NORTHERN SUN INTERCOLLEGIATE CONFERENCE
WOMEN'S TENNIS HANDBOOK
2025-26 EDITION
(August 1, 2025)

1   SPORT OPERATING PRINCIPLES.

1.1 The NSIC Coaches Chair will be on a nomination basis. The Conference Coaches Chair shall be a two-year commitment, no more than four consecutive years. The chair will be nominated and voted on by the coaches. For 2025-26 and 2026-27, Josh Lunak, University of Minnesota Crookston, will be the chair.

1.2 The current NCAA Division II rules and regulations and ITA rules shall be the official policy of the conference women's tennis program with respect to noted exceptions.

2   CONFERENCE COMPETITION SCHEDULE.

2.1 All NSIC institutions shall play each other at least once during the championship season. All conference matches must be completed by the Tuesday prior to the conference tournament. *(Revised: 5/26/22)*

2.2 Conference schedule parameters: *(Adopted: 5/26/22, Revised: 5/22/25)*

2.2.1 A 10-match conference schedule where each team plays all opponents one time. *(Revised: 9/5/2023, 5/22/25)*

2.2.2 **Weekends.** Five weekends of play are identified that feature the following:

2.2.2.1 Three weekends are left open, for institutional Spring Break periods. *(Revised: 7/24/23)*

2.2.2.2 No conference competition is scheduled on Easter weekend. However, Easter weekend may be used for make-up contests, if mutually agreed upon.

2.2.2.3 The last conference weekend will occur the weekend prior to the conference tournament unless it is Easter. The conference tournament will occur on the weekend that is one week prior to the NCAA selection date.

2.2.2.3.1   If two or more weekends remain following Easter, there will be a gap weekend between the last conference weekend and the conference tournament. This weekend is open for any conference make-up matches.

2.2.3 **Match Ups Highlighted in Gold.** The match ups highlighted in gold on the schedule are the teams that compete against the "lone wolf" each week. The location of each match up highlighted in gold is identified, however these match ups can be scheduled for any mutually agreed upon date by the involved institutions. *(Revised: 9/5/2023, 5/22/25)*

2.2.4 **Order of Opponents within a Weekend Flexibility.** The schedule outlines the order of opponents within each weekend that teams are to compete against one another. Institutions have the flexibility to switch the order of opponents within a weekend, provided all institutions' administration involved in the weekend agree. *(Adopted: 5/22/25)*

2.2.5 Teams shall not play more than one match per day, unless both involved institutions' administration agree to such arrangement. *(Adopted: 5/26/22)*

2.2.6 Conference dual matches are to be scheduled (dates/times/locations) with information shared to the conference office no later than October 1 prior to the upcoming season. *(Revised: 7/24/23)*

3 REGULAR SEASON PROCEDURES.

3.1 Match Format. All conference duals will be three doubles matches followed by six singles matches with seven team points awarded. Doubles matches will be played as three 6-game sets with a 7-point tiebreak at 6-all. The team that wins two of the three doubles matches will receive one point. Singles matches are the best of three full singles matches. Each singles match is worth one point. Four or more points are required for team match victory. No-ad scoring will be used for both doubles and singles matches. Once the outcome of a team match has been decided, matches still in the second set shall play a 10-point tiebreak for the third set. Any match already in the third set shall be played to completion. A match that has not started shall consist of two sets with a 10-point tiebreak played at one set all. Coaches may agree to play out all nine matches if under mutual consent.

