

Directors Present: Andrea Barnes, Christine Costamagna (Vice President), Nancy DeSchane, Martha Ehrenfeld, Jack Hesotian, Andrea Norman, (Secretary), Larry Olmstead, Craig Pasqua, Jason Scalese (Delegate), Caroline Sheu, Pam Sloan (President), Jack Walker (Treasurer), Keith Wheeler (elected Parliamentarian), and Scott Winn.

Directors Absent: Michelle Nicholson and Mary Ryniewicz

Advisory Director Present: Suzy Cossette

Legal Counsel Present: Jonathan Madison

USTA NorCal Staff Present: Summer Verhoeven (Executive Director), Darren Wenger (Director of Operations & Strategy), Beth Workeneh (Senior Manager, Junior Competition), Michelle Wilson (Senior Manager, Adult Competition), Becca Bauer (Senior Manager, Marketing and Communications), and Troy Rondeau (Senior Manager of Community Programs)

1. Call to Order

President Pam Sloan called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm and roll call was conducted. President Sloan then asked Ms. Norman to read the recently revised NorCal Mission Statement and new Vision Statement as follows:

- **Mission:** To promote and develop the growth of tennis in the USTA Northern California Section.
- **Vision:** To be a trusted, inclusive, and proactive provider and partner in advocating for tennis as a healthy and accessible lifetime activity that impacts lives in positive ways.

2. Approval of Agenda

There being no persons present to make public comments and no public comments submitted in advance of the meeting, the Board considered approval of the agenda, a copy of which was distributed with the meeting packet. There being no recommended changes, the agenda was announced approved as distributed to the Board.

Keith Wheeler and Scott Winn joined the meeting after the approval of the Agenda.

3. Approval of Minutes

The Board considered approval of the minutes of the meeting held December 14, 2022. Following discussion, the following motion was duly made by Ms. Norman, seconded by Ms. Costamagna and **approved** by a vote of 12 in favor, none opposed, and 1 abstention:

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the USTA NorCal Board of Directors held December 14, 2022 be approved as corrected.

4. Closed Session

President Sloan announced that the Board would be going into closed session and requested Suzy Cossette leave the meeting.

Following the conclusion of the closed session, Ms. Sloan announced all discussion held during the session was to remain confidential; however, it was agreed that the following would be reported in the public minutes:

- Correction of Junior 12s Division Sectionals Seeding Regulation. The Executive Committee unanimously approved a correction to the 12s Division Singles Seeding regulation as set forth below - the correction is highlighted in gray. The materials for the Junior Council meeting at which this was proposed, as well as the discussion, and the Board Consent Calendar Item all reflect that the Council intended for this amendment to apply to 12s Sectionals.

13. Seeding.

- All Divisions of Closed Level 3 Sectional Championships and Open and Closed Level 4 Excellence Tournaments in the 18, 16 and 14 Divisions.** [unchanged]
- Closed Level 3 Sectional Championships in the 12 Divisions, Closed Level 4 Excellence Tournaments in the 12 Divisions, Level 5 Championship Tournaments (except Super Series), Open Level 6 Challenger Tournaments, and Open Level 7 Tournaments.** Round robin draws are not seeded.

- i. **Singles Events.** That players will be seeded for singles events using the most recently published Singles Seeding List of the division, in the order in which their names appear on the list. Seeds 1-4 will be seeded numerically. Seeds 5-8 will be seeded alphabetically as the #5 seed. Seeds 9-16 will be seeded alphabetically as the #9 seed.
- ii. **Doubles Events.** Teams will be seeded for doubles events in the order of their combined standing using the most recently published Individual Doubles Seeding List of the division. See Regulation 12.C. for calculating the combined standing of a team. If there is a tie, the team with the player that has the highest doubles standing on the Individual Doubles Seeding List will be seeded first.

