

# GLTA Tournament Rulebook

Effective as of November 1, 2023



Any questions or comments about the content of the manual may be directed to the GLTA Board

([tennis@glta.net](mailto:tennis@glta.net)). Questions or comments about the Ranking Systems may be directed to the GLTA Ranking Chair ([rankings@glta.net](mailto:rankings@glta.net)). Questions pertaining to fees may be directed to the GLTA Treasurer ([treasurer@glta.net](mailto:treasurer@glta.net)).

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## **Section I. ABOUT THE GLTA**

The GLTA was established in the early 1980's with a handful of LGBTQ clubs on the West Coast of the USA, and over the next few years a small group of players and local organizations expanded into a global network of LGBTQ tennis players and clubs. The GLTA was officially formed and incorporated on July 4, 1991, and the GLTA was established as the international governing body for LGBTQ tennis. By the end of 2018, the GLTA will host 76 world-class tennis tournaments on six continents with 10,000 participants. In addition to our tournaments, and more importantly, the GLTA has an established LGBTQ organization/club in every major LGBTQ community in the world. Our local club memberships continue to grow each year, and the GLTA is now considered the premier LGBTQ sporting organization in the world. The number one goal of the GLTA is to expand our current markets, and to establish new clubs in communities that currently do not have a sanctioned GLTA club. With over \$2 million USD in charitable donations since our inception, the sanctioned clubs of the GLTA are proud to be among the most successful charity fundraisers in the history of the LGBTQ sports movement. For more information regarding the GLTA WORLD TOUR, or to contact the GLTA Board, please log-on to our website at [www.glta.net](http://www.glta.net)

## **Section II. GLTA TOURNAMENT SANCTIONING**

### **A. GLTA SUPPORT FOR SANCTIONED TOURNAMENTS**

The Gay and Lesbian Tennis Alliance (GLTA) exclusively support sanctioned clubs and tournaments worldwide by:

- Promoting tournaments/clubs on the GLTA website and GLTA publications, such as the GLTA Tour Newsletter
- Harmonizing the various regional tennis standards and divisions and integrating them into one global set of uniformed GLTA tournament standards
- Serving as the governing body for GLTA sanctioned events including the promotion of GLTA tournament/club standards
- Providing high quality software for tournament management
- Providing internet infrastructure for communication of tournament draws and results
- Maintaining and publishing accurate rankings and assisting with the seeding process
- Integrating tournament results with the GLTA rankings database
- Pursuing public relations programs to promote the GLTA tour
- Securing sponsorships and partnerships with related businesses and organizations
- Developing new programs to stimulate growth in the tour
- Developing and maintaining a website for communicating news and information
- Managing funds to finance common infrastructure and programs
- Facilitating the exchange of ideas and knowledge among member clubs
- Providing a GLTA Free Entry Voucher to qualifying clubs for use in fundraising
- Administering an awards program to recognize club and player contributions
- Awarding successful tournaments with Master's Series status which rotates each year

### **B. APPLICATION FOR GLTA SANCTIONING**

An organization requesting GLTA sanctioning for their tournament/club must apply on an annual basis by August 31st if your tournament occurs prior to September 1 of each year. If your tournament is held after September 1st, your sanctioning request is due 12/31 of each year. The sanctioning process is electronic and the GLTA Secretary will send the registration link the first week of August each year. Also, the link can be found at [www.glta.net](http://www.glta.net). Once the completed request is submitted and the funds required for GLTA sanctioning are received, the GLTA Board will review your sanctioning request, once approved; the tournament/club will be listed on the [www.glta.net](http://www.glta.net) site.

Failure by a club to submit a completed application including all applicable fees by the deadline will result in the club's tournament being assessed a \$50 late fee. Clubs which miss the final deadline but still wish to pursue sanctioning may submit an appeal request to the GLTA Secretary at [secretary@glta.net](mailto:secretary@glta.net).

The GLTA Board recommends that new organizations considering developing a GLTA sanctioned event also submit their applications before August 31<sup>st</sup> of the year prior to the event. The starting cost is \$175 (1/1/19) for new club sanctioning. Clubs should also carefully evaluate their regional markets and the overall GLTA schedule before submitting an application. If the region associated with a prospective tournament already has one or more GLTA events which are near or below the average size for a GLTA tournament (~150 entrants), extra care should be taken in the selection of tournament dates.

In general, the GLTA welcomes new clubs that wish to pursue sanctioning and strives to grow the tour each year. However, the GLTA Board reserves the right to deny sanctioning to a proposed tournament for any bona fide reason including schedule conflict with an existing sanctioned or affiliated tournament.

GLTA division guidelines harmonize the various rating systems throughout the world into one common set of divisions and guidelines, creating a distinct circuit of tournaments unlike any other. The pursuit of dual sanctioning from an ITF affiliated governing body is permitted provided the member organization promoting such sanctioning submits documentation signed by an authorized official of the secondary sanctioning body clearly acknowledging that:

- a) GLTA players will not be required to become members of an ITF affiliate or pay fees directly to an ITF affiliate in order to be eligible to compete
- b) The rules, division standards, and guidelines outlined in the GLTA Tournament Rulebook will take precedence in all cases where there exists a conflict

This documentation must be submitted in conjunction with the GLTA sanctioning application.

Once a tournament application is approved, the tournament will be sanctioned for one year.

