



Tennis Challenge Ladder™ Suggestions

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Tennis Challenge Ladders have been around for decades. Some tips on making your ladder programming a success:

- 1. Starting Positions:** To initiate a ladder and set up starting positions, consider a one-day round robin event of those signing up to participate in the ladder.
- 2. Leagues and Ladders:** Make it mandatory that your league layers participate on the ladders as well. This ensures that your ladder will be active and that league players have built in ladder results to set up their positions on their teams.
- 3. Ladder Tournaments:** Have regular ladder tournaments where all players entering the event must all be members of the ladder. Have all matches in the tournament count as ladder matches.
- 4. Promote the Ladder:** Post the ladder positions and match results on the Internet or mail them out to add credibility and popularity to your ladder.
- 5. Round Robins:** Have ladder round robins where participants must be ladder members. The matches should be pro sets and results of each pro set count as ladder matches.
- 6. End of Season Tournament:** Have an end of season tournament for the top 8 available players who have played at least 10 matches. Use trophies or prize money raised by the ladder.
- 7. Ladder Levels:** Have at least two levels of ladders so that everyone has a chance of becoming a top contender and qualify for the end of season event. If there are not enough players to create different ladders to accommodate varied levels, simply divide ladders in half for activities like round robin ladder events, etc.
- 8. Annual Ladder Fee:** Most successful ladders have small annual participation fees that cover the cost of running the ladder (prizes, etc.).
- 9. Prizes and Awards:** Promote the various prizes and awards as much as possible to generate maximum interest and participation.
- 10. Participation Incentives:** Consider giving incentives to players who complete a certain number of matches in a given year, including gift certificates, a free lesson, or 50% off the ladder fee for the next year.

- 1. Entry Fees:** The entry fee for the ladder entitles players to participate in all ladder events and activities for a full calendar year. Anyone joining the ladder after July 1st will pay 50% of the annual fee.
- 2. Joining the Ladder:** A person joining an existing ladder has one initial chance to challenge anyone in any position on the ladder. If he or she loses that challenge match they will then be placed on the bottom of the ladder and have to challenge to move up. The new ladder participant who wins that initial match moves into the position of the person they just defeated.
- 3. Playing Format:** All matches will be the best of three sets, no-ad scoring. The third set, if needed, will be determined by a standard tie-breaker, with the match going to the first player to win seven points first. All other aspects of fair play and conduct will follow USTA guidelines. Matches stopped for bad weather or similar reasons must be completed within one week or the leading player wins.
- 4. Challenge Guidelines:** Players may challenge upwards a maximum of three positions. Challengers must issue the challenge to higher players and matches must be accepted and scheduled within three weeks of the challenge, unless both players agree to an extension or the ladder director (Head Pro or Tennis Director) accepts a reasonable reason for a delay such as a challenged player being out of town or injured. In any event, all matches must be played within five weeks, or the challenged player is dropped from the ladder.
- 5. Time Between Challenges:** To avoid excess challenges against any single player, no player may be challenged within one week of having played any challenge match.
- 6. Challenger Responsibilities:** Challengers will make all needed court reservations and supply a new can of balls for the match. If there is a preferred court location, the challenger may choose his or her court. The time of matches must be convenient to both players.
- 7. Reporting Scores:** Winners of matches must report scores to the ladder director within 48 hours of the match.
- 8. Post-Match Positions:** If the higher position player wins the match, there is no change of position. If the challenger wins the match, he or she moves into the loser's position and everyone in between moves down one place.
- 9. Questions or Suggestions:** Please bring any suggestions to the ladder director, who is the final decision-maker for all disputes or questions. However, the ladder director may appoint an impartial ladder committee to rule on disputes as needed.