C. Level 5 Dominant Duo Team Tournaments and Closed Level 4 Mixed Dominant Duo Team Tournaments. [unchanged]

- **Staff Bonuses.** The Executive Committee unanimously approved holiday bonuses for all staff employed 6 months or longer.
- **Legal Updates.** The Board heard updates on outstanding issues.

Suzy Cosette re-joined the meeting, and staff members Beth Workeneh, Michelle Wilson, Becca Bauer, and Troy Rondeau joined the meeting.

5. Strategic Plan: Presentation of Key Initiatives

Ms. Verhoeven introduced the members of staff who joined the meeting to present work on the next phase of the Strategic Plan, and directed attention to the Strategic Planning document distributed on January 18. She thanked staff for the role they have played to date in the development of the plan, collecting and reviewing data, the SWAT analysis, and listening and collecting data from key stakeholders.

Ms. Verhoeven announced that the presentation would include six key initiatives that are in alignment with the Mission and Vision of NorCal. These initiatives are in draft form, and staff is looking for feedback from the Board. This same information will be presented to the Strategic Planning Committee when it next meets on January 31.

While presenting the initiatives below, staff members emphasized how each related to the Strategic Perspectives and Objectives.

- 1. Community Park Day (Tennis Party), presented by Troy Rondeau:** Hosting city-wide events at public parks that are fun, engaging tennis and non-tennis activities for junior and adult players of all ages and skill levels, while leveraging partnerships with parks and recreation agencies and providers within the community.
- 2. Youth Team Tennis Leagues, presented by Darren Wenger:** Youth Team Tennis Leagues will be a community-based and volunteer driven entry-level league for juniors of various ages.
- 3. Adult Social Play, presented by Troy Rondeau:** Pop-up events at local breweries that expose tennis in a non-traditional way to new and returning players. The second phase will be a league format similar to adult leagues where teams will play against other teams on non-traditional surfaces, such as parking lots.
- 4. Tennis Ambassador Program ("TAP 18+"), presented by Beth Workeneh:** Recruit current NorCal players to become Tennis Ambassadors and promote Social Play pilots, Tennis on Campus (TOC), Adult Leagues and Tournaments to their own networks to attract new, returning and existing players to participate.
- 5. Enhanced Get Connected Program, presented by Michelle Wilson:** A customer-focused service that helps connect new and returning players with our USTA NorCal staff who will facilitate with finding program opportunities for all.
- 6. NorCal E-Store, presented by Becca Bauer:** Build an E-store to enhance brand visibility, customer engagements and generate additional revenue.

Following the presentation, the Directors had the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback. An extended period of time was taken for this purpose.

Legal Counsel Jonathan Madison left the meeting during the presentation of the key initiatives. Jack Hesotian joined the meeting during the discussion of the key initiatives.

6. Consent Calendar

President Sloan directed the Board's attention to the Consent Calendar that was distributed with the meeting packet and noted that there are:

- 2 recommendations being made by the Adult Leagues Committees; and
- 5 recommendations being made by the Adult Tournament Committee.

President Sloan explained that any Director may unilaterally request that an item be removed from the Consent Calendar for individual consideration apart from the Consent Calendar. She also noted that simple questions, clarifications, or short amounts of dialogue relative to an item on the Consent Calendar may be discussed after the motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

President Sloan asked if any Director intended to pull a recommendation. There being no interest in doing so, a motion to adopt the Consent Calendar, was duly made by Ms. Norman and seconded by Ms. Costamagna. Following discussion, the following motion was **approved** by a vote of 14 in favor, none opposed, and no abstentions.

RESOLVED: That items listed on the Consent Calendar attached as Exhibit A are hereby approved.