### **C. OBLIGATIONS OF SANCTIONED TOURNAMENTS:**

- Use tournament revenue only for tournament program expenses and for contributions to valid non-profit organizations. Tournament revenue may be used to cover prior year deficits or to invest in a future tournament, but it may not be used for the personal benefit of any individual or group of individuals. If prize money is awarded to players it must be equal across all divisions and cannot be more than the registration fee. **For-profit tournaments should not pursue GLTA sanctioning.**
- Recognize the GLTA as the governing body for sanctioned GLTA tournaments and comply with all provisions of the GLTA Tournament Rulebook
- Promptly pay all fees associated with GLTA sanctioning
- Maintain a policy of inclusion and non-discrimination
- Designate a GLTA Representative (usually, but not limited to Club Presidents or Tournament Director's) who is responsible for:
  - Representing the interests of their organization within the GLTA
  - Ensuring GLTA communications are circulated to club members
  - Voting on matters put before the GLTA Committee, including elections
  - Participating in periodic conference calls of the GLTA Committee
  - Submitting the club's sanctioning application and tournament assessment form
- Disclose the event's GLTA-sanctioned status in any press release and place the GLTA logo in any print advertisements.
- If a tournament has a website, the site must indicate that the tournament is a GLTA-sanctioned event and must display the GLTA logo on the home page with a link to the GLTA website.

- Allow the GLTA to negotiate and finalize national or global sponsorships on behalf of the tournament regarding products or services such as bottled water, tennis balls, energy bars, airlines, car rentals, liability insurance, etc.

***Please note: Failure to meet obligations or to comply with GLTA rules and regulations may result in the loss of GLTA sanctioning for the tournament/clubs.***

## **Section III. Visual Reality and TTP**

In January 2008, the GLTA proudly introduced *Visual Reality* as the organization's software provider. Software can be downloaded from their home website at: <http://www.tournamentsoftware.com/product/download.aspx?id=16&s=2> We also recommend that you download the manual (\*\*please note... due to the large size of this document it may be difficult to print.) Visual has also placed some instructional video's on their website for tutorial viewing:

<http://www.tournamentsoftware.com/product/faq.aspx?id=45&s=2>

The GLTA has paid the initial TTP license for all sanctioned clubs. This license is valid until 1/31 of each year. Software is not limited to GLTA sanctioned events, and can be applied to all league and club events throughout the year.

TTP will have no trouble recognizing which events constitute GLTA rankings as opposed to the events that don't. Visual Reality is an innovative company that is constantly updating and enhancing program features, therefore any upgrades to the software will be free and downloadable from the website for all organizations. Visual Reality also offers *Tournament TV*. With this added feature you will be able to link your software to a TV screen to show results, upcoming matches, sponsor logo's or tournament information. This license is NOT free for GLTA clubs. If you care to use this feature, you can order a license at [www.tournamentsoftware.com](http://www.tournamentsoftware.com). The license is not expensive (Initial set up fee is around 90 dollar or (60 euro). And again, we encourage you to visit the TTP site to obtain more information pertaining to this exciting feature. Finally, if you need support with the tournament software, you can ask your GLTA Board representative. If they cannot assist, you can always contact the helpdesk at Visual Reality: [info@toernooi.nl](mailto:info@toernooi.nl)

You may also find contact details on the Internet site: [www.tournamentsoftware.com](http://www.tournamentsoftware.com) (\*\*Please note that Visual Reality is located in Europe. EST + 6 hours)

## **Section IV. THE ROLE OF THE TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE**

Clubs should appoint a Tournament Director and/or Committee, and if possible, a Tournament Referee. The Tournament Director and Referee should thoroughly study and understand the GLTA Tournament Rulebook as well as the rules of their ITF-affiliated national or regional tennis organization. If a Tournament Committee thinks it must deviate from any of the GLTA Rules or Regulations, it should contact their GLTA Board Representative before the event for approval.

### **A. Tournament Budget: The Planning Structure**

Once a basic plan for the tournament is outlined, a preliminary budget can be made to assess the financial feasibility of the plans. As the planning evolves, the budget should change accordingly. Estimates for each expense and income category will change many times, and an updated budget will point out potential problem areas and budget overruns. Since the host club will eventually have to pay for any budget overruns, the earlier the initial budget can be done, the better. It should be set up on a simple spreadsheet for ease of making changes throughout the planning process. For more information please consult with your GLTA Board Representative.

### **B. Site and Surface Selection**

One of the first and most important decisions a Tournament Committee will make is selecting and securing court site(s) for the tournament. Draw sizes and the decision to include or exclude optional divisions and consolation events will depend on the number of courts available. Therefore, it is advisable to do a court plan as early as possible with estimates for draw sizes or limits so that appropriate court reservations can be made. Using two different surfaces for one event should be avoided, but when this is not possible, each division should play on only one surface throughout the event (i.e.,

the B's might play all matches on clay, while the Open plays only on hard courts.) The decision as to which division will play on which surface should be made as early as possible, and explicitly advertised on the tournament entry forms and/or website.

## **C. Entry Form Requirements**

All GLTA Entry Forms MUST include the following:

- GLTA Player Number
- Waiting list policy
- GLTA Division Standards
- Waiver of Liability
- Refund Policy
- Minimum Division Size Policy
- Policy regarding whether or not players must play in the same division for all events Consolation availability
- Minimum age of 18 yrs (exceptions may be made if player has written approval from parent) Disclosure that names will be viewable on the GLTA website

It is mandatory that each GLTA entry form include a "Waiver" section which must be agreed to and signed by all players prior to play. Through this section, players waive any potential claims against the club, club officers, the facilities, the GLTA, and GLTA officers. The waiver should be added to the "regulations" tab of your TTP properties.

It is also recommend that email addresses and phone numbers be requested on entry forms

If a tournament committee is unsure about the completeness of their entry form, they should contact their GLTA Board Representative for review.

Several good examples of recent tournament entry forms are available by contacting any GLTA Officer. It is a good idea to include a section that the player can retain once the entry is mailed in, which would include important dates and contact numbers (Directors, Housing Chair, draw information, etc.)

### ***1. Notification of Entry Status***

Tournament Directors should send notification to all players upon receipt of their entry. (Communication may be postcard, letter, e-mail or equivalent). Also, all clubs are encouraged to use the online registration feature of the TTP software, and the software will automatically send an entry confirmation email to each player.

