

NOTE: *The resolutions in these minutes were approved by USTA NorCal Board of Directors on June 21, 2023. These minutes were approved by the Committee on June 6, 2023.*

Mark Fairchilde, the vice-chair of the Adult Tournament Committee, called the meeting to order at 8:17pm and roll call was conducted. The meeting was held by Google Meet video conference.

Committee Members Present: Mark Fairchilde (vice-chair), Leslie, Airola-Murveit, Christopher Aria, Darrin Cohen, Andie Mouzes, Marina Wills

USTA NorCal Staff Present: Michelle Wilson, Joanna Broda-Schunck

Guests Present: n/a

1. Proposal to Recommend Amendment to USTA Adult and Family Tournament, Ranking and Sanctioning Regulations:

Wild Cards. Currently the only section tournaments that are allowed to offer wildcards are the Open Level 4 tournaments. In the past, all tournament directors had the ability to accept 25% of players, which guaranteed for them the possibility of accepting members of their organization. Without this guarantee, they cannot justify to their members, why they are running a tournament and using all the courts.

Following discussion, the following motion was duly made by Marina Wills, seconded by Darrin Cohen, and approved by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 0 recusals.

RESOLVED: That the following proposal to amend the USTA Adult & Family Tournament, Ranking, and Sanctioning Regulations regarding the addition of wild cards to all Section and District Level 4, 5, and 6 Tournaments will be submitted to the USTA Adult Competition Committee (underlined language is proposed to be added; stricken through language is proposed to be deleted).

Proposal for regulation VII.A.5, VII.B.5, VII.C.5

VII.A.5. (level 4s)

5. *Selection.*

a. *Adult Open Divisions.* [unchanged]

b. *Adult Age Group, Family, and NTRP Divisions.*

i. *Wild cards.* The maximum numbers of wild cards that can be awarded are as follows: 8 in a draw of 64 or higher; 6 in a draw of 32; 4 in a draw of 16 or fewer.

Regulation VI.G.5.a.i. Comment: Criteria for selection of a player or team to receive a wild card is at the discretion of the Tournament Committee. Information on applying for wild cards, including the deadline, must be posted on the tournament website no later than the date entries open.

ii. The Sectional Association determines the method of selection using either VII.A.5.b.iii or VII.A.5.b.iv

iii. *Players from National Standings List.*

(A) *Open tournaments.* When a singles draw size is limited, all other players will be selected (and alternates will be ordered) in the order their names appear on the most recently published National Standings List of the division. When a doubles draw size is limited, all other teams will be selected (and alternates will be ordered) using the procedure described in Regulation V.B.

(B) *Closed tournaments.* When the draw size of a Closed Adult tournament is limited, the same procedures described in Regulation VII.A.5.a.ii.(A) will be used *except that* the National Standings List will be filtered to include only players who are residents of the Sectional Association.

iii. iv. Players from a rating.

(A) Open tournaments. When a singles draw size is limited, all other players will be selected (and alternates will be ordered) in the order their names appear on the most recently published rating. When a doubles draw size is limited, all other teams will be selected (and alternates will be ordered) using the best combined ratings from the most recently published ratings. For example, in a draw of 16, if the 16th best doubles combination had a combined World Tennis Number (WTN) of 46.0 (22.4 and 23.6), they would be selected over the 17th best doubles combination of a WTN of 46.5 (22.5 and 24.0). Wild cards may not be awarded.

(B) Closed tournaments. When the draw size of a Closed Adult tournament is limited, the same procedures described in Regulation VII.A.5.a.iv.(A) will be used *except that* the selections will be filtered to include only players who are residents of the Sectional Association. Wild cards may not be awarded.

VII.B.5 (level 5s)

5. Selection.

a. Adult Open Divisions.

- i. *Open Adult tournaments.* The Selection process must follow the options set forth in Regulation VII.5.a Regulation VII.A.5.a.ii. Wild cards may not be awarded.
- ii. *Closed Section Adult tournaments.* The Selection process must follow the options set forth in Regulation VII.A.5.a.ii. Wild cards may not be awarded.
- iii. *Closed District Adult tournaments.* When the draw size of a Closed District Adult tournament is limited the same procedures described in Regulation VII.A.5.a.ii will be used *except that* the National Standings List or most recent published rating will be filtered to include only players who are residents of the District Association.

b. Adult Age Group, NTRP, and Family Divisions.

- i. *Open Family tournaments.* The Selection process must follow the options set forth in Regulation VII.5.b Regulation VII.A.5.a.ii. Wild cards may not be awarded. Wild cards may not be awarded.
- ii. *Closed Section Family tournaments.* The Selection process must follow the options set forth in Regulation VII.A.5.a.ii. Wild cards may not be awarded.
- iii. *Closed District Family tournaments.* When the draw size of a Closed District Adult tournament is limited the same procedures described in Regulation VII.A.5.a.ii will be used *except that* the National Standings List or most recent published rating will be filtered to include only players who are residents of the District Association.

