

**ARTICLE 27**  
**TENNIS**  
**BOYS AND GIRLS**

**Section 1. RULES**

- A. 1. All matches will be played according the USTA Rules which can be found in “A Friend at Court” or at the website: [www.usta.com-rules/officials](http://www.usta.com-rules/officials): click on Rules, The Code. Except for any RIIL Special Rules listed below or in the manual/RIIL Bulletins.
2. All individuals and team match play will be the best of three (3) sets, boys play traditional scoring with a 12 point Coman Tie Breaker, and girls play no ad scoring with a 12 point Coman Tie Breaker.  
Coman Tie Breaker Procedure: This requires the tiebreaker to be played with the players changing ends after the 1st point and thereafter every 4 points.
3. An athlete may participate on only one (1) tennis team during a school year.
4. All communications concerning tennis must go through the proper chain of command: Coach, Athletic Director, or Principal.
5. Protests/complaints must be reported to the Director of Tennis immediately
- B. 1. The director of Tennis and the Tennis Committee shall have the authority to establish as many divisions as necessary and shall establish the format for the State Championship Playoffs subject to approval of the Committee.
2. The sites for all tournaments will be decided by the Director of Tennis and announced at the interpretation meeting. These sites **will not be changed** and, if there is a rain date, the sites will be the same for the rain date.
3. a. Team uniforms must be worn for all matches and tournaments. Players will not be allowed to play if this is not followed.
- b. All teams must have scoring devices, center straps and a minimum of four (4) courts.
- c. In League matches, the home team must supply seven (7) new cans of balls. Each singles player or doubles team must bring a new can of balls to the qualifier and main draw, winner of match gets new can, lower gets used one. In team tourneys, each team must bring seven (7) new cans of balls.
- d. A Home Team representative must read the Blue Card before the start of the team match.

C. **LATENESS IN REGULAR MATCHES, INDIVIDUAL TOURNAMENTS AND PLAYOFFS**

1. **League Matches**

Per RIIL Rules and Regulations, all RIIL League scheduled matches are to be played – no forfeits are allowed (see Article 6, Section 11).

2. **Individual Tourney**

The coach and player(s) are responsible for knowing the site and times of tournament matches.

The Coach and player(s) must be present 15 minutes prior to the posted start time as stated on the Interscholastic League website. If the player is running late, the coach must call the Director/Designee as well as to the Coach/Athletic Director of the school to be played.

Lateness for match penalties (page 3, FAC)

5:00 minutes or less:	Loss of Toss, plus one game
5:01-10:00 minutes:	Loss of Toss, 2 games
10:00-15:00 minutes:	Loss of Toss, 3 games
More than 15 minutes:	Default

This rule will be enforced by the Tournament Director and/or Director of Tennis. All communications will be to the Director of Tennis via the coaches.

3. **Team Tournaments**

A coach is responsible for knowing the site and times of all tournament team matches.

Coach and players must be present fifteen (15) minutes prior to the posted start time as stated on the Interscholastic website.

If a team is running late, the coach must call the Director/Designee as well as the coach and/or athletic director of the school to be played.

All team tournament team matches are to be played.

D. EACH SCHOOL MUST SUBMIT A RANKING OF ITS SINGLES PLAYERS AND DOUBLES TEAMS IN ORDER OF ABILITY TO THE DIRECTOR OF TENNIS PRIOR TO THE FIRST RIIL MATCH. Failure to do so will result in a forfeit. Re-ranking of players will be permitted during the season under these conditions:

1. Pre-season rankings – To arrive at this Ladder, all returning Players are already ranked based upon where they were at the end of last year on the singles ladder. New players can challenge at the placement the coach deems appropriate, based on their ability.
2. Coaches are required to keep a log of ladder matches to verify any ranking changes. The log is to be dated and signed by the players involved and the new ladder faxed to the Director of Tennis (Girls: Elizabeth Legault Fax: 727-6157 and Boys: Kevin McNamara FAX: 334-8753).
3. A Single Player or Doubles Team can only move up or down **one position** on the ladder between League matches said change being based on a challenge match.
4. No change of ranking is allowed when back-to-back matches take place.
5. Each school must submit a ranking list to the Director of Tennis before the start of the playoffs. No change in this line-up will be allowed after the start of the playoffs. **RANKINGS WILL BE LOCKED. THERE WILL BE NO MORE CHALLENGES.**

E. League Matches will consist of four (4) singles and three (3) double matches. No Singles player may enter Doubles.

1. Before play starts coaches will exchange a copy of the present team ladder with players arranged according to their known ability in Singles and Doubles.
2. A coach MUST play the best 4 singles players and the best 3 doubles teams according to their ranked ability. Any combination of players may be used in Doubles, provided that #1 has proven that it beats #2 and #2 beats #3 and #3 beats #4.
3. In case of illness, injury or absence from a match, the coach must move their players up **one rank** i.e., two to one, three to two, four to three, five to four. Doubles must be played in the same manner; again the best must play #1.
4. If a team cannot provide sufficient players for a match, it will forfeit the third doubles match.

