

Tardiness: If a hut commander cannot locate a player or team at the scheduled match time, the hut commander will notify the APTA Tour Director or Tournament Director that the player or team is not present. The hut commander will keep time until the late player or team arrives, and any penalty will be assessed, and the match will be played from that point forward. Penalties will be applied (in accordance with the schedule outlined below) and enforced by the Tournament Director and APTA Tour Director.

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- Any time a team will be late for its next scheduled match because its previous match ended after its next match was scheduled, teams must coordinate with the hut commander, APTA Tour Director, or Tournament Director on the revised start time for its next match. The new start time may include a short break, drive time, or lunch break, if applicable. In general, all teams are expected to check in with the hut commander after their match is completed to confirm the starting time of their next match.
- Penalties will begin to be assessed as soon as there is an available court for the scheduled match:
 - 5 minute grace period
 - 6 to 10 minutes: Loss of toss
 - 11 to 15 minutes: Loss of toss and first point
 - 16 to 25 minutes: Loss of toss and the first game
 - 26 to 35 minutes and 36 to 45 minutes: Each loss of another game
 - 46 minutes: Default

Court or Facility Damage Penalties: If any incidents are reported to the APTA after an NRT match or tournament play, the APTA will take the following steps:

1. The APTA will investigate the allegation and report its findings to the National Tournament Committee. If actual damage is done, there will be an immediate 30-day suspension from all APTA-sanctioned events. The player will be financially responsible for all repairs.
2. If there is a second incident involving the same player, there will be a 1-year suspension. The player will be financially responsible for all repairs.
3. If a player is determined to have been involved in any action that could potentially damage a court (examples include slamming a paddle into the screen, net, or court, kicking a screen, or throwing paddles out of the court), but there is no physical damage, the player will receive a written warning. If there is a second incident, the player will receive a 30-day suspension; after a third incident, the player will receive a 1-year suspension.

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Requesting New Balls: During NRTs, play should continue with the same ball throughout a set, including the tiebreaker. A new ball should only be requested during the set if the current ball becomes clearly defective. Any tournament can allow more frequent ball changes, but this must be communicated in advance.

For all APTA Tour events, including the Men's and Women's National Championships, players in all main draw matches (with or without an umpire) from the quarterfinal round on can request to change to a new ball every 7 games. Any 1 player may request the change, and all 4 do not need to agree for the change to be made. For tournaments that may have umpired matches before the main draw quarter finals, the Tournament Director will determine the ball change schedule before the tournament; however, for all main draw matches within that round, whether umpired or not, players have the option to have the same ball change rotation. Specifically, all players within the same round must have access to the same ball change opportunities, whether or not there is an umpire on the court.

For all NRTs, including APTA Tour events, in the event of inclement weather, and all four players agree, any match from the round of 16 on may change the ball more often. This change should occur on a predetermined set number of odd games or once all players agree that the ball is defective and no longer playable.

Use of Lights and Heaters: If any player requests the use of lights during a match, then lights will be utilized until all 4 players agree to discontinue use. If any player requests the use of heaters during a match with inclement weather, then heaters will be utilized until either the courts are dry, or all 4 players agree to discontinue use.

Changing Courts Before or During Play: If any player on a court feels play will be or is unsafe (e.g., due to severe weather or changing court conditions), they may ask permission to switch courts or delay play. It is at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director or APTA Tour Director to make this change. If the tournament official is not available, the hut commander will make the decision. Once made, the decision is final.

Rules for Umpired Matches

The APTA strives to have umpires for all quarterfinals, semifinals, and finals of the main draw in Grand Prix, Mixed Nationals, and Men's and Women's National Championships. Non-Grand Prix tournaments may or may not have umpires; it is up to the Tournament Director.

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Umpire duties include:

The Spin: Before the start of play, the umpire will flip a coin or administer a racquet spin to determine the choice of end of court and the right to serve first or to receive first.

Scoring: Umpires will determine the score before every point and after each game. If there is a scoring dispute, all four players must agree on the correct score. Evidence players can use to help determine the correct score, if available, include:

1. The Chair Umpire's opinion
2. Live Scoring done by an APTA official
3. Live Streaming match score

The Tournament Director or APTA Tour Director will review all available evidence and have the final say if all four players still can't agree. Spectators' opinions are not relevant.

Overrules: If an out call is made and the team who lost the point disagrees, they may ask the umpire for a ruling. The umpire will then either agree with the call and play will continue, or the umpire will overrule the call, which is a loss of point for the team who made the call. To reiterate, the players make all line calls; the umpire will make a line call only if there is a disputed call, and the umpire's ruling is final.

Violations: Umpires may call violations that are immediate loss of point without a warning: foot faults, double bounce, player touching the net, player reaching over the net to strike the ball (assuming the ball has not bounced on striker's side yet), intentional distractions, and player touched by the ball. All of these violations, except for foot fault, should be called by the player themselves, according to the etiquette section of the rules, but in case they are not, if the umpire sees it, he/she will call it.

Pace of Play: Umpires are responsible for maintaining an appropriate pace of play. The first offense per team will be a warning. See below for time permitted.

Note: During the match, a player shall not leave the court area without permission of the umpire; this includes at the beginning of the match and at the end of a set.

1. Changing sides: When changing sides on the odd games, a maximum of 1 minute is allowed for players to towel off, change equipment, rest, etc.

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2. Between points: During a service game, the server is permitted a maximum of 20 seconds between the finish of play on a point and the delivery of the next service.
3. Between sets: A maximum of 2 minutes is allowed between sets. However, after discussion with opponents and/or umpire, up to 5 minutes is allowed for a restroom break or special circumstances. Equipment adjustment: If a player's clothing, footwear, or equipment becomes out of adjustment in such a way that it is impossible or undesirable for the player to continue, up to a 10-minute suspension in play may be authorized by the APTA Tour Director or Tournament Director.

Penalties: An umpire, a Tournament Director, an APTA Tour Director, or designated APTA official has authority to administer penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct during a tournament. The umpire may impose penalties that may include a warning or loss of point. Penalties such as loss of game, set, match, or expulsion from the tournament will be made upon consultation between the umpire and APTA Tour Director, the Tournament Director, or designated APTA official. Examples of unsportsmanlike conduct: continuous, aggressive questioning of line calls, throwing the paddle, court abuse, abusive or foul language, retaliatory calls, threatening verbal or physical behavior, and name calling.