

Following College Tennis

THE FALL SEASON

The first half of the college tennis season begins in mid-September and continues through early November. Individual events and tournaments are scheduled during this time frame, as student-athletes represent their university in selected singles and doubles contests.

Two of the three Grand Slam events also take place in the fall: the Riviera/ITA All-American (Pacific Palisades, Calif.) and the ITA National Indoor Championships (hosted by the University of Virginia).

THE SPRING SEASON

While a handful of individual tournaments are still contested, the focus of the second half of the college tennis season, which begins in January, turns to dual match play.

A dual match is an event between two schools that features three doubles matches and six singles matches. The coaches from each school submits a lineup with its top players squaring off against each other at the No. 1 position, its next best player at the No. 2 position and so on through the No. 6 position. The same method applies for doubles.

Each school earns one team point by winning at least two of the three doubles matches and earns an additional point for every victory in singles. The winning school of the dual match captures the best of SEVEN team points. A final score might read: UF def. UX 4-3.

To make dual matches more "fan friendly," doubles matches are scored as a pro set. The winner of a pro set is the first pair to claim eight games, while leading by two games. A tiebreaker is implemented if the games are even at 8-all. The only time the pro set scoring is not utilized is during the three doubles Grand Slam events.

Singles matches always implement the traditional scoring method, with the winner claiming two of three sets for a victory. In a dual match, if the team victor already has been determined and an agreement was established between the both coaches, a singles match entering a third set might use a "super-tie-breaker" in place of a third set to establish the individual winner. The two acceptable methods of displaying that result: 1-6, 6-2, (10-8), or 1-6, 6-2, 1-0 (10-8).

During mid-February, the USTA/ITA National Team Indoor Championships are held in Madison, Wis. Sixteen (16) of the nation's best teams compete in dual matches for the indoor title. Georgia Tech defeated Northwestern, 4-2, to win last year's crown.

The NCAA Championships (hard surface) is the final collegiate event contested each year.

COLLEGIATE GRAND SLAM EVENTS

The Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) sanctions the three legs of the collegiate singles and doubles Grand Slam events as well as the ITA National Team Indoor Championships and the NCAA Team Championships. The tournament legs in order contested: Riviera/ITA All-American; ITA National Indoor Championships; and NCAA Championships. From 1986-2001 there were four national events, but the ITA National Clay Court Championships is no longer played.

NATIONAL RANKINGS

In Division I, the ITA National Rankings are determined by a computerized system, using the ITA's average points-per-match formula. They are released 17 times during the season (pre-season, fall, and 14 times on a weekly basis in the spring and year-end). The first team ranking is revealed on January 6, 2009. The Division I top 75 teams, top 100 singles players and top 50 doubles teams receive an ITA ranking. The ITA Rankings are also used in selection of all ITA Grand Slam Championships as well as the USTA/ITA National Team Indoor Championships.

Division I Regional rankings are released twice a year (end of fall and year-end). The top 15 teams, top 30 singles players and top 15 doubles teams are ranked for men and women in each of the eight ITA regions.

How the ITA Computer Rankings work:

- 1) Will use one set of points for wins and also a tighter set of points, with less gaps.
- 2) There will be bonus points awarded for road wins.
- 3) The rankings that are run at the time of NCAA Championship selections will be run twice and the second run of the rankings will be the published ranking.
- 4) There will be expanded, unpublished rankings (and values for opponents): 76-125 for team, 126-75 for singles, and 61-90 for doubles.
- 5) The first computer rankings (for team) will take place on March 3, 2009.
- 6) The singles and doubles rankings from the fall of 2008 are a computer ranking.

Intercollegiate Tennis Association

As the governing body of collegiate tennis, the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) promotes both the athletic and academic achievements of the collegiate tennis community. The ITA, which is based in Skillman, N.J., administers the ITA Collegiate Grand Slam Championships, the ITA Collegiate Summer Circuit, presented by the USTA, and the ITA Rankings for men's and women's tennis at the NCAA Divisions I, II and III, NAIA and Junior College levels. The ITA also has a comprehensive awards program for players and coaches to honor excellence in academics, leadership and sportsmanship.

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NCAA CHAMPIONSHIPS OVERVIEW

Three different events comprise the NCAA Championships: team, singles and doubles draws.

The top 64 teams in the nation, as determined by the NCAA Selection Committee, begin competition at 16 regional sites on May 8, 2009. The 16 winners of each regional will travel to College Station, Texas, for the remainder of the tournament to compete for the NCAA title.

The Singles field features the top 64 players, while the doubles draw contains the top 32 tandems, also determined and seeded by the NCAA Selection Committee.

NCAA Format Change Began in 2006

The 2009 NCAA Championships will continue to be held as a combined men's and women's event. The 2006 season marked the first time the men's and women's events were played simultaneously at the same location and Stanford University played host. The entire men's and women's team Championships beginning with the round of 16, as well as the 64-player singles and 32-team doubles draws for men and women are held at one venue. **Texas A&M University's George P. Mitchell Tennis Center in College Station, Texas, plays host to this year's event May 15-25, 2009.**

Future sites that have been determined for the NCAA Men's & Women's Tennis Championships:

2010: Dan Magill Tennis Complex • Athens, Ga. • Host: University of Georgia

2011: Taube Family Tennis Center • Stanford, Calif. • Host: Stanford University

2012: Dan Magill Tennis Complex • Athens, Ga. • Host: University of Georgia