F. 1. Team scoring – The team winning four (4) of seven (7) matches will be the winner.  
2. All matches must be completed. By mutual agreement, coaches may waive this right. Any team which defaults without the agreement of the opposing coach will forfeit the entire team match.  
3. Super tie-breaker: If the team match has been decided and remaining matches on court have split sets, a super tie-breaker should be played instead of the 3<sup>rd</sup> set. If the score in the 3<sup>rd</sup> set is 1-1, 2-2, etc., the above should be played. The winner of a super tie-breakers is the player who wins ten points and leads a by a margin of two points. If the match is decided and the players are in the 1<sup>st</sup> set an 8 game pro-set should be played (tie breaker at 8 all).

G. Coaching: When coaches may talk to players

Guidelines from USTA Rules #3- (coaching is considered to be communication, advice or instruction of any kind, audible or visible to a player.) FAC p. 31

1. A coach may coach a player at any time during the match so long as they do not interfere with play, and also after the third game and any subsequent change over (rest period) they may coach for 1 minute. At the end of each set they may coach for 1 minute and thirty seconds.

Coaches allowed on Court – All Divisions

Where coaches may coach: A coach must site (or stand if the facilities dictate) near the net post. A coach may change courts when his movements will not interrupt play. Coaching is permitted outside the fence perimeter. On an empty adjacent court, the coach may stand at the doubles sideline on the same side as his own player. On the opponent's side, he must remain at mid-court. Coaches may coach within the lines of the Court only during a changeover or set break.

This is to clarify the above Rule: Use Common Sense. Coaches must not change courts between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> serve, or between points and should do so only at the end of the game or a change-over, so as not to interrupt play. In addition to the below mentioned places, coaches may stand in the space between courts inside the fence perimeter.

2. If a coach cannot be at a match, an assistant coach, athletic director or principal are the only authorized personnel allowed to coach. **Spectator parents and players not on the court for their match – may not coach at any time.**
3. If a coach and assistant coach are present, they both may coach players, but not the same player at the same time.

4. Head coaches should introduce their assistant at matches to avoid any problems that may occur with other coaches during the match.
5. Guidelines for Spectators: It is the coaches' responsibility to remind spectators of the guidelines.

#### H. Individual Tourney

1. The coach or a representative of the team **MUST** be present at the seeding meeting in order for their players to be placed in the draw. If extenuating circumstances prevent the coach from being present at the meeting, they must contact the Director of Tennis ahead of time and provide a list of players they wish to be entered into the draw. If the above is not followed, their player(s) **will not** be placed in the draw.
2. Coaches who want to have a singles player or doubles team seeded **MUST** submit their names at the seeding meeting. The names of all seeded players will be listed on draw sheets. Seeded players **must play** or they will be **defaulted**. Seeded players may not substitute for other seeded players or unseeded players. Unseeded players may not substitute for seeded players, but may substitute for other unseeded players provided they are of lower ability.
3. There will be a Division 1, 2, 3 and 4 Singles and Doubles Qualifying Tournament held concurrently on Friday, Saturday and Sunday in May. Each Qualifying Tournament will be completed to the last round that is required. Division 3 and 4 Tourney will be combined.
4. No coaching in the Division 1 Singles and Doubles Qualifying Tourney. No coaching until the round of 16 in the Division 2, 3 and 4 Singles. In regards to Doubles, no coaching until the Quarterfinals of Division 2, 3 and 4.
5. A coach or a bona fide representative must be present at the Qualifier/and Main Draw for the players from their school to compete.
6. The "round of 16" winners in Division 1, "Round of 8" winners in Division 2 and "Round of 8" winners in combined Division 3 and 4 singles will compete in the State Singles Tournament to be held on Friday, Saturday and Sunday in May.  
Lucky Loser – If a player or team is unable to go to the main draw, the player or team they beat will take their place.  
Reseeding – Players who upset seeds will be reseeded according to where the coaches originally placed them prior to the main draw. In singles Division 1 will have 16 slots; Division 2 – 8 slots; Division 3 and 4 – 8 slots. In Doubles: Div 1 (8) – Div 2 (4) – Div 3 and 4 (4).
7. Time between matches should be up to 30 minutes after a 2-set victory and up to 60 minutes for a 3-set victory. This should be at the discretion of the Director **ONLY**.
8. All Rounds in the Division 1 Qualifier will be the Best of 3 sets. Division 2, 3 and 4 **may** use an 8 game pro-set leading up to the Qualifying Round and **must** be the Best of 3 sets in Round of 16 in Singles and Round of 8 in Doubles.

