



2026

Team Tennis

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2026 Team Tennis Tournament Format

A. TOURNAMENT DATES*

- a) Cut-off Date: May 20, 2026
- b) Bracket Release: May 22, 2026
- c) Tournament Begins: May 26, 2026
- d) Anticipated State Finals: June 13-14, 2026

Note: If both ADs agree, games may be played as early as May 23, 2026

*Dates Subject to change

B. QUALIFYING CRITERIA

1. A school must schedule and compete in a minimum of 50% of the season competition limits per Handbook Rule 34 (10 matches) to be eligible for tournament play.
2. All team sports will qualify the top 32 teams by division.
3. Teams not power seeded in the top 32 but meeting 50% qualifying criteria will be eligible for the tournament.
4. Teams will be seeded by power ranking system.
5. The rest of the bracket positions will be filled with remaining teams using the MIAA Power Ranking system. After the top 32 teams are power seeded, the remaining teams with a 50% or better record will be seeded from the bottom of each bracket.

C. FORFEITED CONTESTS, NO CONTESTS AND UNPLAYED MATCHES

When a forfeit win is awarded to a school due to the termination of their opponent's tennis program or failure to fulfill their contractual obligation, for power ranking purposes, the score will be entered as 3-0. Approval for forfeits and no contests of unplayed matches that are not by rule change need to be submitted to and approved by the TMC Spring Season Seeding Committee.

D. SEEDING/PAIRING ANNOUNCEMENT

1. Seeding is to be done by a Seasonal Seeding Committee. Members of the Seasonal Seeding Committee will include one chairperson (or designee) from each sport of current season, and 4 Tournament Management Committee members. Tournament Directors and Executive Liaisons will be present but are non-voting members. All decisions made by the Seasonal Seeding Committee are final. No appeals regarding seeding decisions will be allowed.
2. Seeding will be done by a power rating system:
 - Team's average margin of victory + average of opponents' ratings = overall rating
3. Tie Breaking Procedure (Seeding)
 - a) Head-to-head Competition
 - b) The higher average of each team's opponents' rating, based on the power rating formula.
 - c) League Champion
 - d) Coin flip
 - Only 2 teams tied – use coin flip
 - More than 2 teams, all team names will be put into a hat. Once team name is drawn, that team wins the tiebreaker. All other remaining teams will return to the first step of the Tie Breaking Procedure

In a tie breaker for tournament seeding every match played, including exclusion games, is counted.
Note: If a tie involves multiple teams (more than 2) and a team is eliminated, the procedure starts over at the first step of the Tie Breaking Procedure with the remaining teams.
4. Pairings and tournament information will be available on the MIAA website, <http://www.miaa.net> throughout the tournament.
5. Tournament match results should be called in to the Tournament Administrator by the winning team, as soon as possible from the match site.

E. SITE INFORMATION

1. All matches will be at the home site of the higher seed for the Preliminary Round games, Round of 32, Round of 16, and Round of 8.
2. If the home site is not acceptable, the following will apply:



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- Home school AD finds an acceptable site
 - Lower seed will host the game
 - If both sites are not acceptable, the Tournament Administrator will place the game at an acceptable site within the MIAA site policy.
3. The MIAA will provide sites for State Semi-Finals (round of 4) and State Finals as defined by TMC Site Policy.
 4. Home court venues must meet the following standards from the MIAA Handbook:
 - Condition of playing surface
 - Crowd Control
 - Seating Capacity
 5. Tournament matches that are played at the site of the higher seed should be played at a site that has a minimum of four courts. Facilities for athletes should be made available and accessible. Courts must have proper nets with correct height, correct tension, with center straps, and be in good condition, without cracks or weeds on them. If that is not the case, an alternate site will need to be secured.
 6. State Semi-Finals and State Finals sites will have at least five courts.
 7. Playing sites shall be outdoors on courts of asphalt or asphalt consistency. Exception: In case of inclement weather, tournament matches, with mutual consent and at the expense of the host team, may be moved indoors, either before the start of play or at the time of a rain delay.
 8. The athletic director or designee, other than the head coach, will serve as the site director and must be available for the duration of the match.

F. ASSIGNMENT OF TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS

The assignor will hire neutral roving USTA officials for the State Semi-Finals and State Finals.

G. SCHEDULING

The number of and equity in “rest” days is not a tournament scheduling criteria.

H. MEDICAL COVERAGE

It is the responsibility of each participating school to provide for the first aid/medical needs of its student-athletes through the State Semifinals.

The MIAA will hire medical personnel to be on hand at the State Finals.

