



Tennis Australia National League Finals

2026 RULES AND REGULATIONS

AS OF 23RD FEBRUARY



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RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. General

- 1.1 The National League Finals will be played under the ITF Code of Conduct (match conditions) and in accordance with Tennis Australia Code of Behaviour and policies. Tennis Australia may penalise or suspend players for breach of the Tennis Australia Code of Behaviour or Tennis Australia Member Protection Policy. Please note that inappropriate behaviour at sites including, but not limited to, the tennis venues (on and off court), hotels and transport vehicles, will be dealt with in accordance with these policies.
- 1.2 Tennis Australia reserve the right to refuse a player or a member of their entourage entry into the National League Finals if the applicable person(s):
 - is currently suspended by Tennis Australia, a Member Association, the ITF, or another applicable tennis authority, or has any outstanding financial liability or otherwise to any of these organizations, or is otherwise ineligible under any applicable code, rule, regulation, policy or procedure;
 - is not of good standing or character and will likely embarrass or bring into ridicule or disrepute Tennis Australia, its Member Association, the applicable tournament and/or the sport of tennis;
 - has failed to comply with all conditions of entry or other applicable rules, regulations, policies or procedures detailed by Tennis Australia; and
 - currently has any visa conditions imposed on them by the Australian Immigration Department or is otherwise not permitted to play in a tournament as a result of conditions imposed by the police, any other government authority or court of law.

2. 2026 National League Finals

- 2.1 The 2026 National League Finals are a progression opportunity for teams who win their local league premiership, to compete against other premiership winners from across Australia.
- 2.2 The 2026 event is a pilot, meaning there will be a reduced number of teams, and potentially a different composition of event compared to what the National League Finals may look like in the future.
- 2.3 In 2026, Open Doubles and Women's Doubles events will be offered.

3. Event Requirements

- 3.1 The event shall take place on dates and at a venue determined by Tennis Australia. Tennis Australia shall in each case determine the venue(s) for each event.
- 3.2 The minimum requirement shall be to provide 16 courts per competition of the same surface. This may be at the same or neighbouring venues. There is no requirement for a Grand Slam surface to be used (i.e. a modified grass surface may be used).
- 3.3 The Venue hosting a competition shall provide:
 - 3.3.1 Sufficient courts of an approved standard.
 - 3.3.2 Adjustable centre net strap per match court.
 - 3.3.3 Scoreboards
 - 3.3.4 Court Lights
 - 3.3.5 Access to a clubhouse, lounge area, changerooms (with toilets & showers), private physiotherapy

area and Tournament Director/Referee office.

4. Eligibility

- 4.1 To be eligible to enter the 2026 National League Finals, at minimum, a team must have won a local league premiership, or relevant Member Association state event, between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026. The league must be an affiliate of their relevant Member Association. The team's premiership status will be verified by the Member Association.
- 4.2 The local league can utilise any format; it needn't be a doubles only league, however it must be team based.
- 4.3 With 2026 being a pilot, each Member Association will manage the registration process on behalf of their local leagues. Entries must be lodged with the Member Association by 9am Monday 27 July 2026 to be considered.
- 4.4 The Member Association, in consultation with Tennis Australia, will have final say on eligibility of leagues in their area (or specific sections within leagues) – with smaller numbers, ensuring level based play and fairness across the country are important considerations for the pilot.
- 4.5 After the entry deadline, Tennis Australia will have absolute discretion in determining the total number of teams and which teams' applications will be accepted. It is likely that not all teams who apply will be granted a spot.

5. Team Registrations

- 5.1 All teams must consist of a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 8 players.
- 5.2 All registered players must be 18 years of age or older as of the commencement of the National League Finals (October 16, 2026).
- 5.3 Teams in the Open Doubles competition can consist of any combination of gender. The Women's Doubles competition will consist of female players only.
- 5.4 All players who are registered as part of a team must have completed their Competitive Player Profile, and provide their Tennis ID as part of the registration process.
- 5.5 All registered players must have played at least three rounds during the team's premiership season to be eligible to participate, unless extenuating circumstances apply in the opinion of the Member Association and Tennis Australia.
- 5.6 If a premiership team does not have four players that are available for the event, depending on the scenario, there is a couple of options available:
 - 5.6.1 If the premiership team consists of 2 or 3 players, the team can find additional players, provided they have played at least three matches in the relevant season within the same league, and have a doubles UTR Rating no higher than the highest rated doubles player on the team at time of entry.
 - 5.6.2 If the premiership team consists of 4 or more players, but one or more players is unavailable, the replacement player(s) should be a like-for-like replacement and have a doubles UTR Rating no higher than the player they are replacing at time of entry. They must have also played at least three matches in the relevant season within the same league.
 - 5.6.3 Any departure from these conditions must be approved by the Member Association and Tennis Australia.
- 5.7 Players must only be registered onto one team for the National League Finals.

6. Competition Format

- 6.1 Within each event (Open Doubles and Women’s Doubles) Tennis Australia will determine how many teams will participate, and how many sections there will be within each event.
- 6.2 Teams will be placed into sections based on the average doubles UTR Rating of the team, as well as any other relevant information. Tennis Australia’s decision on grading is final with no ability to appeal.
- 6.3 To maximise the number of rounds played, a round robin format will be utilised. If there are multiple round robin groups within a section, playoff rounds will also be held.
- 6.3.1 If inclement weather impacts the event, and if in the opinion of the Tournament Director and Referee, a round robin format will make completing the event impossible within the scheduled dates, Tennis Australia will have absolute discretion in changing the competition format to ensure the event is completed.