### ***2. Entry Deadline***

It is recommended the official entry deadline be set TWO WEEKS before the start of play. Most clubs have found that with the number of players on the circuit now, it is essential to have extra time to establish final draw sizes and make last minute changes. This should give ample time for confirmation letters, housing assignments, banquet size, court planning, draw sheets and program printing.

### ***3. Player Refunds***

If a player withdraws from a tournament prior to the deadline stated on the entry form, the tournament committee must provide a full refund within 30 days of withdrawal. If a player is not assigned a partner for doubles or mixed doubles, the tournament committee must provide a refund for the applicable portion of their entry fee within 30 days of tournament completion.

There should also be a policy which deals with the cancellation of an event or an entire tournament. The specifics of the policy will be left to the discretion of the tournament committee.

#### ***4. Consolation Rounds Availability***

It is mandatory to state if Consolation play will be available to those who lose their first match played - Byes or defaults do not count as a round played. Clubs which offer consolation play must undertake their best efforts to deliver a consolation event, even in the event of inclement weather. Consolation events do not need to be hosted at the primary tournament site and may be on surface different from that of the main draw.

#### ***D. Draw Sizes & Match Scheduling***

Integral to the selection of court sites is deciding maximum draw sizes. A rule of thumb to keep in mind:

#### **MAXIMUM MATCHES PER DAY**

**Singles:** Maximum 2 Matches Per Day (unless format is abbreviated)  
3-day event: Maximum 6 matches (64-draw)

**Doubles:** Maximum 2 Matches Per Event per Day (unless format is abbreviated)

Once the division structure is chosen and the sites are secured, the Tournament Committee must develop an accurate estimate of the number of players that can be comfortably accommodated. There are generally two strategies at this point:

##### ***1. Set Draw Limits by Division***

In this case, each scheduled division would be announced to have a draw limit (i.e., 16, 32, 64), and entries would be closed for that division when the limit is reached.

##### ***2. Setting Limits on Total Players***

The tournament committee may also decide on a total number of players the event can accommodate and leave the individual draw limits to float. Since it is often difficult to predict which division will actually be the largest, this approach accommodates the most people.

## **Section V. TOURNAMENT DIVISIONS**

The GLTA has developed division standards for the following purposes:

- To assist players in deciding which division to play
- To assist Tournament Committees in assigning players to more uniform ability Classifications
- To make more uniform use of the tournament results in the GLTA Player Points System.

The GLTA has adopted basic tournament division standards for all sanctioned tournaments. The GLTA recognizes that larger and smaller tournaments may choose alternative formats to meet their situations and the needs and desires of local club players. Tournament directors must promote and label each event within a tournament according to the division standards outlined in this rulebook.

#### **A. GLTA Division Standards Guideline**

The GLTA Division Standards are shown below, along with the equivalent ratings. To assist in keeping a more uniform understanding of the definitions of each ability category, it is suggested that the rating be used along with the division (i.e. "B/3.5-4.0", "C/3.0") on entry forms and tournament information.



GLTA Division Standards								
GLTA Basic Divisions	USTA & Tennis Canada NTRP Rating	UK	Netherlands	Belgium	Germany	Italy	France	Switzerland
OPEN	6.5+	No. 1-20	1	A, B-15.4	Bundesliga Regionalliga		15/1 +	N1, N2, N3, N4, (1 – 150)
OPEN	6.0	-30, -4/6	2	B-15.2	Oberliga	B3, B4	15/1 +	R1
OPEN	5.5	-4/6 -2/6 0 +2/6 +4/6	3	B-15 B-4.6 B-2.6 B0	1e Verbandsliga	C1	15/1 +	R2
OPEN	5.0+	+15	4	B+2.6 B+4.6 C+15.4	2e Verbandsliga	C2	15/1 +	R3
A	4.5	+15/1 +15/2	5	C+15.2 C+15.4	1e Bezirksklasse 2e Bezirksklasse	C3	15/2, 15/3	R4, R5
B	3.5 - 4.0	+15/3 +15/4	6	C+30	1e Kreisklasse 2e Kreisklasse	C4	30, 15/4, 15/5	R6 ,R7
C	3.0	+15/5 +30	7	C+30.2 C+30.4	3e Kreisklasse		30/1, 30/2, 30/3	R8
D	<3.0	+30/3	8 (9)		4e Kreisklasse		30/4, 30/5,	R9
							40, NC	

Division Definitions (to be used on entry forms):

Division	Description
Open	Highly advanced players
A & 40+A	Advanced players
B & 40+B	High intermediate players
C & 40+C	Low intermediate players
D & 40+D	Beginning players

The basic divisions apply for both men and women, and the GLTA highly recommends that a tournament offer all basic men's events if any men's events are offered and all women's events if any women's events are offered on the entry form. Divisions may be combined if the minimum number of entries is not received as defined by the entry form policy. If over 50% of the participants are from the higher division, the event must be coded as the higher level event. If there are fewer than 50% from the higher division, it should be coded as the appropriate age category. For example, an event with 1 Open player and 6 A players should be coded as a 40+ event. An event with 1 A player and 6 B players should be coded as a 50+ event.

~~Women who enter men's ability or ability/age events are eligible for the division one level below their normal division.~~  
(rule changed - see addendum at end of document)

The division standards should appear on all GLTA entry forms. If abbreviated in any way, you must ensure that division guidelines are understood by all players. It is still the responsibility of the players to enter the appropriate division, but tournament directors should undertake their best efforts to ensure that all players entering comply with these standards by reviewing requested divisions against the GLTA Player Seeding databases. The latest GLTA Seeding databases will list each player's "Minimum Play Level" in singles, doubles and mixed doubles, and the GLTA Rankings Chair will send the

ranking file information to the email address listed in your sanctioning application. The file will be sent 10 days prior to the start of your tournament.