7. Action Item: Correction to Head Tax Regulation

Ms. Norman presented her Action Item, a proposal to correct the Head Tax for Junior Level 7 Tournaments. She explained the original presentation to the NorCal Board and noted that the intent of the proposers in October 2021, was always to have the Junior Level 7 Tournaments have a Head Tax of \$1.00 per player. At that time, and at all times since, decisions related to setting entry fees for these tournaments, and the budgeting of income for these tournaments, was predicated on the \$1.00 Junior Level 7 Tournament Head Tax, and the actual fees being charged have been \$1.00. Ms. Norman also noted the proposal has no fiscal impact on the NorCal Budget or the Organization Members that hold sanctions for Junior Level 7 Tournaments. This Action Item seeks to correct the error.

Following discussion, the following motion was duly made by Ms. Norman, seconded by Ms. DeSchane, and **approved** by a vote of 13 in favor, none opposed, and 1 abstention.

WHEREAS: At its October 20, 2021 meeting, the USTA NorCal Board of Directors approved amendments to the USTA NorCal Tournament Sanctioning Regulations (“Regulations”) that included in the Action Item rationale a statement that the existing Head Taxes paid to NorCal would remain the same; and

WHEREAS: It has recently come to the attention of the NorCal staff that a typographical error existed in the approved Regulations, attached to the Action Item, that incorrectly stated the Junior Level 7 Tournament Head Taxes would be \$3.00, instead of the existing \$1.00 Head Tax; and

WHEREAS: The Junior Level 7 Tournament Head Tax charged since the adoption of the amendments in October 2022 has been \$1.00 per player.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That, effective immediately, Regulation 6.B. of the USTA NorCal Tournament Sanctioning Regulations is hereby amended as set forth below (all stricken-through language is proposed to be deleted and all underlined language is proposed to be added).

6. Sanction Fees & NorCal Head Tax. The following fees are charged to applicants for sanctioned Tournaments:

- B. NorCal Head Tax.** Each player is charged the Head Tax per player shown blow, which is included in the fee charged when a player is selected for the tournament. The fee is charged once per Tournament, not per event in a Tournament.

Tournament Type	Head Tax
Junior Level 3, Level 4, Level 5, and Level 6, and Level 7 Tournaments Adult Level 4, Level 5, and Level 6 Tournaments	\$3.00
Adult and Junior Level 7 Tournaments	\$1.00
Level 3, Level 4, and Level 5 Wheelchair Tournament	No Fee

8. New & Returning Organization Members

Mr. Wenger presented the report of seven new and returning Organization Members (4 new, 3 returning) since the last time the Board met on December 14, 2022, so that the Board may fulfill its obligation to review such report pursuant to USTA NorCal Bylaw III.D. No concerns were raised by Directors.

9. Treasurer’s Report

Mr. Walker directed the Board’s attention to the November 30 financial materials distributed with the meeting packet. He reported NorCal is in a strong cash and net assets position and is well-positioned financially to start 2023 and to fund initiatives from the Strategic Plan. Highlights of the report include:

- The November 30 balance sheet shows a cash balance of \$3.55 million and net assets of \$5.2 million.
- Net income through November is \$593,298 which exceeds budget by more than \$561,246.
- Projections for the remainder of the year show net income of \$275,189 and we expect to finish the year with a surplus of approximately \$1.1 million including \$286,000 of Employee Retention Tax Credits from 2021.

Discussion included future plans to consider investing a portion of the cash balance given the current interest rates, and to reconsider the monthly recurring charge to TennisLink that is associated with NorCal's use of its own system to manage leagues.

10. President's Report

Ms. Sloan requested the Directors review her written report, but highlighted the following:

- Section Presidents Meeting. The Presidents met at the Leadership meeting and identified a number of concerns, many of which parallel the issues being faced in NorCal: Pickleball, court shortages, governance, coaches for tennis providers, advocacy, Section Foundations, collaborations between Sections. These topics and more will be discussed/brainstormed in future Section President's meetings.
- USTA President's Long-Term Goals. President Brian Hainline presented his following long-term goals for the association:
 - Tennis looks like America
 - Tennis taking place in every park
 - Tennis programs at all schools
 - Tennis is for the 15% of Americans with disabilities
 - Tennis is the moral and ethical voice of sport
 - Tennis is the model sport
 He also announced his management priorities:
 - Pickleball
 - Player Development, Coaching, and Center of Excellence
 - UTR/WTN
 - Serve Tennis
 - International Governance
 - 20-30 year plan for US Open.