VII.C.5. (level 6s)

5. Selection.

a. Adult Open Divisions. The Selection process must follow the options set forth in Regulation VII.A.5.a. Regulation VII.A.5.a.ii Wild cards may not be awarded.

b. Adult Age Group, NTRP, and Family Divisions. When a draw size is limited in a Family Division, teams will be selected (and alternates will be ordered) using the most recently published team National Standing List of the Division. Wild cards may not be awarded. The Selection process must follow the options set forth in Regulation VII.A.5.b.

Rationale: Currently Tournament Directors are not given the option to award wildcard. This makes it hard for them to host tournaments, as they are taking away courts from their members. Many players play only at very local tournaments and thus will not have enough ranking points to qualify for the event if only the National Standings List is used. Similarly, they may not play enough matches to have a reliable WTN number, which would put them at the bottom of the list. Awarding

wildcards to their members would make it possible for tournament directors to advertise the event to their club members and justify the usage of the courts over an extended period of time.

2. Proposal to Recommend Amendment to USTA Adult and Family Tournament, Ranking and Sanctioning Regulations: Bottom Up Selection for Level 7 Tournaments.

Currently Player selection into Adult Level 7 tournaments is top-down by NSL or rating. Level 7 tournaments are supposed to be entry-level tournaments, therefore players with little to no ranking points or low confidence in rating should be selected before those that are higher in standings, giving them the opportunity to earn the points necessary to enter higher level tournaments. Player selection bottom-top is also currently used in junior Level 7 tournaments. This change would give more consistency.

Following discussion, the following motion was duly made by Marina Wills, seconded by Leslie Airola-Murveit, and approved by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 0 recusals.

RESOLVED: That the following proposal to amend the USTA Adult & Family Tournament, Ranking and Sanctioning Regulations regarding the bottom-up selection of players for Section and District Level 7 Tournaments will be submitted to the USTA Adult Competition Committee (underlined language is proposed to be added; stricken through language is proposed to be deleted).

Proposal for rule VII.D.6:

6. Selection. When a draw size is limited, the selection process must follow the options set forth in **Regulation VII.A.5.** *except that* when National Standings Lists and/or rating are used for selection in a limited draw tournament, players shall be selected from the bottom up.

Rationale: Level 7s are supposed to be "Entry Level" tournaments. This means that priority should be given to those players that have no ranking points yet, as they are trying to get started in the tournaments and often cannot get into any other tournament.

3. Amendment to Rule #29 Level 7: One Day Tournaments

The rule regarding one day tournaments currently has a provision for when those tournaments can be cancelled. This provision is already stated in the Sanctioning Agreement and therefore not necessary in the rule itself.

Following discussion, the following motion was duly made by Marina Wills, seconded by Andie Mouzes, and approved by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

RESOLVED: That effective immediately, USTA NorCal Adult Tournament Rules # 29 is amended to read as follows (underlined language is proposed to be added; stricken through language is proposed to be deleted).

29. **Level 7: One-Day Tournaments.** Below are special provisions for one-day singles and/or doubles tournaments. Except as provided below, these tournaments shall comply with all other Adult Tournament Rules and Sanction Rules:

- a. *Maximum Entry Fee.* The maximum entry fee for a one-day tournament shall be \$30 per player in doubles and \$40 per player in singles.
- b. *Multiple Flights Permitted.* The tournament may hold more than one flight per division. For example instead of holding one draw in a division with 16 entries, a tournament may hold 2 draws in a division of 8 entries each. Teams should be waterfalled by rank into flights (see example below). If no ranking information is available, teams are drawn to flights by lot.

Waterfall Example: If 16 players, ranked 1-16 are entered, players 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15 are waterfalled into one flight and players 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, and 16 are waterfalled into the other flight.

- c. *Cancellation of a One Day Tournament.* The Tournament Committee shall not make the decision to cancel all matches for the remainder of the day until at least 12 Noon of the day in question. In the case of inclement weather, no earlier than two days before the tournament start date, the tournament may contact the USTA NorCal Adult Tournament Coordinator to request a waiver to the cancellation of tournaments rule. Waivers will be determined on a case by case basis.

Rationale: The amendments to the rule regarding the cancellation of a One Day Tournament is being made to make the rule consistent with the cancellation rule for all other tournaments. The Sanctioning Agreement gives the NorCal staff the authority to approve an earlier cancellation of a tournament in the case of inclement weather and hazardous conditions.

