

NOTE: *All resolutions in these minutes were approved by the USTA NorCal Board as of October 18, 2023.*

NOTE: *These minutes were approved on December 4, 2023*

Christine Costamagna, chair of the Adult Leagues Committee (“ALC” or “Committee”), called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm and roll call was conducted. The meeting was held by Google Meet video conference.

Committee Members Present: Andrea Barnes, Christine Costamagna (chair), Marilyn Morrell-Kristal, Michelle Nicholson, Tuesdai Powers, Paul Startz

USTA NorCal Staff Present: Michelle Wilson, Sr. Manager, Adult Competition

Guest: Sarah Robinson, Chair of the Adult League Grievance Committee

1. **“Leagues Played Here” Banners.** Pursuant the Committee’s request at the September 25 meeting, Staff presented the ALC with a proposal of how to distribute “Leagues Played Here” banners. The proposal presented to the Committee awarded a banner to facilities that host 5 USTA NorCal Adult Leagues. She further noted that banners would be replaced every 3 years from when they were distributed beginning in the 2023 calendar year. The Committee discussed this proposal which included proposing a request of an additional \$6,100 from the Budget Committee to increase the \$10,000 already budgeted to purchase the 156 banners needed to send to the organizations that hosted at least 5 leagues in 2023. The Committee discussed the budget and the concern that some eligible facilities may not display the banner. The Committee requested Staff to poll the eligible facilities to see which facilities would want one and to not request additional funding at this time until it is known how many facilities would want a banner. A discussion ensued about how to distribute additional banners should there be any left over.

Following the discussion, the following motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

RESOLVED: Effective with the 2024 Adult League Year, “Leagues Played Here” banners will be distributed every 3 years starting with facilities that host at least 5 USTA NorCal Adult Leagues in the previous year who would like one.

Rationale:

- Continuing to distribute “Leagues Played Here” banners every three years promotes USTA NorCal’s partnership with the facilities hosting Adult Leagues.
- The banners are an inexpensive promotional tool for NorCal.
- Distributing to facilities starting at 5 Adult Leagues played in a given year recognizes the commitment by these facilities to host USTA NorCal Adult Leagues

2. **Approval of September 11, 2023 Minutes.** The Committee considered for approval the draft minutes of the meeting held September 11, 2023.

The following motion was then **APPROVED** by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0

abstentions:

RESOLVED: That the minutes of ALC meeting held February 8, 2023 be approved as presented.

3. **Approval of September 25, 2023 Minutes.** The Committee considered for approval the draft minutes of the meeting held September 25, 2023.

The following motion was then **APPROVED** by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 abstentions (Marilyn Morrell-Kristal, Tuesdai Powers):

RESOLVED: That the minutes of ALC meeting held September 25, 2023 be approved as presented.

4. **2024 Rule Changes to the NorCal LLAR.**

- A. **(NorCal LLAR) Wildcards.** It was proposed to the ALC to amend the rule regarding how wildcards are selected to advance to postseason play to clarify the selection process.

Following discussion, the following motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

RESOLVED: That the NorCal LLAR Wildcard rule be amended as follows (stricken through language are proposed deletions and underlined language are proposed additions).

(NorCal LLAR) Wildcards. Wildcards may be used to round out the number of teams that advance to Sectionals. Wildcards are chosen at the beginning of the season from areafights with the greatest number of teams. If there are two or more flightareas that have the same greatest number of teams, the wildcards will be selected randomly from those flightareas.

Rationale: The Wildcard rule was changed in 2023 for wildcards to be selected from the flights with the greatest number of teams. Previously wildcards were selected from the **area** with the greatest number of teams. This change will make it more equitable to recognize areas with the most number of teams.

- B. **3.03B(4) Scoring of Eligibility Disqualification in Local League.** Staff explained to the ALC that 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. During this discussion, Staff also pointed out that based on National regulations, Sections must determine the timeframe which will be between 24 hours and 14 days and that NorCal currently uses 24 hours. Staff and Ms. Robinson are proposing to change the timeframe from 24 hours to 5 days to give captains more time to file a NTRP grievance at the end of the season with the chance that it will be adjudicated before the next segment of play.