7. Match Format

- 7.1 A minimum of four and a maximum of six players can participate in a match.
- 7.2 There shall be four doubles rubbers per overall match, with each rubber to be a single set, first to 6 with a standard, 7 point tiebreak played at 6 games all. Standard, advantage scoring will be used. This applies for both Open Doubles and Women’s Doubles events.
- 7.2.1 Tennis Australia may choose to lengthen or shorten match formats at its absolute discretion after final team numbers are confirmed, and during the event if there is inclement weather or other scheduling impacts.
- 7.3 Two courts will be used for all matches.
- 7.4 Before the commencement of a round, teams should name their 1st ranked and 2nd ranked pair for the first two doubles rubbers, in order of ability. The player with the highest doubles UTR Rating must be in the 1st ranked pair. This should be clearly marked on the scoresheet.
- 7.5 A match will consist of the following rubbers:

Rubber	Team A	Team B
1	Pair 1	Pair 1
2	Pair 2	Pair 2
3	Pair 1	Pair 2
4	Pair 2	Pair 1

- 7.6 A team may utilise a fifth or sixth player as a substitute in the 3rd and 4th rubber, in any position. This should be clearly marked on the scoresheet.
- 7.7 Play should be continuous, with a five minute warm-up permitted prior to a round commencing, and a three minute warm-up before the 3rd and or 4th rubber permitted if a substitute is utilised. Otherwise, there is no rest permitted between rubbers.



7.8 The team who wins the most games will be awarded the match win. If games are equal, sets will be the determinant.

7.8.1 If games and sets are both equal, in the round robin stage the match will be declared a draw. In the case of finals or playoff ties, each team are to select two players that competed in the match to play a standard tiebreak (first to 7 points with a 2 point advantage). The winner of the tiebreak is declared the winner.

8. Playing Conditions

8.1 The Tournament Director will be responsible for the allocation of courts for matches.

8.1.1 The Tournament Director may approve additional courts for play if they deem it necessary for the completion of a match whether it is under lights or change of court surface.

8.2 Tennis Australia will provide 4 new Dunlop Australian Open Balls for each match.

8.3 Identifiable team uniforms are encouraged.

9. Forfeits

9.1 In the event of a forfeit in a rubber due to illness or injury, the score that has been reached in the rubber stands and is recorded on the result sheet as the same. The injured player automatically loses the rubber and any games still in progress. If a player is injured in a singles rubber and were nominated for doubles, they may be substituted, but a team must ensure they do not use more than six players per match.

9.2 All ties must commence at the specified time given as per the schedule. If a team does not have a player/s ready to commence a rubber after 15 minutes has elapsed from the commencement time, the offending team will forfeit the rubber. If after another 15 minutes has elapsed from the commencement time (i.e. 30 minutes in total), the offending team will forfeit the entire tie.

9.2.1 Matches may be called earlier than the scheduled time, if both teams have checked in and there are courts available.

9.3 A player defaulted during the course of a rubber shall be defaulted for the remainder of the match against that team. The Referee shall then determine whether the offence warrants suspension for the remainder of the event or whether the player shall be allowed to play further matches against other teams.

10. Result Entry

10.1 Immediately after the completion of all rubbers, the official score sheet must be completed and signed by the captains of each team and returned to the Tournament Director.

10.2 In the event of a match not being commenced or being incomplete, the score sheet shall as far as practicable be completed and must include each nominated player's name and the score (if any) of each completed or incomplete rubber and state the reasons for the match not being commenced or completed.

10.3 Scores will be posted on the competition website Match Centre.

11. Final Round Robin placings

11.1 Placing of teams after the Round Robin will be based on the following:

- The team which wins the greatest number of matches
- If two teams win an equal number of matches, the head-to-head result between the teams shall decide the higher placed team
- If the head-to-head result between the teams was a draw or incomplete, the below countback will be used.

11.2 If three or more teams win an equal number of ties, the following procedure will be used:

- The number of rubbers won shall decide the higher placed team
- If rubbers won are equal, the percentage of sets won of sets played against all teams in the group will decide the higher placed team
- If percentage of sets won is equal, the percentage of games won of games played against all teams in the pool shall decide the winner
- When three or more teams are tied, head-to-head results are never used to determine the positions in the group, unless in the opinion of the Referee, due to format changes, this is the most appropriate way to determine final placings.

12. Postponement of Play

12.1 If matches are postponed due to inclement weather, those matches will be completed before the next round of matches commence.

11.1.1 However, if in the opinion of the Tournament Director and Referee, there will not be enough time to finish the incomplete match, the match will be declared a draw, unless one team has an unassailable lead on games and/or sets.

13. Powers of Tennis Australia

13.1 The Tournament Director and/or Referee can, at their discretion, issue any disciplinary action they see fit for any breach of the Tennis Australia Code of Behaviour. Tennis Australia representatives may, at their discretion implement penalties as they see fit, in relation to any breach of rules which may include point, game, set or match forfeits. These penalties can be given without warning and can be applied immediately.

13.2 Except as expressly described above, Tennis Australia shall have the sole and absolute discretion to determine any matter relating to the interpretation and/or implementation of these Rules and Regulations and any matter or things arising from them.

13.3 Tennis Australia may alter or amend these Rules and Regulations without prior notice. If updated, the Rules and Regulations will be posted on the event website and/or distributed to competing teams.



Tennis acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work, rest and play, and pay our respect to Elders past and present.