4. Amendment to Rule #21 Entry Fees

The rule regarding entry fees is being amended to clarify the fees that are being collected and the circumstances under which any and all of those fees should be refunded

Following discussion, the following motion was duly made by Marina Wills, seconded by Leslie, Airola-Murveit, and approved by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

RESOLVED: That effective immediately, USTA NorCal Adult Tournament Rules # 21 is amended to read as follows (underlined language is proposed to be added; stricken through language is proposed to be deleted).

21. Entry Fees.

Players are charged the following fees when accepted into a USTA NorCal tournament:

- the entry fee for each event;
- a one-time USTA NorCal fee ("Head Tax") that is included in the entry fee, but is paid to USTA NorCal per tournament (not per entry); and
- a Serve Tennis administrative fee ("Serve Tennis Fee") paid to the service provider for processing the online entry.
 - a. *Processing Fee May Not be Charged by Tournament Committee to Accept Entries.* Tournament Committees may not collect the Active.com Serve Tennis Fee when a player does not register online.
 - b. *Collection of Head Tax for Entries Not Paid for in Serve Tennis.* When a player competes in a tournament without making payment in the Serve Tennis system, within 30 days of the completion of the tournament, the organizer must pay the Head Tax to USTA NorCal. Failure to pay an outstanding Head Tax may result in the loss of future sanctioned tournaments and/or consideration of future sanctioned tournaments.
 - c. *Nonpayment of Entry Fee.* The tournament may charge a collection fee for returned entry fee checks or nonpayment of outstanding fees at the tournament. Nonpayment of entry fees or cancellation of payment after the entry deadline will result in player suspension until such payment is received by the involved tournament.
 - d. *Entry Fee Refunds.*
 - i. *Refund Method and Deadline.* When a refund is required, the refund is required to be postmarked, or sent digitally through Serve Tennis or other electronic transfer of funds, no later than 30 days following the last day of the tournament.
 - ii. *Circumstances Requiring a Refund.* The following circumstances require a refund:
 - a. *Tournament Administrative Error.*
 - (1) *Error in Accepting Player into Tournament.* When a player is accepted due to a tournament administrative error, the entire fee paid must be refunded (entry fee, Head Tax, and Serve Tennis Fee).
 - (2) *Failure to Communicate a Change in Start Time or Omitted Time is Added.* When a Tournament Committee fails to communicate a change in a start time or an omitted start time is added, and the player's opponent is advanced by walkover,
 - The entire fee paid for the event (entry fee; Head Tax, if applicable; and Serve Tennis Fee) must be refunded if no match has been played in the tournament; or
 - 50% of the player's fee paid for the event (entry fee; Head Tax, if applicable; and Serve Tennis Fee) must be refunded if at least one match has been played in the tournament.
 - b. *Full Cancellation of Tournament or Event.* See Regulation 21.d.vi.a
 - c. *Partial Cancellation of Tournament or Event.* See Regulation 21.C.vii.b
 - d. *Withdrawal for an Approved Concurrent Entry into Another NorCal Tournament.* When a player who has received the proper prior written approval to enter a concurrent tournament (see Rule #19 withdraws to play in that current tournament, the fee paid, minus the Head Tax and Serve Tennis Fee, will be refunded.
 - e. *Player Who Declines to Play in at a different level.* When a player, by the deadline set by the Tournament Committee, declines the opportunity to play in an event at a higher level or lower age group when the event they registered for is cancelled the declining player is entitled to a refund of the total fee paid at the time of selection, including the Head Tax (if applicable) and the Serve Tennis Fee. Players declining after the deadline are entitled to a refund of the fee paid, minus the Head Tax (if applicable) and Serve Tennis Fee. Players who have not been selected have not paid any fee and are not entitled to any refund.
 - iii. *No Refund for Withdrawals in Violation of Concurrent Tournament Rule.* When a player withdraws from a tournament in violation of the Concurrent Tournament Rule (Rule #19 a player is not entitled to a refund, regardless of when the withdrawal occurs.
 - iv. *Other Withdrawals Before Start of Tournament.*
 - No refunds are required after the entry deadline.
 - v. *Credits Not Permitted.* The Tournament Committee may not issue a credit for the entry fee in lieu of a refund.
 - vi. *Fees for Refunding Not Permitted; Administrative Fee for Full Cancellation Permitted in Certain Circumstances.* The Tournament Committee will not charge any fee (such as a processing, service, or handling fee) for refunding the entry fee except an Administrative Fee as follows:

a. *Cancellation of Tournament.* When a tournament is cancelled before a match is played due to inclement weather, or other reason approved by the USTA NorCal staff to protect the health and safety of the players, the tournament may withhold an Administrative Fee as follows:

- \$2.00 per player for a Level 7 Tournament;
- \$3.50 per player for a Level 4, 5 and 6 Tournament;

When making the refund, the player will receive the fee paid for all events selected, net of the Administrative Fee, the Head Tax, and the Serve Tennis Fee.

b. *Cancellation of Event.* When an event in a tournament (but not all events in the tournament) is cancelled before a match is played due to inclement weather, or other reason approved by the USTA NorCal staff to protect the health and safety of the players, the tournament may withhold an Administrative Fee as follows:

- \$1.00 per player for a Level 7 Tournament;
- \$1.50 per player for a Level 4, 5 and 6 Tournament;

When making the refund, the player will receive the fee paid for the event, net of the Administrative Fee, the Head Tax (if applicable), and the Serve Tennis Fee.