I. GAME MANAGEMENT

1. Start Time - Teams are to arrive at the designated playing site at least 15 minutes before starting time.
2. Dress - All players must be dressed in the official school uniform to participate. Failure of a player to comply will result in default.
3. Sportsmanship - The tournament director, his/her designee or host site administrator shall have the authority to default any player for unsportsmanlike conduct. Every effort will be made to have a warning precede any disqualification as well as contact with tournament administrator. However, a flagrant violation may result in immediate disqualification. This authority includes matches where officials are assigned.
4. Adverse Conditions or Postponements
 - a) In case of rain, only the tournament director/site director or official is responsible for the decision to play or not.
 - b) If rain occurs during a match, only the tournament director/site director or official will determine if the match is to be continued.
 - c) Any decision regarding postponement will be made with player safety as the paramount consideration.
 - d) A suspended match shall resume at the exact point of suspension with the exact same line-up.
 - e) Any change in the assigned site or time must be approved by the tournament director.
 - f) If rain dates have been exhausted and inclement weather occurs, permission to schedule indoor matches must first be obtained from the tournament director or MIAA Tennis Liaison, Richard Pearson.
 - g) PLEASE HELP! Schools are requested to bring extra roll-dri or squeegee(s).



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J. GAME BALLS

1. USTA approved *Extra Duty* optic yellow balls must be used. Regular Duty balls are not acceptable.
2. New balls will be used automatically for any match reaching a third set.
3. Each team must bring 10 unopened cans to every match.
 - a) Coaches should bring extra balls in case of a three-set match, loss or damage.
 - b) The winner of each match receives an unopened can, to use for the next round. If two cans have been opened, the winner receives two unopened cans of balls.

K. SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE

1. All teams must be accompanied by the high school tennis coach(es).
2. The coach must remain at the tournament site until the completion of the entire match.
3. If the high school coach is unable to attend, the principal or athletic director may appoint an official school designee. Notification must be submitted prior to the event or presented to the tournament director when the players check in. Only the coach/official school designee may coach during the match. Only one coach at a time can coach a player. Personal coaches may not provide coaching at any time during the match or in between sets. At no time can a personal coach act as the school designee unless they are the official head or assistant coach of the team.
4. Failure to observe these rules will result in the team being defaulted.
5. The coach must bring a copy of the tournament format to the tournament site.

L. MATCH RULES

1. The MIAA rules of tennis as found in the [2025-2027 MIAA Handbook](#), this tournament format and USTA rules will be in effect for all matches.
2. Handbook Tennis Rules #81 must be strictly adhered to:
 - a) 1st and 2nd singles players and doubles teams must be played in order of ability.
 - b) Coaches must exchange the tournament line up justification form prior to the match and have the completed team ladder and challenge match results forms readily available upon request (see pg. 6- 9).
 - c) Failure to comply with this rule will result in match forfeiture of that team's point or points affected by the violation.
3. The last day a challenge match can be played is May 20, 2026, the cutoff date.
4. If there is an issue regarding lineups, the issue must be resolved with both coaches and the tournament director prior to the start of play.
5. All coaches must use the forms contained within this format for the entire year. This collection of forms will allow for full information during tournament competition. All forms must be available and present at all tournament events.
6. Every coach must have the signature of the Athletic Director or School Administrator on the "Final Tournament Justification/Signature Form" all season justification and lineup forms. ***** (work to finalize form with Dave and Ron)
7. MIAA Handbook Rule #81.2.3 details how a match is to be played if one team has fewer than seven players.
8. Tie-Break - The 7-point tie break will be used in all matches when the set score reaches 6-6 in games. Players are not allowed to leave the court prior to the tiebreaker.
 - If the team match has been decided and an individual match is still in progress, in the event of split sets, there will be a three (3) minute break followed by a first-to-ten-by-two match tiebreaker.
9. In the event both teams are equally short-handed (i.e., both teams have 5 players or both teams have 6 players), only four matches will be played, and the match could end in a 2-2 tie. The winning team will be the team that won the most sets. If this is a tie, the winning team will be the team that won the most games. If this is a tie, the last match to complete play will play a super tiebreak (first player or team to win 10 points or more by a 2-point margin) to determine the winning team.
10. The racquet spin is to be conducted before the ten-minute warm-up period.