Following discussion, the following motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

RESOLVED: That the USTA NorCal Options rule under 3.03B(4) be amended as follows

(stricken through language are proposed deletions and underlined language are proposed additions).

(NorCal LLAR) USTA NorCal Options. NorCal chooses the timeframe of ~~24 hours~~ five (5) days after the end of the local league season for eligibility disqualifications to affect the scoring of local league matches in 3.03B(4).

Rationale: Since this timeframe also applies to NTRP grievances, this adjustment allows captains who file a NTRP grievance after the last match in the local league (maybe played on the last day of the local league season) a chance to have their grievance adjudicated. The current timeframe of 24 hours after the end of the local league season does not provide enough time to consider an appeal and render a decision. This change also supports that integrity of the NTRP rating system by allowing time to address grievances.

C. **2.030 Unforeseen Circumstances.** Staff discussed with the Committee the National regulations regarding unforeseen circumstances at a Championship event and explained that National states that if any situation occurs, which could potentially result in invalid matches or the postponement, rescheduling, or cancellation of a National Championship, a committee comprised of the Tournament Director, National staff and National League Committee member(s) will determine the best course of action. It was explained that this rule also allows Sections to add language to their regulations or Championship procedures to cover similar unforeseen circumstances. The ALC discussed the proposed NorCal LLAR regarding unforeseen circumstances. It was explained that when the Adult League Rules sub-committee reviewed this rule, it proposed that the Championship Committee would determine the best course of action as the Championship Committee helps running the event and making decisions related to the event. The Championship Committee would be set in advance of the event and have specific criteria regarding membership which will include at least one Adult League Committee member.

Following discussion, the following motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

RESOLVED: That the (NorCal LLAR) Unforeseen Circumstances rule be added under 2.030 as follows (Underlined language are proposed additions.)

(NorCal LLAR) Unforeseen Circumstances. Should any situation occur, which could potentially result in invalid matches or the postponement, rescheduling, or cancellation of a Sectional Championship, the Championship Committee will determine the best course of action. This may include, but not be limited to, changes to the format, number of matches, and scoring. If a championship cannot be completed for any reason, the Championship committee shall determine the teams advancing to the next championship level.

Rationale: This change provide clarity.

D. **(NorCal LLAR) Adult 40 & Over Tie-Break Procedure for a 4-line Format.** Staff reminded the ALC that beginning in 2024, National will be going to 5 lines for the Adult 40 & Over National Championship, however NorCal will remain a 4-line league. Previously, the ALC passed a rule to have Adult 40 & Over sectional standing calculations to be the same as used in local leagues since the National format will be different in 2024. Under the rule, the tie-break procedures were not the same as what all

other NorCal leagues were using for Section Championships and Staff is proposing that the tie-break rule be the same for all leagues.

Following discussion, the following motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

RESOLVED: That the (NorCal LLAR) Adult 40 & Over Tie-Break Procedure for a 4-line Format rule be amended as follows (stricken through language are proposed deletions and underlined language are proposed additions.)

(NorCal LLAR) Adult 40 & Over Tie-Break Procedure for a 4-line Format. Points per Position will be used to determine a match winner and Section Championship standings. A win in the #1 doubles position will be worth 2 points. Match wins in the other positions—#1 singles, #2 doubles, and #3 doubles—will be worth 1 point each. The team with the most cumulative points will be in first place in the flight. In the event of a tie in total number of points won, the tie shall be broken by the first of the following procedures that does so:

- ~~1. Fewest number of sets lost~~
- ~~2. Fewest number of games lost~~
- ~~3. Winner of head-to-head matches~~
- ~~4. Coin toss~~
 1. Winner of head-to-head matches
 2. Fewest number of sets lost
 3. Fewest number of games lost
 4. Game Winning Percentage: Total games won divided by total games played

Rationale: Previously, the ALC passed a rule to keep Adult 40 Sectional standings calculations the same as used in local leagues. However, in all the other leagues, NorCal uses the National championship tie-break procedure. In regards to in event of a tie, the National procedure moves head-to-head above sets lost and games lost. This change brings the Adult 40 & Over Sectional Championships in line with the other leagues in terms of tie-break procedures.