As soon as possible after the completion of the tournament, and no later than 30 days after the last day of the tournament, the Tournament Committee will provide a report to USTA NorCal of all Head Taxes refunded. USTA NorCal will reimburse the organizer for this expense within 30 days of receiving the report. Failure to submit this report absolves USTA NorCal from the requirement to reimburse the refunded Head Taxes.

vii. *Partial Cancellation Policy.*

The refund will be determined by the number of matches played by each player in each event.

a. *Level 7 Tournaments.* If only one match is played, a player is entitled to a 50% refund that is calculated after deducting from the total fee paid for the event, the Head Tax and the Serve Tennis Fee. If a player completes two or more matches in the singles or doubles event, no refund is required.

b. *Level 4, 5, and 6 Tournaments.*

If only one match is played in an event, the player is entitled to a refund of 25% of entry fee for event that is calculated after deducting the Head Tax and the Serve Tennis Fee. If a player(s) completes two or more matches in the event, no refund is required.

e. *Nonpayment of Entry Fee.* The tournament may charge a collection fee for returned entry fee checks or nonpayment of outstanding fees. Nonpayment of entry fees or cancellation of payment after the entry deadline will result in player suspension until such payment is received by the tournament.

The Tournament Committee shall refund a player's entire entry fee (minus the Tennis Link Serve Tennis non-refundable registration fee) if the entry is not accepted, if the player withdraws before the draw has been published or no later than seven days before the start date of the tournament, whichever date is sooner. The Tournament Committee is not required to refund the Serve Tennis administrative fee, except that if an entry is accepted because of an administrative error by the Tournament Committee. The Tournament Committee may not issue a credit for the entry fee in lieu of an entry fee refund.

The Tournament Committee shall not charge any fee (such as a processing, service, or handling fee) for refunding the entry fee. However, in the case where the tournament is canceled due to inclement weather (or other reason approved by USTA NorCal staff to protect the health and safety of players) before a match is played, the tournament may withhold an administrative fee of \$2.00 per entry in the case of a tournament that charges a per entry fee or a total of \$2.00 in the case of a tournament that charges a base fee.

When an entry fee refund is issued, the refund is required to be postmarked no later than 30 days following the last day of the tournament.

e. *Partial Cancellation Policy.*

i. *When Per Event Fee Charged.* No refund of the per event fee will be required to be made to a player if that player finishes one match in an event and the event is subsequently canceled due to inclement weather (or other reason approved by USTA NorCal staff to protect the health and safety of the players).

ii. *When Base Fee Charged.* No refund of the base fee will be required to be made to a player if that player finishes one match in the tournament, regardless of whether it is a singles or doubles match. A finished match is a match that takes place on court and is played to completion, meaning a player has either won a match point or has won after the start of the match because their opponent has retired or been defaulted.

Rationale: The amended rule clarifies the circumstances under which all or any of the different fees need to be refunded to the players. The change also increases the amount that tournament directors are allowed to withhold from the refund when a tournament is canceled due to inclement weather. This increase accounts for the inflation and the costs that the tournaments incur prior to the tournament being held.

7. Approval of Minutes. The Committee considered approval of the minutes of the meeting held *March 28, 2023*. The following motion was duly made by Leslie, Airola-Murveit, seconded by Marina Wills, and approved by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Adult Tournament Committee meeting held March 28, 2023 be approved as presented.

8. Staff Report

- Item 1: Joanna Broda-Schunck made a note that the update to the Player Selection rule was approved by the Committee via a unanimous written consent on May 10, 2023
- Item 2: Joanna Broda-Schunck reported about the Bay Area Senior Games that were hosted by USTA NorCal April 27-29, 2023
- Item 3: Joanna Broda-Schunck informed the committee about the planned pilot events: Tri-level 4.0/4.5/5.0, WTN, singles tri-level
- Item 4: Joanna Broda-Schunck reported that the 2023 Grand Prix will be held at Gold River Sports Club.
- Item 5: Joanna Broda-Schunck informed the committee that the Action Item regarding Open requirement to play in Open Series tournament in order to qualify to the Grand Prix was tabled pending more information about the efficacy of Adult Tournament Stipends
- Item 6: Joanna Broda-Schunck reported to the committee on the progress the subcommittee has made to update the criteria for Adult Tournament Stipends

There being no further issues or discussion to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned 8:46pm.