3.2 Lineups.

3.2.1 The order of play for conference dual matches shall go from top to bottom (unless mutually agreed upon by both coaches) no less than 30 minutes prior to the start of the contest. *(Adopted: 7/12/18)*

3.2.2 All lineups are to be made in order of strength. *(Adopted: 8/18/22)*

3.2.3 Team lineups should be exchanged between coaches at least 45 minutes prior to the scheduled match start time. These lineups should include all physically able and eligible student-athletes. Any lineup changes during the season shall follow the current requirements as stated in the ITA Regulations. *(Adopted: 8/18/22)*

3.2.4 **Pre-Match Protests.** If a coach believes that the opponent's lineup provided is unfair, the coach should notify the match official and the opposing coach. Any protests not resolved prior to the match will follow appropriate ITA policy. *(Adopted: 8/18/22)*

3.3 Facility Standards. Any matches to be played at an indoor facility must meet ITA Facility Standards. If the facility doesn't meet the ITA Facility Standards, both coaches must certify in writing of the agreement to play at the facility before the start of the match.

3.4 Match Start Time. Matches shall not begin before 9:00 a.m. unless mutually agreed upon by all applicable institutions. *(Adopted: 8/15/19)*

3.5 Pre-Match Protocol. Each team is given 30 minutes of warm up time prior to the beginning of the match. Doubles teams will not warm up against their opponent. The doubles matches are to begin promptly at the designated dual start time. Singles opponents who just completed a doubles match are given five minutes of warm up time against each other prior to their singles match. If the singles opponents did not participate in a doubles match, or have sat for 30-minutes or more prior to their warmup period, they are given 10 minutes of warm up time against each other prior to their singles match. *(Adopted: 7/12/18)*

3.5.1 **Conference Tournament Warm-Up Period.** During the conference tournament, teams may not begin their warm up period until both teams are ready on their respective areas of the playing surface. Teams may begin stretching and other activities that do not involve tennis balls before this point. *(Adopted: 8/5/21)*

3.5.2 The home court coach is responsible for addressing both teams prior to the match regarding the particulars of the home site.

3.5.3 At conference dual matches, the home team will conduct line-ups/introductions prior to the match unless mutually agreed upon by both coaches no less than 30 minutes prior to the start of the contest. *(Revised: 7/12/18)*

3.6 Officiating.

    3.6.1 A minimum of one (1) qualified official must be present at each conference match. *(Adopted: 8/18/22)*

    3.6.2 To be considered qualified, the official must hold current USTA and ITA certification. It is the responsibility of the host institution's coach to ensure certifications are current prior to the start of the match. *(Adopted: 8/18/22)*

    3.6.3 Official jurisdiction will mirror what is stated in the current edition of the ITA rulebook. *(Adopted: 8/18/22)*

    3.6.4 **Conflicts of Interest.** Any conflicts of interest between an official and a team will result in that official being ineligible to work matches in which the team in question is participating. *(Adopted: 8/18/22)*

        3.6.4.1 All students and employees of tennis sponsoring institutions are not eligible to officiate matches of their institution. *(Adopted: 8/18/22)*

        3.6.4.2 Assistant coaches are not eligible to officiate any matches within the conference. *(Adopted: 8/18/22)*

        3.6.4.3 Former coaches and student-athletes may not officiate conference matches for a period of five (5) years after they depart their institution. *(Adopted: 8/18/22)*

    3.6.5 **Officiating Assignments.** The host institution will assign the officials for the matches they are considered the host for. *(Adopted: 8/18/22)*

3.7 Coaching. Coaching is permitted by the head coach and two designated coaches, who may be an assistant coach and/or a registered volunteer coach and/or player. All assistant coaches and volunteer coaches must be on the institutional coaching list and registered with their respective institution. Two coaches may coach on the same court at one time. In the absence of a head coach, and assistant coach may be designated at the acting head coach. At the beginning of the season, each institution will email a list of designated coaches to the conference office.

