



Overview of Early-Start Leagues

What is an early-start league?

An early-start league is a league (for a championship year) that begins before the next calendar year begins and before year-end ratings are published. For example, a league that takes place in the Fall of the 2013 calendar year, but is for the 2014 Championship Year.

What is an early start rating?

An early start rating is a tentative rating for exclusive use by players who register for an early start league prior to publication of year-end ratings. The rating is based on the most current dynamic at the time of publication. Once the year-end ratings are published, all registrations are done using the year-end rating.

When would an early-start league start?

This would be up to the state association, but most early-start leagues begin in the fall prior to the end-of-the-year. For example, a 2014 early-start championship year would begin in the Fall 2013 (calendar year).

What is USTA's "Championship Year" and how is it different from the "Calendar Year?"

USTA's "Championship Year" includes all of the league seasons that allow you and your team to advance to a particular League State Championship. If you have two league seasons during a championship year, one is always one year and the other league season is the following year, so it's better to explain this as a particular "Championship Year." For instance, a winning 3.5 Adult 40 & Over team (Fall 2013) and a winning 3.5 Adult 40 & Over team (Spring 2014) will be advancing to the 2014 Championships for Adult 40 & Over. So a "Championship Year" simply designates which League State Championship you may advance to . . .

What are the benefits of early start leagues?

- Local leagues have the possibility of creating more than one league season for the Adult League or Mixed Doubles league.
- Increased participation levels at the local level.
- Players can participate at their current rating level when registering for a local league. For example, if a player has a 4.5 year-end rating, but their current dynamic level (after the spring season) is a 3.98, the player would have a 4.0 early-start league rating and could register on a 4.0 team.

What are the cons for early start leagues?

- Players in early-start leagues can be disqualified from advancing to further championships if their year-end rating hits the disqualification (DQ) mark for their roster'd early-start level. This pertains to both Adult and Mixed Doubles leagues.
- Challenge of explaining to the player the difference between an early-start league rating and year-end rating.
- Possibility of more teams at state championships unless state association adjusts berths given to each local league.



Example

In the 2014 league championship year, Knoxville decides to do two seasons of the Adult 40 & Over (one early-start league in Fall 2013) and one regular season in the spring (Spring 2014).

- For early-start league, registration for Fall season begins August 8, 2013.
- State League Coordinator would run an early-start league report for August 7, 2013, which would give the exact dynamic rating as of August 7. The SLC can print a list of these early-start leagues specific to Knoxville players to put on web site.
- State League Coordinator would need to make sure local leagues mark that this is an early-start league in league settings in TennisLink.
- Players register for a fall team using the rating that shows up on the early-start league list.
- Players compete in their season like normal and have opportunity to advance to local playoffs and/or state championships.
- At end of the year, it's possible that players may be DQ'd from the early-start league roster'd level if their year-end rating reaches the disqualification mark.