## **B. Optional Divisions**

All GLTA sanctioned events must follow the ability division's format shown above, but there are options that are left to the Tournament Committee with regard to age divisions, mixed doubles and consolation draws. For instance, an organization with no women members may have a difficult time promoting and/or filling a separate women's division. Another organization with a very large "senior" membership may choose to add one or more age divisions (40+, 50+, 60+) at their event. Tournaments that want to expand but cannot increase the size of their basic division draws may elect to add 40+A, 40+B, 40+C, and 40+D divisions. Most clubs with limited court space/time have had to weigh the tradeoff between holding consolation draws and the optional divisions, or total draw size. These types of decisions are again left to the tournament committee.

## **C. Requirements For Entry in Divisions**

### ***1. Ability Divisions***

Both Singles and Doubles have a separate GLTA Seeding Points database that operates independently from the other events. Players may be eligible for one ability level for singles while being eligible for a different ability level in doubles. Players are allowed to play in different divisions as long as split divisions are permitted by the tournament.

Tournaments with one site should permit split divisions. A player may play down up to two levels from their highest division entered if there is an established ranking for both events. For example, when an eligible player enters the "Open" doubles division they can play the "B" singles division if there are established rankings for both. If there is no established ranking for one event entered then only one level down is permitted. No player shall be allowed to play a lower division than that which theirs is listed under in the latest GLTA Seeding Point database. This includes a righthanded player, who enters a tournament "left-handed."

A player with a current valid ranking by an ITF-Affiliated National or Regional tennis association may not play in a division lower than that ranking unless they have a valid and current GLTA ranking.

For our purposes, a rating for a year ending within two years of the current year shall be considered valid if it is the most recent one available.

Players do NOT forfeit their tournament results by playing with another hand, and shall NOT be treated as a "different player" by this declaration. It is the responsibility and authority of the Tournament Director to see that player placement in divisions complies with the above rules, and is fair to all entrants.

### ***2. Age Divisions***

A player may enter any senior division (40+, 50+, 60+, etc.), if the player will have reached the minimum age for that division by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the calendar year in which the tournament starts. Starting in 2005, the change was made from 35/45/55 to 40/50/60 because the 35+ category was usually redundant with the Open category and very few tournaments were electing to offer age categories under the earlier framework.

### ***3. Ability/Age Divisions***

These optional divisions (40+A, 40+B, 40+C, 40+D) were created to allow larger tournaments to expand their participation without creating oversized draws which could not be played within the time constraints. It also reduces the number of rounds that more senior players are required to play.

Players who qualify for these divisions may elect to play in their regular ability division or in the ability/age division. Tournament committees may offer any combination of singles, doubles, or mixed doubles for these divisions and may set rules on split divisions as they see fit.

#### ***4. Graduation to Higher Divisions & Division Points***

Graduation to a higher division occurs when a player's points exceed a pre-determined threshold.

<b>Division</b>	<b>Maximum Rating</b>
<b>Open</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>42,500</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>4,250</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>425</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>40+A</b>	<b>42,500</b>
<b>40+B</b>	<b>4,250</b>
<b>40+C</b>	<b>425</b>
<b>40+D</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>40+</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>50+</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>60+</b>	<b>N/A</b>

The above rules have no effect on any player's ability to play in an appropriate age division if offered.

#### ***5. Applicable Period for GLTA Seeding Point Database***

The GLTA Seeding Point Database provided by the Seeding Chair to each tournament contains results from the players previous 4 GLTA events played (over the course of unlimited amount of years) of sanctioned tournament play ending 14 days prior to the scheduled start of the event. Player divisions are frozen at this point regardless of tournament results which may occur during the intervening 14 days

For events in excess of 500 players which require more time for development of draws and schedules, the tournament committee may request and utilize a Seeding Point Database from 45 days prior to the event instead of 14, but they should communicate their policy to players no later than 6 months prior to the start of the event.

#### ***6. Penalties for Playing in Wrong Division***

If a player violates these provisions by playing in an inappropriate division, then that player should be immediately defaulted out of the tournament and will not be awarded GLTA points in any entered singles or doubles division for the tournament(s) at which the violation(s) occurred. Tournament Directors should use their best judgment to default any player after play has begun if that player was entered into the wrong division.

This guideline applies to all players including those who are self rated, those who have a valid GLTA ranking, and those who have a current ranking from an ITF affiliated tennis organization. If only one round of play has occurred, the defeated player is to be re-instated as the winner. If more than one round has occurred, the player is to be disqualified and the last opponent reinstated into the draw as the winner of that round. Players who are disqualified earn no GLTA points for matches won and will not receive a refund of their entry fee.

## **Section VI. SEEDING**

### **A. GLTA Player Point Seeding System**

The GLTA Player Point Seeding System has been developed to assist Tournament Committees in seeding for GLTA Tournaments. However, Tournament Seeding Committees are NOT bound to use the point's results only, and are

encouraged to account for any other information, when available, to determine seedlings. The point system is maintained by the GLTA Seeding Chair; updated seeding information may be obtained from the Seeding Chair at any time. The Tournament Director should contact the GLTA Seeding Chair two months before the date of the scheduled draw to coordinate the exchange of the latest seeding data which is updated after each GLTA Tournament. There are two sections of the database - one for singles results, one for doubles.<sup>2</sup> the seeding information has been used successfully as a guideline for seeding in all divisions.

### **1. Match Points**

Players will be awarded match points for each round won in each GLTA Sanctioned event. Match points for any given round depend on:

- a) The division played
- b) The number of players in the event
- c) The proximity of the round won to the final round

Standard Match Points by division are as follows:

Division	Standard Match Points
Open	100,000
A & age division A	10,000
B & age division B	1,000
C & division C	100
D & division D	10

The number of players in the event and the proximity of the round to the final round are taken into consideration by applying a multiple of these standard match points according to the following chart. Also, all players that play an event and lose their first match will be added to the GLTA database. Below is the new updated match point grid as of 1/31/2012.