- E. **Removing COVID-19 Restrictions from NorCal LLAR.** Staff proposed that rules adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic to elevate safety when playing USTA sanctioned events during that time should be retired.

Following discussion, the following motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

RESOLVED: That the following (NorCal LLARs) regarding new balls, water, and bathrooms be amended as follows (stricken through language are proposed deletions and underlined language are proposed additions.)

(NorCal LLAR) New Balls. ~~Due to COVID-19 restrictions which vary by county, USTA NorCal is requiring every team on the same side of the net is to provide a brand new can of balls for every match they participate in. Both cans of balls should be marked with alternate numbers. If all players in the individual match agree to use just one can of balls, the can will be provided by the home team. The home team shall supply new balls for the match [ULR 1.05]. The home team shall decide on the use of new balls for a full third set.~~

(NorCal LLAR) Water. ~~Due to COVID-19 restrictions which vary by county, players should bring their own drinking water as access to drinking fountains at facilities may be limited or~~

~~unavailable.~~ Water must be available at the site of the match. Drinking fountains meet this requirement.

(NorCal LLAR) Bathrooms. Bathrooms must be accessible and on site for players to use during the entire match. ~~Due to COVID-19 restrictions which vary by county, the use of restrooms at facilities may have restrictions.~~

Rationale: The COVID-19 restrictions are no longer in place so we are reverting to the pre-COVID version of the requirements for Hosting Responsibilities.

F. **(NorCal LLAR) Coaching.** Staff explained to the ALC the Coaching rule needs to be clarified as confusion has been raised by a number of players. The Committee discussed the proposed changes.

Following discussion, the following motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

RESOLVED: That the (NorCal LLAR) Coaching rule be amended as follows (stricken through language are proposed deletions and underlined language are proposed additions.)

2.01D Coaching. When the scoring method is the best of three tiebreak sets and a 10 minute rest period is taken between the second and third sets, coaching is permitted only during this rest period.

(NorCal LLAR) Coaching. No coaching is allowed once warmups have begun. When the scoring method is the best of three tiebreak sets and a 10 minute rest period is taken between the second and third sets, coaching is permitted only during this rest period.

2.03G Coaching. When the scoring method is the best of three tiebreak sets and a 10 minute rest period is taken between the second and third sets, coaching is permitted only during this rest period.

(NorCal LLAR) No Coaching. No coaching is allowed once warmups have begun. When the scoring method is the best of three tiebreak sets and a 10 minute rest period is taken between the second and third sets, coaching is permitted only during this rest period.

Rationale: The title of the NorCal LLAR is modified because it follows the 2.03G Coaching rule which states that coaching is allowed in the 10-minute rest period. NorCal allows coaching in the 10-minute period, so this clarifies that. The title has been misleading as it says "No Coaching". There are two places (local league and Championship) where it is added.

G. **(NorCal LLAR) Scheduling Local League Matches.** The Committee reviewed and discussed the rule change proposal clarifying that for a split start, the individual match start times have to be according to the charts in the League Regulations. During their discussion, the ALC found that they had concerns with the clarity and understandability regarding the language for this rule change proposal. The also saw how the current language may be confusing as well but want to come up with language that is more clear. Following discussion, the ALC is sending this rule proposal back to the Adult League Rules sub-committee for further review.

H. **(NorCal LLAR) Total Team Default Procedures.** The ALC was also informed that the

Adult League Rules sub-committee reviewed the NorCal LLAR regarding the Total Team Default Procedures. In the current NorCal LLAR, total team defaults do not count as a win for either team in the standings. It was reported that some players have voiced their concern regarding the current rule. During discussion, the Committee was notified that a rule proposal of "A match defaulted will be considered a team win for the non-defaulting team" is currently being researched to see if the Tennislink system can support this proposed rule change before bringing it to the ALC to review.

5. **USTA NorCal Section Connection – November 4, 2023.** The Committee was informed that the NorCal Section Connection event is scheduled for November 4. It is a community event for volunteers, providers, and players. Staff noted that there will be different sessions such as an Adult League Captains Training and an Adult Comp Town Hall. It was also mentioned that there is going to be a Volunteer Appreciation Dinner that evening to which the Committee will be invited.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 pm.