Ms. Sloan encouraged Directors to reach out with questions after meeting.

11. Executive Director's Report

In addition to the NorCal program statistics and written report included in the meeting packet, Ms. Verhoeven's in-meeting presentation included the following:

- A request for Directors who are planning to attend the Annual Meeting to notify her and meet the USTA registration deadline of by January 30, 2023.
- Aces Awards will be held on February 12 at the Chateau Hall at the Pleasant Hill Senior Center for the first time since 2019. Attendance is encouraged and registration is required.
- Junior Player Awards will be held at Big Al's in Milpitas on January 29th from 2:00 to 4:00 pm - all Directors are welcome to join, but need to notify staff in advance.
- The Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) has adopted the ITF's World Tennis Number (WTN) as its exclusive rating. The ATP has also announced a partnership with WTN.

Ms. Verhoeven asked the Directors to review her written report for key upcoming program dates and to contact her with questions.

12. Open Comments

Ms. DeSchane requested information on the Tyler Nii Scholarship. It was reported that the 2023 recipients will be recognized at the Aces Awards. Mr. Scalese noted that this year's application period had a quick turnaround. The selection committee is looking to have a longer timeframe in the future, with the assistance of better marketing of the scholarship opportunity in coming years.

13. Adjournment

There being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 8:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
 Andrea Norman
 Secretary

This document contains all committee recommendations made (or not included) since the previous board meeting on December 14, 2022.

Adult Leagues Committee

1. **Scoring of Eligibility Disqualification in Local League.** Approved at the January 4, 2023 meeting by a vote of 6 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.

RESOLVED: That effective immediately, the rule is being amended as follows (underlined language is proposed addition.)

3.03B(4) Scoring of Eligibility Disqualification in Local League.

3.03B(4)a In the event of an eligibility disqualification during the local league season and up to a maximum of 14 days after the end of the local league season, but prior to any playoff, all matches played by the disqualified player shall be considered defaults and those matches shall be considered wins for the opposing players or doubles teams and scored 6-0, 6-0 for determining standings. Sections must determine the timeframe between 24 hours and 14 days. The ineligible player will not be allowed to continue or advance. In case of an eligibility disqualification in single elimination, the last individual match played by the disqualified player shall be considered a win for the opposing player or doubles team and scored 6-0, 6-0 for determining standings. If a double disqualification results in a tie, the local tiebreak procedure shall be used to determine the winner of the team match. If no such local tiebreak procedure exists, Reg. 2.03H Procedures in the Event of a Tie shall be used in order to determine a winner of the team match.

(NorCal LLAR) NorCal chooses the timeframe of 24 hours after the end of the local league season for eligibility disqualifications to affect the scoring of local league matches in 3.03B(4)a.

Rationale: Being that playoffs typically start 1-2 weeks after the end of the local league season, there is little time to consider match reversals due to ineligibility defaults after the completion of the local league season. Reversing matches not only affects the team with the ineligible player but could potentially affect standings which could impact playoffs.

2. **Section Options for Move-Up/Split-Up.** Approved at the January 4, 2023 meeting by a vote of 6 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.

RESOLVED: That effective immediately, the following rule is being amended as follows (stricken out language is proposed deletion and underlined language is proposed addition.)

2.06B Section Options for Move-Up/Split-Up.

2.06B(1) All Championships Below Nationals. Sections shall have the right to decide whether a team who competes at any championship level below the National Championships must move-up or disperse to form new teams for the next championship year and under what conditions.