3.8 Athletic Training. Per the NSIC Bylaws and NSIC Athletic Training Handbook, all institutions are required to provide an athletic trainer at their home events, including the dual matches the host institution is not participating in. Ice, water and restrooms are required. The athletic trainer must be present at the facility at least 45 minutes prior to the start of the match. *(Revised: 7/13/17)*

3.9 Court Expenses. During a weekend of NSIC play, the host team is responsible to cover all court expenses for all traveling teams at their home facility. The time allotted is to include all necessary team warm up time. *(Adopted: 7/13/17; Revised: 7/12/18)*

3.10 Official Tennis Ball. The official tennis ball for the NSIC is the Wilson U.S. Open Extra Duty. The official ball must be used as the competition ball for all conference contests. *(Adopted: 7/12/18)*

    3.10.1 **Competition Balls.** During the conference dual match weekends, the host institution will cover the cost of competition balls for those matches they are competing in. The host institution is responsible to provide tennis balls to the dual that takes place at the host institution during the dual weekend.

    3.10.2 **Practice Balls.** It is the responsibility of the host team to provide practice balls or arrange practice ball availability at the facility for the participating teams. Visiting teams may bring their own practice balls if they desire. *(Adopted: 8/5/21)*

3.11 Team Uniforms. All participating student-athletes are to be wearing the same uniform top for the duration of the match during both the regular season and the conference championship. *(Adopted: 7/12/18)*

3.12 Scoring. The head coach of both participating teams shall sign the home team scorecard before departing the facility. *(Adopted: 8/18/22)*

3.13 ITA Score Reporting. The host institution and its travel partner are required to enter the final results from the matches they played into the ITA website. Results must be inputted within 48 hours after the final match. *(Adopted: 6/18/20)*
   3.13.1 Each institution must input their current team roster into the ITA website no later than one week prior to their first NSIC contest. *(Adopted: 8/18/22)*

4   CONFERENCE TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES.

4.1 Format. The top six (6) teams from regular season play will qualify for the conference tournament. The Automatic Qualifier will be the winner of the conference tournament. If the tournament is not played due to uncontrollable circumstances, the AQ will be awarded to the regular season dual meet champion. All members of the championship team shall be considered conference champions. The conference tournament is a dual format with three (3) doubles and six (6) singles matches. The tournament will take place over three days. Friday will consist of two quarter-final matches. Saturday will consist of two semi-final matches played at separate times. Sunday will consist of the championship match. Matches will be pulled once a team has reached four (4) points. *(Revised: 7/11/24)*
   4.1.1 Semifinal matches will be played at separate times, instead of simultaneously. The top seed will play first with the following semifinal match to be played at a set time. *(Revised: 7/13/23)*

4.2 Tie Breaking Procedure. In the event of a tie that might impact which teams are invited or seeding placement of teams, seeding of participants will be decided by the following; Option 1 – overall win-loss record against conference teams, Option 2 – head to head match results, Option 3 – results against teams ranked ahead of teams starting with the 1st place team and going in descending order, Option 4 – total number of matches lost within teams that are tied for points, Option 5 – coin flip.

4.3 Tournament Site. The NSIC Tournament will be held at Match Pointe in Sioux Falls, S.D. for the 2026, 2027 and 2028 NSIC Tennis Tournament.

4.4 Conference Office Responsibilities. The conference office will have the following responsibilities in regard to the conference tournament. They will provide the tournament information and results to institutional CSCs, hire an athletic trainer for the tournament and do all the arrangements for the tournament site. The cost of the tournament will be split between the six (6) participating institutions.

4.5 Tournament Committee. The NSIC Tournament Committee will be made up of the following: conference office representative, rules official, and the tournament director. The committee will provide guidance to the tournament director prior to the tournament and during the tournament.

4.6 Line-ups. All line-ups must adhere to ITA rules. The following procedures will be followed when submitting and challenging lineups for the conference tournament. *(Adopted: 8/15/19)*
   4.6.1 By 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday of the week of the conference tournament, coaches shall submit their entire singles and doubles line-ups to the conference office. Coaches must list all eligible student-athletes to compete on the singles line-up

in the order of their ability. If a student-athlete is not listed on the singles line-up, they may not compete during the tournament. The list of student-athletes should contain the individual's record at each position played. *(Adopted: 8/15/19)*

    4.6.2   Line-ups from all teams will be sent by the conference office to all participating coaches by 4:00 p.m. on the Tuesday prior to the championship. *(Adopted: 8/15/19)*

    4.6.3   Coaches have the right to challenge line-ups by 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday prior to the championship. Challenges will be reviewed and determined by the tournament committee. *(Adopted: 8/15/19)*

    4.6.4   If a challenge is upheld by the tournament committee, the committee will determine the appropriate line-up. *(Adopted: 8/15/19)*

5   AWARDS.

5.1 Player of the Week. Player of the week nominations will include the entire championship season. Each coach or college sports communicator shall nominate a player from their team and submit that nomination to the Conference Office CSC.