### **Multiple of Standard Match Points**

Draw	Nr of players	Winner 1st	Runner Up 2nd	SF 3th/4th	QF 5-8th	R16 9-16th	R32 17-32th	R64 33-64th	R128 65-128th	R256 129-256th
2	2	2								
3	3	3	1							
4	4	3	1							
5	5	4	2	1						
8	6-8	5	3	1						
16	9-12	7	5	2	1					
16	13-16	9	6	3	1					
32	17-24	10	7	4	2	1				
32	25-32	10	7	4	2	1				
64	33-48	11	8	5	3	2	1			
64	49-64	11	8	5	3	2	1			

For Example 1, Player A wins an Open Singles event consisting of 6 players in which he or she received a first round quarterfinal bye. He or she will be awarded 100,000 X 2 for the first round semifinal win and 100,000 X 3 for the final win for a total of 500,000 points including the single point for participation. Example 2, Player B is playing in C Doubles in a draw of 27 teams and reaches the semifinals, but does not advance to the final. He or she would be awarded 100 X 4 for a total of 400 points; the opponent that moved on to the final and won would have 100 X 9 for a total of 900 points.

Consolation event winners will earn one round of points for the applicable division. For COMPASS Draws, only the "West" consolation event winner will be eligible for consolation points.

## ***2.) Points for default, retirements, withdrawal or walkover matches***

Ranking points must be assigned to every match in every draw, including results for retired matches, walkovers and defaults, based on the table on page 14 of the GLTA rulebook.

There are two concerns with respect to these rules:

- 1.) No points will be awarded for a default, retirement, or walkover in a consolation match in all rounds until the final round.
- 2.) No points will be awarded for defaults, byes or walkovers in a first match unless the player wins the next round.

Explanation:

A player who does not show up to a tournament must be removed from a tournament file, otherwise they will have an extra tournament that will be calculated into their 4 tournament GLTA results file.

To make the distinction between a "first round" default and one in the subsequent rounds, it is imperative that tournament directors accurately administer scores for defaults.

All first match defaults (walkovers) must be noted as withdrawal (wd), defaults and walkovers in subsequent rounds must be noted as defaults or walkovers. Never use withdrawal in a round other than a "first round match".

## ***3.) Player Eligibility Within Divisions***

Players eligible for the age division Open/A/B/C/D divisions may elect to play in either their regular ability division or in their age/ability division. For the purposes of calculating player points the 40's is the equivalent of the twice A division points; the 50's is the equivalent of the twice B division points; and the 60's is the equivalent of the twice C division points.

A player's match points are calculated by adding the points as indicated above for each match won. A player's rating is calculated by adding the total points accumulated at a maximum of 5 tournaments then dividing by the total number of tournaments played, with a minimum divisor of 1.75 for players with only 1 tournament in the ranking database. Ratings are calculated separately for Singles and Doubles. When an event offers Mixed Doubles, all points earned will count toward their Doubles ranking and will also count as a separate event. For example, if Player A is a new player and elects to participate in both Open Doubles and Open Mixed at the Atlanta tournament, then Player A will have earned ranking points in two events, thus his/her combined points earned in those events must be divided by 2 instead of 1.75 for playing in just 1 event.

Players may access the latest points on the GLTA web site at [www.glta.net](http://www.glta.net)

### **3. Doubles Points**

Doubles points are awarded individually. For seeding purposes, team points are determined by adding both partners' ranking totals. However, Tournament Directors may use discretion in determining seeding if, for example, one player has an extremely high ranking or if there seems to be a large disparity in ability between partners.

### **B. Number of Seeds**

The tournament committee may seed players at a maximum ratio of one seed for every four players or major fraction thereof (i.e., two or three players more than the even multiple of four does justify an additional seed, but one player more does not.) Notwithstanding the above, every single elimination draw regardless of size should have at least two seeds.

### **C. Factors to Consider**

Seedings should represent the committee's subjective rating of the various players' chances of winning the tournament and must be justified by a reasonable amount of factual evidence. The committee should consider all available evidence including, but not limited to rankings, current records, types of surface and head to head encounters.

The GLTA Player Seeding System has been developed to provide one common and objective way of seeding players. However, the Tournament Committee has the responsibility to review the points, and make final judgments as to other factors of which they may be aware. In general, more recent results should be weighed more heavily than past results. A committee should be very careful in considering a player with no GLTA points, or no GLTA tournament record for seeding, unless there is overwhelming evidence of some verifiable recent tournament success elsewhere.

### **D. "Placing" Unseeded Players is Prohibited**

Placing occurs, for example where the committee in a 16 draw event seeds four and "places" four more in the draw away from seeded players. In this case the practice is an attempt to hide the reality that it has seeded eight players, which exceeds the maximum of one per four players. In another case, a committee may have enough information to seed 4 strong players in a 32 draw, but not enough strong data or reasoning to rank the next four, so it chooses to "place" four others. There is nothing wrong with seeding less than the "one per four" maximum if information is not clear, but the practice of "placing" must always be avoided.

### **E. Correcting Errors in Seeding After Draw**

The Tournament Committee may correct an error in seeding after the draw is made only if no affected seeded player has begun a match. However, the procedure is somewhat complicated, and likely to cause hard feelings once the tournament has started. Please contact your GLTA Board Representative for guidance.