NorCal LLAR) USTA NorCal Options. USTA NorCal additionally applies the Move-Up/Split-Up Rule in the following leagues that end at sectionals: Combo Doubles, Mixed 55 & Over, Adult 65 & Over, Adult 18 & Over (2.5 men only) Mixed 18 & Over (combined 5.0 only).

(NorCal LLAR) USTA NorCal Options – Exempt Teams. Teams in the following divisions are exempt from the Move Up/Split Up rule:

Adult DAYTIME Leagues

Adult 18 & Over 5.5+

Adult 40 & Over Men's 2.5+

Adult 40 & Over 5.0+

NorCal Adult 70 & Over

NorCal Combo 10.0+

NorCal Mixed 55 9.0

2.06B(2) Sections shall have the option to restrict crossover between Adult and Mixed Divisions and/or between some or all Age Groups notwithstanding Section 2.06A.

(NorCal LLAR) USTA NorCal Options. USTA NorCal does not restrict crossover between Adult and Mixed Divisions and/or between some or All Age Groups notwithstanding Section 2.06A. USTA NorCal additionally applies the Move Up/Split Up Rule in the following leagues that end at sectionals: Combo Doubles, Mixed 55 & Over, Adult 18 & Over (2.5 men only) Mixed 18 & Over (combined 5.0 only).

(NorCal LLAR) USTA NorCal Options – Exempt Teams. Teams in the following divisions are exempt from the Move Up/Split Up rule:

- Adult DAYTIME Leagues
- Adult 18 & Over 5.5+
- Adult 40 & Over Men's 2.5+
- Adult 40 & Over 5.0+
- Adult 65 & Over
- NorCal Adult 70 & Over
- NorCal Combo 10.0+
- NorCal Mixed 55-9.0

Rationale: The NorCal LLAR regarding which NorCal leagues are included in the Move Up/Split Up Rule and which are exempted needed to be moved to under **2.06B(1) All Championships Below Nationals** because that is the rule that refers to sections having the right to decide whether a team who competes at any championship level below the National Championships must move-up or disperse to form new teams for the next championship year and under what conditions. In addition, Adult 65 & Over was moved from exempt from Move Up/Split up rule to having the Move Up/Split Up rule apply because the Adult 65 & Over Division now advances to a National Invitational. Additionally, a NorCal LLAR has been added to 2.06B(2) identifying that USTA NorCal does not restrict crossover between Adult and Mixed Divisions and/or between some or All Age Groups.

Adult Tournament Committee

1. **NTRP Gold Cup Series Tournament Designation Criteria.** Approved at the December 7, 2022 meeting by a vote of 10 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.

RESOLVED: That effective immediately, the following amendments to the NTRP Gold Cup Series Tournament Designation Criteria be approved (underlined language is proposed addition, crossed out language is proposed to be removed).

32. **NTRP Gold Cup Series Tournament Designations.** Each year, up to 6 NTRP tournaments, in different regions, would be designated as a Level 4 Open: NTRP Gold Cup Series Tournament.

Tournaments that meet the following minimum criteria shall be considered first for Gold Cup Series designation:

- The tournament needs to be multiple days;
- The tournament needs to have received an evaluation score higher than 90% (4.5);
- A minimum of ~~15~~ 25% of the total participants must have completed a player evaluation; and
- ~~The Pre-Tournament Checklist is completed by the Tournament Director no later than the date entries open;~~
- ~~The Post-Tournament Report is completed no later than 7 days after completion of the Tournament; and~~
- The tournament has complied with all applicable USTA NorCal sanction and tournament rules. Player results in all divisions shall receive Level 4 ranking points in accordance with the USTA Adult and Family Tournament, Ranking & Sanctioning Regulations. All champions of NTRP Gold Cup Series Tournaments shall receive a special piece of USTA NorCal logo wear or other item commemorating their win.