#### I. Team Tourney

There shall be a Champion in each Division. Co-Championship award will be given in case of ties.

1. State Team Championship – Only Division 1 teams will play for the State Championship. All Division playoffs will consist of the Top 6 Teams (by Record). Top 2 teams get a Bye, #4 plays #5 and #3 plays #6 at the higher seed (if they have lights, if not, higher seed gets to pick neutral site with lights, (Girls' Rule only) . #1 plays winner 4-5 and #2 plays winner 3-6.
2. Playoffs – All divisions will use a tie-breaking system for 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> place. Ties.  
The tie-breaking system for the Rhode Island Interscholastic League playoffs will be determined in the order as they may be necessary:
  - a. Head-to-Head competition
  - b. Team match scores between the teams that are tied
  - c. Total sets lost between the teams that are tied
  - d. Total games won between the teams that are tied
  - e. **Total match points won listed in standings as Points For (PF).**
3. Playoffs – The championship playoffs will be conducted under the direction of the Director of Tennis under a format determined by the Director of Tennis, approved by the Principals' Committee on Athletics, and published with the RIIL tennis schedule. Both teams must bring 7 cans of balls. The winning team takes the new balls and the losing team takes the old balls. Score cards must be brought by each team to neutral sites.

Div. 1	Div. 2	Div. 3	Div. 4
1	1	1	1
Bye	Bye	Bye	Bye
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
3	3	3	3
6	6	6	6
Bye	Bye	Bye	Bye
2	2	2	2

Playoffs - All Playoff Matches should be played only until a Decision (Winner) then matches in progress are abandoned.

Officials – RIIL assigned officials shall have supervision of the playing court from the start of the match, unless otherwise designated until it is finished. In the absence of the Director of Tennis or an RIIL appointed supervisor, the coaches of the respective teams shall act as the officials of the RIIL tennis match and shall supervise said matches in accordance with these rules. A coach must observe all their matches and should not wander from the immediate court area.

4. Reporting Results – The home team shall report the results immediately after the match to The Providence Journal (277-7340 or 1-800-277-WATS) with the results for publication. The game report must be sent to the Director of Tennis within 24 hours. It is the responsibility of every coach to have exact records of the scores for each match. **Please submit the game report form in your packet. Home teams must record scores online at [www.riil.org](http://www.riil.org) after each match.** This helps determine standings which are published.
  
5. Sportsmanship/Point Penalty System (From FAC USTA Regs P. 113-116)
  - A. Point penalties will be imposed against a player for unsportsmanlike conduct during a RIIL match and/or tournament such as:
    1. Unreasonable delays after the warm-up period between points and when changing ends and otherwise unreasonably delaying a match
    2. Audible obscenity
    3. Visible obscenity
    4. Violently or with anger hitting (i.e., hitting the racket against any type of surface), kicking or throwing a tennis ball, racket or other equipment
    5. Verbal or physical abuse of any official, opponent, spectator or other person
    6. Disruptive behavior
  - B. Following are the penalties for the above violations:
    1. First offense – point
    2. Second offense – game
    3. Third offense – default
  - C. The imposition of penalties during a League match is primarily a function of the coaches, although the Director of Tennis or his/her delegate may impose penalties on the basis of his/her observations. A penalty to be imposed by a coach against an opposing player should be preceded by a courtside conference of the coach involved. If no mutual agreement can be reached, a report must be made to the Director of Tennis or his/her delegate. If the Director of Tennis or his/her delegate deems it necessary, a penalty may be imposed on a future match.
  
7. While normally the imposition of penalties will be in accordance with the basic table, a flagrantly unsportsmanlike act may result in the imposition of an immediate penalty, even a default for a first offense.