### **F. Appeals Process**

There are two valid reasons for approving an appeal of a rating:

1. The player has sustained a permanent injury since his points were won and therefore "is not the same player they used to be". The injury must be permanent in order to be considered a valid basis for an appeal, and in most cases, a written statement explaining and proving the injury must be submitted by a licensed medical physician.
2. The player didn't deserve the points they got in the first place, because their opponent(s) were playing above their level. For example, player A is forced to play Open singles due to their Open Doubles Ranking, and receives 200,000 points for beating player B, a first round quarterfinal opponent who was electing to play above their eligibility level. Since player B was not rated as an Open player, player A may have some basis for having the result disallowed so that they can be eligible to play in the A division despite the victory. Our rating system

requires someone who wins a first-round match in their first event to stay at the same level (or higher) for the next TWO tournaments.

Appeals related to player eligibility may be pursued by either the player or the tournament director. Appeals should be submitted to [rankings@glta.net](mailto:rankings@glta.net). The rankings chair has the authority to grant an appeal, to deny an appeal, or to refer an appeal to a ranking appeal committee. The committee will consist of three people: the Commissioner, the Rankings Chair, and at least one At Large-Board members. It takes a majority to approve appeals which are referred to the committee.

## **Section VII. MAKING THE DRAWS**

### **A. DRAW BY PUBLIC COMMITTEE**

The making of the draws should be open to all interested parties. At least two tournament committee members should be present, but it is preferable that the time and place be announced and open to all entrants.

The TTP software will automatically produce draws and draw sheets. We strongly encourage all Directors to use the online registration feature of the TTP program, and then all players will receive an automated email confirmation of their entry. Please refer to the TTP User Manual for procedures.

### **B. FIRST ROUND OPPONENTS**

Visiting players from the same club or region should not play each other in their first round match. If possible, local players should also not play each other in the first round.

The tournament committee should try and prevent doubles partners from playing each other in their first round match. This is now available as an automated function of TTP, and potential conflicts can be avoided.

### **C. POSTING THE DRAW**

Entrants should be notified as to how and where the draws will be posted, once they are completed. It is also customary to "post the draws" at an announced location and time the night prior to the start of play. Also, all Directors are encouraged to use the "first match" email feature of the software; all players will receive an email announcing their first match time.

*Please see the TTP Tournament Software Manual on instructions on how to post your draw online, and use the player message feature.*

### **D. Withdrawal of a Seed**

If play has not begun, the tournament committee may remake the draw if any of the top four seeds withdraws, or if more than one seed below the top four withdraws. If the tournament committee decides not to remake the draw, then they shall not relocate the seeded players.

For example, if the fifth seed withdraws, the Referee may not simply move the sixth seed to the fifth seed's line, and so on.

### **E. Players Omitted from the Draw**

Any player whose entry is received on time and is otherwise acceptable will not be denied a place in the draw because of administrative error or oversight by tournament officials unless the Referee decides play has proceeded too far to make changes in the draw practicable.

1) If play has not begun and the omitted player would not have been seeded, then their place in the draw should be determined by a random drawing of all unseeded players. The names of all unseeded players are "put in a hat", and a name is drawn. The omitted player takes the place in the draw of the name drawn, and the name drawn moves to the position of the last bye inserted in the draw.

2) If play has not begun, and the omitted player would have been seeded, then the seeding must be changed. The "numbered seeds" will remain on the same lines. The seeded players' names are moved to the new lines corresponding to the number of their new seeded positions (i.e. The new Number 5 seed will take the line where the old Number 5 seed was.) The previous lowest seed is therefore no longer seeded, and his position is determined by using the same procedure as the unseeded player who has been omitted from the draw (see 1. above).

3) If play has begun, or if scheduling problems make the above procedures impossible, one method for determining the omitted player's place in the draw would be for him to take a bye position that is opposite an unseeded player. The specific line would be done by random pick from all such positions remaining. If the only byes available are opposite seeds, the player takes the spot of the last bye placed on the draw.

## **F. Late Entries and Substitutions**

### ***1. When to Accept Late Entries or Substitutes***

The Tournament Director may accept a late entry or substitute a new player or team into the draw if the Director and Referee determine that the ability of the new player or team does not invalidate the seedings. Although it is generally desirable to encourage play, the Director should weigh this against possible repercussions of changing the draw for a person who was not entered by the deadline, and the possible schedule conflicts this may cause to someone who has already been informed they will have a first round bye. The following guidelines must be followed:

- No player or team who has previously lost a match in that draw may be substituted into the draw.
- A substitute may be made for a player or team who has reached the second round due to a bye, but not if they have advanced by default.
- A substitute may be made for a player who is injured in warm-up, if it is his first round match or second round due to a bye.
- If the Tournament Committee has established a priority "waiting" list, he shall use this list before filling places with any other late entries.
- Except in extremely unusual circumstances, the draw shall not be remade once it is announced.

### ***2. Positioning a Substitute***

If one member of each of two doubles teams withdraws, then the two remaining players may be combined into a new team. If one of the two original teams drew a bye, then the new team should be placed opposite this bye. If both of the original doubles teams or if neither team drew a bye, then a coin should be flipped to determine which spot should be taken.



## **Section VIII. MATCH FORMAT AND SCHEDULING**

### **A. Standard Match Format**

The GLTA tournament match format is the standard two-out-of-three set match, with 12-point tie-breaks to be played at 6 games all in any set. (The 12-point tie-break procedure is described in USTA/ITF Rule Section 1.P.7.)

The Tournament Committee may decide to make exceptions to this standard (for instance, all first round matches in a certain division may have to be 8 game pro sets due to valid facility or schedule constraints), but this format should be announced in the player's entry information. One case where this standard is often waived is for early consolation rounds, which are usually 8-game pro sets until the consolation final, which is traditionally the standard two-of-three set format once again. Standard 8-game Pro Sets involve 12 point tiebreakers at 8 games all.