Rationale: The amendments to the criteria are being made to be in line with the current rules. A Gold Cup tournament is a level 4 tournament, which requires multiple days, therefore a tournament needs to be over multiple days in order to be considered for a Gold Cup tournament. The additional criteria of score and response rate needed to be adjusted to conform to the new form of the survey conducted; as well as the requirement of pre- and post-tournaments reports needed to be removed due to a change in the procedures that do not require these any longer.

2. **NTRP Gold Cup Series Tournament Designation.** Approved at the December 7, 2022 meeting by a vote of 10 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.

RESOLVED: The following tournaments be designated as Gold Cup Tournaments:

1. Napa Valley Tennis Classic - NTRP 2.5 - 5.0
2. Laguna Creek Fall NTRP Classic

3. San Francisco City Championships

Rationale: These selections were made based on the Gold Cup Designation criteria that is also recommended for approval by the Board.

3. **NTRP Tournament of the Year Designation Criteria.** Approved at the December 7, 2022 meeting by a vote of 10 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.

RESOLVED: That effective immediately, the following amendments to the NTRP Tournament of the Year (TOY) Designation Criteria be approved (underlined language is proposed addition, crossed out language is proposed to be removed).

33. NTRP Tournament of the Year Designations. *Each year, up to 6 NTRP tournaments, in different regions, would be designated as a Level 5 Open: Tournament of the Year Tournament. NTRP Tournaments of the Year (TOY) are those tournaments that, after NTRP Gold Cup Series Tournaments have been designated, receive the highest average rating by participants.*

Tournaments that meet the following minimum criteria shall be considered first for events to be designated as TOY:

- The tournament needs to be a multiple day event;
- The tournament shall have received an average rating by all participants on the player evaluation ~~of at least 3.75; of at least 4.0 (80%);~~
- A minimum of ~~15~~ 25% of the total participants must have completed a player evaluation; and
- ~~The Pre-Tournament Checklist is completed by the Tournament Director no later than the date entries open;~~
- ~~The Post-Tournament Report is completed no later than 7 days after completion of the Tournament; and~~
- The tournament has complied with all applicable USTA NorCal sanction and tournament rules.

Player results in all divisions shall receive Level 5 ranking points in accordance with the USTA Adult and Family Tournament, Ranking & Sanctioning Regulations.

Rationale: The amendments to the criteria are being made to be in line with the current rules. A Tournament of the Year tournament is a level 5 tournament, which requires multiple days, therefore a tournament needs to be over multiple days in order to be considered for a Tournament of the Year designation. The additional criteria of score and response rate needed to be adjusted to conform to the new form of the survey conducted; as well as the requirement of pre- and post-tournaments reports needed to be removed due to a change in the procedures that do not require these any longer.

4. **NTRP Tournament of the Year Designation.** Approved at the December 7, 2022 meeting by a vote of 10 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions.

RESOLVED: The following tournaments be designated as Tournaments of the Year:

1. Adult NTRP 40+ & 55+ 3.0-4.5 Singles & Doubles - Operation Pride
2. * Sweet Spot - Sierra View Country Club - NTRP 3.0 - 5.0 Men's & Women's Singles & Doubles
3. * Stonegate NTRP 18+ Singles & Doubles
4. Laguna Creek Spring NTRP Classic
5. Johnson Ranch Round Up - NTRP 3.0 - 5.0 Men's & Women's Singles, Doubles & Mixed.

Rationale: These selections were made based on the TOY Designation criteria that is also recommended for approval by the Board.

*Sweet Spot (Sierra View Country Club) and Stonegate have been selected conditionally pending application for sanctioning.

5. **Laguna Creek Age Tournament Spring Classic Level Determination.** Approved at the January 11, 2023 meeting by a vote of 8 in favor, none opposed and 1 member recused themselves.

RESOLVED: That the "Laguna Creek Age Tournament Spring Classic" will be designated a level 5 tournament.

Rationale: The Laguna Creek Age Tournament Spring Classic tournament is the recipient of the 2022 Outstanding Age Tournament of the Year due to outstanding performance and high ratings in the player survey.