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11. Play

- a) The first three games of each set will be played without a rest except for the change of ends after the first game. Coaching is allowed by the high school coach during odd game changeovers for one minute except after the first game of each set. Coaching is also allowed during the two (2) minute rest period at the end of each set, and before the start of the third set or super tiebreak. At the discretion of the site administrator, coaching may be allowed on court at designated locations. Otherwise, coaches are not allowed on the playing surface
- b) USTA rules mandate a ten (10) minute player rest period when a match proceeds to a third set.
- c) Play is to be continuous. No player may leave the court until the completion of his/her match. Players are not to leave the playing enclosure during the match except for a bathroom break and/or the mandated ten (10) minute break between the second and third set when applicable.
- d) Injury Time Out - as specified by the MIAA handbook (5 minutes), includes both evaluation and treatment.
- e) USTA rules mandate while on court, or during a match, a player may not receive information via electronic devices capable of receiving communications such as cell phones and smartwatches.
- f) In accordance with USTA Rules, a wheelchair tennis player is allowed two bounces of the ball. The second bounce can be in or out of the court boundaries.

12. Line/Foot Fault Calls

- a) Complaints concerning line calls or foot faults shall be made by a player to his/her coach.
- b) It shall be the coach's decision to inform the tournament director of any concerns.
- c) The tournament director shall inform the opposing coach and player of the concerns.
- d) Upon request, the tournament director shall provide an arbitrator to monitor the match.
- e) Students and/or coaches should not be asked to watch the lines.

13. Protest - Per the MIAA Handbook (Rule 17), all results will be final when the contest has been concluded. There will be no protest after the fact.

14. Code of Conduct - The MIAA and USTA Code of Conduct should be reviewed and will be followed throughout the tournament. Any incidents of unsportsmanlike behavior should be reported to the tournament director immediately.

15. MIAA Drone Policy - Prohibiting the Use of Drones (Unmanned Aircraft Systems or UAS's)

Unless granted special permission by the MIAA Executive Director, the use of drones (UAS), for any purpose, is not permitted at any MIAA tournament event. This prohibition applies to all fields of play, courts, arena, mats, gym floor or pool, and covers a ban on the entire facility being used as part of the MIAA event, including the spectator stands and parking areas.

M. SAT/SAT SUBJECT TESTS:

1. Matches may be scheduled for a weekend date - the same date as an anticipated SAT Test Date. Schools are encouraged to be aware of this date and collaborate if scheduling a match on this date. A listing of College Board exam dates that may take place during the Tournament can be found here - <https://www.collegeboard.org/>
2. The College Board offers an SAT Program Alternate Test Date Policy. As stated in their published material: "The SAT Program will consider granting an alternate test date when the following criteria are met:
 - a) The conflicting event must be unexpected. Regularly scheduled sporting events or previously scheduled school activities, such as prom, are not considered unexpected. An event such as an academic or athletic competition, in which students have advanced through the competition or into post-regular season competition, can be considered an unexpected event.
3. SAT School Day: Allows high schools to administer the SAT to students during the school day, thus avoiding weekend athletic conflicts. To date, the MA school districts that have participated are Plymouth, Springfield, Revere and most recently Fitchburg. SAT School Day is contracted through the College Board with participating districts.



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2026 Tournament Line-up Justification Form

(Refer to Rule# 81.1.3)

School Name: _____

Town: _____

Note: The Team Tournament Format stipulates that no challenge matches be undertaken later than **May 20th**. It also states that the best two players in the lineup, as determined by challenge matches, must play at first and second singles, the first singles player being the winner of the most recent challenge match between the two. Of the two doubles teams in the line-up, the first must have defeated the second in the most recent challenge match between the two. This form is particular to this match.

First Singles Player: _____

Result of most recent challenge match with second singles player:

Date: _____ **Result:** _____

Second Singles Player: _____

History of most recent challenge match with each of the three next best players in the starting line-up, excluding first singles player (listed above):

Date: _____ **Player:** _____ **Result:** _____

Date: _____ **Player:** _____ **Result:** _____

Date: _____ **Player:** _____ **Result:** _____

Third Singles Player: _____

First Doubles Team:

_____ and _____

Result of most recent challenge match with second doubles team:

Date: _____ **Result:** _____

Second Doubles Team:

_____ and _____

Coach Name: _____

Coach Signature: _____ **Date** _____



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MIAA 2026 Tennis Team Ladder

Date: _____

Gender: Boys Girls

School Name: _____

Coach Name _____

Players must be listed in order of ability. Ladder must be updated throughout the season as challenge matches are completed.

Singles Players (based on challenge match results)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Doubles Players (based on challenge match results)

- 1st Doubles _____ and _____
- 2nd Doubles _____ and _____
- 3rd Doubles _____ and _____
- 4th Doubles _____ and _____