### **B. Alternatives for Unforeseen Delays**

In case of bad weather or major facility disasters that make play at one or more sites impossible, the Tournament Committee may choose any way it deems necessary to finish the tournament by the scheduled time. Some recommended ways are as follows:

#### ***1. Third Set Tie Break***

One of the first options to consider for accelerating the schedule is to eliminate three set matches. This format plays a regular two of three set format, except in the case of split sets, at which time a tie break is used to decide the third set. Tournament directors often elect to use an 18 point "super tiebreaker," which is the first person to reach 10 points with a two point margin.

#### ***2. No Ad Scoring***

The next least disruptive change in match format that a Committee may use to catch up a couple of lost hours is by going to a "no ad" scoring procedure. This simply means that the first player to win four points in a game wins the game. The seventh point of the game (at deuce) is a game point for each player. On this point, in singles or doubles, the receiver may choose to receive the ball on either the deuce or ad side.

#### ***3. Pro Set Format***

For more severe schedule delays, a Committee may have to go to a "pro set" format, which is a one set match, usually to eight games, with a tie-break played at 8 games all. This format may be extended or shortened at the discretion of the tournament committee depending on the severity of the schedule setback. All matches must start at 0-0.

#### ***4. Consistent Application of Abbreviated Formats***

If an abbreviated format of play is instituted due to unforeseen delays, then that format must be used consistently within any given round and whenever possible from division to division. For example, if no-ad scoring is used in early delayed rounds, then no-ad scoring should be used for all matches remaining within a given round. Only in the most severe cases should remaining matches within a round be abbreviated after one or more matches in that round have been played under the standard match format. Matches which have already started under the standard match format may not be abbreviated.

#### ***5. Contingency Plans***

At the outset, every GLTA sanctioned tournament must have available a contingency plan concerning the handling of inclement weather. This plan must include, at a minimum, an information telephone number and maps for any alternative sites which may be used.

### **C. Single Site/Surface by Division**

The tournament committee shall not schedule any division on more than one type of surface. When a tournament cannot be finished on schedule at those courts, the committee has discretion to use any available courts to finish.

It is also recommended, that when possible, each division should be located as much as possible at a single site, to further reduce travel times and potential variability within the same court type.

### **D. Time Allowed Per Scheduled Match**

There is a wide range of possible match time assumptions that could work for an event depending on the surface, the size of the site, the number of players, etc. For more information, please consult your GLTA Board Representative.

### **E. Time Allowed between Matches, Sets, Games, and Points**

All players are entitled to a rest period of at least thirty (30) minutes between singles matches and fifteen (15) minutes between doubles matches. Players are entitled to a rest period of thirty (30) minutes before they must play doubles after the completion of a singles match.

At the end of each set there shall be a set break of up to two (2) minutes, not including the time required to get new balls if applicable.

When players change ends at the end of a game, a maximum of ninety (90) seconds are allowed. However, after the first game of each set and during a tie-break game, play shall be continuous and the players shall change ends without a rest.

Between points, a maximum of twenty (20) seconds is allowed. This does not include time required to chase a stray ball.

No extra time shall be given to allow a player to recover from a conditioning related issue.

A player suffering from a treatable medical condition may be allowed one medical time-out including evaluation time as determined by the referee plus a maximum of three minutes for the treatment of that condition. If qualified medical personnel are not available, the three minute treatment time begins immediately after an official has explained the medical time-out regulation.

A limited number of toilet/change of attire breaks may also be allowed. Whenever possible, these should take place during the two minute second set break.

### **F. Match Default Rule**

A player is defaulted from a match when the player is not available for their scheduled match time as stated in the draw or when match has been called by tournament desk after scheduled match time has past. The guideline is as follows:

- 5 or fewer minutes lost of toss and one games
- 5:01 – 10:00 minutes lost of toss and two games • 10:01 – 15:00 minutes lost of toss and three games.
- After 15:00 minutes Default.

If the Director changes a scheduled match time, the player MUST be personally notified, and they must confirm they have received the new match time before the default rules are enforced. The player does not have to agree to the new match time, but changing a match without receiving confirmation that the player received the notification is not allowed.

## **G. Match Start Times**

Players shall not be required to start their matches prior to 8:00am local time. Players shall not be required to start their matches after 10:00pm local time.

# **Section IX. GLTA TOURNAMENT RULES OF PLAY**

Unless otherwise specified in the GLTA Tournament Rulebook, GLTA sanctioned tournaments are required to follow the rules of tennis issued by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and their ITF-affiliated national or regional tennis association. ITF rules may be downloaded from their website at [www.itftennis.com](http://www.itftennis.com).

For example, GLTA tournaments in the USA must follow the rules outlined in “Friend at Court, The USTA Handbook of Tennis Rules and Regulations.”

The GLTA Tournament Rulebook contains special tournament regulations which take precedence over the rules of any other organization. These regulations must be followed even if they are not consistent with ITF rules or those of the applicable ITF-affiliated national/regional tennis association. For example, the GLTA does not require the use of singles sticks for singles competitions even though singles sticks are required by the ITF.

## **A. GLTA Rules Violated by Tournaments**

The following are the GLTA Disciplinary Procedures to address non-complying tournaments:

GLTA Commissioner is informed of GLTA tournament rule violation.

GLTA Commissioner calls tournament director and players involved (if applicable) to gather information on possible violation.

GLTA Commissioner determines severity of violation, and decides whether violation justifies a disciplinary hearing or only merits a warning.

If the decision is in favor of a warning, a letter is sent to the tournament director and may be sent to all other tournament directors reminding them of the rule.

If the decision is in favor of a disciplinary hearing, the GLTA Commissioner allows the tournament director 30 days to provide a response to the violation.

The GLTA Board reviews the violation and the response from tournament director. All GLTA Board members affiliated with the club or tournament involved in the hearing are excluded from the review.

The GLTA Board makes the ruling for a warning, probation or an immediate withdrawal of GLTA sanctioning.

If the final decision is for a warning, procedure 4 above is followed.