    5.1.1   **Criteria.** The NSIC Office will select the player of the week based on the following criteria (in no particular order):

        a. Position played (No. 1 vs. No. 4 or 5).

        b. W/L record for the week (individual).

        c. Quality of opponent faced (individual).

        d. Performance lead to team success (team W/L record).

        e. Milestones/school records.

5.2 All-Conference Selections.

    5.2.1   **Team Breakdown.** The all-conference first team will consist of the five (5) doubles and nine (9) individuals receiving the highest total points. All-conference second team will consist of the 6-9 doubles and 10-18 singles receiving the next highest points. *(Revised: 9/10/21)*

    5.2.2   **Nomination Procedure.** Coaches may nominate as many players as they feel necessary. Nominations will be taken the Monday following the Tournament.

    5.2.3   All student-athletes being nominated for post-season awards must have a winning percentage of .500 or higher in NSIC play; or any player with over six matches played at No. 1 singles or doubles in NSIC play. A student-athlete can only be nominated on one doubles team. *(Adopted: 9/24/19, Revised 7/10/25)*

    5.2.4   **Voting Process.** The NSIC office will compile a ballot of nominations and send it out via email the Wednesday following the NSIC Tournament. The final ballot will be due back to the conference office on the second Tuesday following the NSIC Tournament. On the final ballot, coaches cannot vote for their own players.

    5.2.5   **Voting Results.** The voting will be done by a points system. Coaches will rank their top nine singles with a 5 and next nine singles with a 3 (18 total votes). Coaches will rank their top five doubles teams with a 5 and the next four with a 3 (9 voted on). *(Adopted: 9/10/21)*

    5.2.6   Tiebreaking. Any ties in the all-conference voting will be broken using the following methods. *(Adopted: 9/10/21)*

        5.2.6.1 More "5" votes

        5.2.6.2 Highest flight most frequently played

        5.2.6.3 3-Head-to-Head

5.3 Individual Awards.

5.3.1 **Most Valuable Player and Freshman of the Year.** Each coach may nominate one player (regardless of records) as a candidate for most valuable player and freshman of the year awards when nominating for all-conference. The coaches shall vote from the list of candidates on the final voting ballot. Coaches cannot vote for their own player. *(Revised: 7/10/25)*
No student-athlete can win NSIC Freshman of the Year twice in the same sport. (Adopted: 7/10/25)

5.3.2 ~~All student-athletes being nominated for post-season awards must have a winning percentage of .500 or higher in NSIC play.~~

5.3.3 **NSIC Outstanding Senior of the Year Award.** *(Adopted: 9/10/21)*
5.3.3.1 The recipient shall be a four-year student-athlete at their institution, be a full-time* regularly enrolled graduating senior competing in the NSIC and can only win the award once in their career.
5.3.3.2 They shall be an academically sound student that has made a positive contribution to their team and institution.
5.3.3.3 Each year an institution may nominate one qualifying senior to be voted on by league coaches. Coaches are asked to submit student-athletes roster information and GPA along with a supporting paragraph of the nominee's season, career accolades, and positive contributions to their institution. Coaches are NOT allowed to vote for their own players.
5.3.3.4 A plaque shall be given to the winner of the award.
5.3.3.5 The winner will also be recognized during the NSIC Tournament, if possible.
Special consideration will be made for student-athletes that are not full-time, this must be explained in the nomination – all other criteria must be met.