If the final decision is probation, the tournament is placed on probation for one year (one tournament year). During that time, the tournament may remain on the GLTA schedule and will be reviewed during the following year’s tournament for compliance with the GLTA rules. If compliance is acceptable, the tournament is taken off probation. If the tournament is not in compliance with GLTA rule, the Board holds a hearing to consider withdrawal of sanctioning.

Same procedure as above. All Board members affiliated with the club or tournament is excluded from the decision process. A decision will be made to either: (a) withdraw sanctioning; (b) continue probation status; (c) remove probation status and send a warning letter detailing the new violation; or (d) return to regular GLTA sanctioned status.

Removal of GLTA sanctioning will result in removal from the official GLTA schedule for a full year and exclusion from all GLTA public relations and advertising. After a year, the club may reapply for sanctioned tournament status again.

## **B. Player Conduct Violations at GLTA Tournaments**

Every player entered in a GLTA event also has responsibilities for their actions and conduct on and off the courts during the tournament. Players will be held accountable for acting in accordance with the rules of conduct promulgated by the host's ITF affiliated national or regional tennis organization.

If a player exhibits misconduct, a tournament official such as the referee or the tournament director has the authority to default them for cause. They may also issue warnings and submit a formal complaint to the GLTA Commissioner. The GLTA Commissioner shall determine if and when further actions should be taken after review.

Among the violations worthy of official disciplinary action are:

- Failure to pay player entry fees
- Abuse of Players
- Abuse of Tournament Officials
- Unsportsmanlike Conduct
- Not showing for a match without a bonafide reason
- Not notifying the committee of intent to withdraw or default
- Tanking of any kind

Penalties for player conduct violations depend on severity and frequency and are at the discretion of the GLTA Commissioner. Among the possible penalties are:

- Formal Warning
- Suspension from GLTA tournament participation

Players affected by the aforementioned penalties may appeal in writing to the GLTA Commissioner, who will gather information regarding the incident in question from all parties involved, including but not limited to the player, tournament director and GLTA Rankings Chair. The Commissioner will present all information to the GLTA Board for review. Any Board member affiliated with the club of the penalized player or the tournament involved will be excluded from the appeals process. The Board's decision will be final.

## **Section X. POST-TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES**

With the packed GLTA tournament schedule, it is essential that Tournament Directors do the following ***WITHIN ONE WEEK*** after the tournament ends. The timely response of EACH tournament director makes it possible to provide the necessary player information to the upcoming tournament(s).

### **A. Tournament Results.**

1. **TTP website** – Final Tournament Results are completely updated ***WITHIN ONE WEEK*** after the tournament ends.
2. **GLTA Ranking** – copy of the TTP backup file will be downloaded by the GLTA Rankings Chair ***WITHIN ONE WEEK*** after the tournament ends. **With the minimum information:**

3.

**a) *Tournament Information:***

Tournament Official Name

Dates of Play

Location (City)

Director/Referee

Director Phone Number (assumes Director can answer questions about draws and results - if this is not the case, list additional contact)

**b) *Player Information:***

**Player Name**

**Gender**

**GLTA Player ID Number**

**Club Affiliation, if applicable**

**City/State/Country**

**Please check the accuracy of each player's GLTA Player ID and name.**

**\*\*\*\*\*Tournament submitting inaccurate file information may be assessed "error correction fees" to be specified by the GLTA Board.**

Gender, club, city, state and country help the GLTA Rankings person with player questions during the file check before loading into TTP.

**B. Sending Tournament Fees to GLTA Treasurer**

It is also the responsibility of the Tournament Director to send a check with the tournament fees collected on each entry to the GLTA. Each tournament must pay four dollars (US \$4.00) for each entry to the GLTA. This amount must be remitted to the GLTA within 30 days of the conclusion of the tournament at which it was collected.

For sanctioned events with 500 players or more, the organizer must submit a 50% deposit within 30 days of the start of the event.

**C. Tournament Assessment Form.**

It is the responsibility of the Tournament Director to send the Tournament Assessment Report to your GLTA Board Representative within 30 days after the completion of the tournament. A sample of the assessment report is on the next page. Submission of a Tournament Assessment Form is a requirement for GLTA sanctioning. The Assessment Form is an Excel file that will be sent to the tournament with the player file.

## **Section XI. ADDENDUM**

1. Women who enter men's events are eligible for the division one or two levels below their women's division, unless they already have an established men's division ranking.
2. Given the infrequency of women's events, women may also enter a women's doubles events using their established GLTA women's singles ranking, rather than their established GLTA women's doubles ranking, provided that the gap between their ranking and the women's doubles event is no more than 2 levels apart. If it is, a minimum of 2 levels will apply.

### **For examples...**

- a. If a woman has a GLTA women's doubles rating of Open and a GLTA women's singles rating of B, they can enter B doubles draw, provided that the tournament director and ranking director do not have any reasonable objections. Note in this case there is a minimum of a gap of 2 levels from their establish GLTA women's doubles rating.
  - b. If a woman has a GLTA women's doubles rating of Open and a singles rating of C. They can center as low as B doubles, provided that the tournament director and ranking director do not have any reasonable objections. Note in this case the minimum of a gap of 2 levels from their establish GLTA women's doubles rating is applied and they cannot enter C, as that would be 3 divisions lower than their established rating, so B is the lowest level they can enter.
3. Occasionally a player will fall to an 'L' ranking and in this case, the ranking director and tournament director must use the best previous ranking for the player to determine the player's level. If the player had played Open for most of the recent tournaments prior and won tournaments or went deep into Open draws, the player should continue to play Open, despite the 'L' ranking. However, if the player has played Open prior to the 'L' or lapsed ranking, but the player was not a strong Open player, then the player can play one level lower, but no more than one level lower. Tournament directors and players should rely on the ranking director for determining the level of play of players with 'L' or lapsed rankings.