

## **Minutes of the USTA NorCal Adult Leagues Committee Meeting Monday, February 6, 2023**

**NOTE:** All resolutions in these minutes were approved by the USTA NorCal Board as of February 15, 2023.

**NOTE:** These minutes were approved on April 3, 2023.

Christine Costamagna, chair of the Adult Leagues Committee ("ALC" or "Committee"), called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm and roll call was conducted. The meeting was held by Google Meet video conference.

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

**USTA NorCal Staff Present:** Michelle Wilson, Sr. Manager, Adult Competition; Summer Verhoeven, Executive Director

- 1. 2023 Combo Sectionals.** Staff gave a report to the Committee regarding the Combo Sectionals event that was hosted on February 3-5. It was reported to the Committee that staff tracked the weather for 2 weeks and based on the weather forecast of having a window to play the sectionals on Friday and Saturday staff decided to run it on a shortened format to get the event in. However, as the event was started and run, the weather was worse than originally forecasted as it kept lightly raining at one site through the afternoon and it rained in the late afternoon at another site which was not forecasted. Due to the unpredicted weather, the event was not completed and each site stopped at a different point in the draw. It was also noted that staff had accidentally cc'd all captains in one of the notifications that went out and that captains have been replying all and sharing their feedback and frustrations. One of the Committee members also shared their concerns that she felt staff more communication with the players were needed. The Committee also discussed if a prorated refund is appropriate based on the number of team matches that were played but also took into consideration it is always tough for the event hosts and players when it rains and that all teams got to play and received their captain's gift and player's gifts. It was also discussed that while a pro-rated refund may be nice gesture for the teams that only played one match, the captains/players are most likely looking for more empathy from USTA NorCal than they are a refund.

Summer Verhoeven left the call at 7:13pm.

- 2. WTN Flex League Pilot – Scala Program App.** Staff gave an update regarding the WTN Flex League Pilot, informing the ALC that it will be run using the Scala program/app as the current platform used to run Flex Leagues does not support WTN. Following discussion, the Committee expressed their support of using Scala.
- 3. Addition of 2 Tri-Level Team Events.** Staff informed the ALC that they have been notified by National that two team formats will be added to the Tri-Level Invitational in 2024. Currently, the only division that is offered is a team consisting of 3.5/4.0/4.5 players. In 2024, National will be adding a 3.0/3.5/4.0 division and a 4.0/4.5/5.0 division. To qualify teams for the 2 additional events, it was proposed to host two additional Tri-Level Team Events (an event consisting of 3.0/3.5/4.0 and an event consisting of 4.0/4.5/5.0). It was mentioned to the Committee that the additional two divisions were being considered pilot events and funds are currently in the budget to support them.

Following discussion, the following motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 7 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

**RESOLVED:** That effective immediately, the addition of 2 qualifying Tri-Level Team events be added to the schedule.

**Rationale:** Tri-Level Teams are teams comprised of 3 different levels. While there is no league for these teams, this is considered a league product by the USTA and NorCal provides team tournaments for these teams to compete called tri-level team events. We currently have one for 3.5/4.0/4.5 and this proposal adds 2 new events for 3.0/3.5/4.0 and 4.0/4.5/5.0. This will provide additional play opportunity, increase participation, and will be the way to endorse NorCal teams for the 2024 National Tri-Level Team events for the 3.0/3.5/4.0 and 4.0/4.5/5.0 divisions. These will be considered pilots and there are funds currently in the budget to support these events.

- 4. Tri-Level Team Events Counting Towards NTRP Ratings.** During the discussion regarding team events, the ALC discussed the possibility of having results from Tri-Level Team events counting towards ratings. It

was suggested that this could increase participation, ensure players are playing at level, and make it more enjoyable for players to play.

Following discussion, the following motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 7 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

**RESOLVED:** That effective immediately, Tri-Level Team Events will count towards NTRP ratings

**Rationale:** Having the Tri-Level Team Events counting towards ratings is an option that national gives to the sections. The Committee is proposing this because it believes that it will make play more fair, making it a more enjoyable event for players and may help increase participation.

- 5. New Player Promotion Proposal.** Staff presented to the Committee a proposal for a promotion for new players where up to 155 who have not played in a NorCal League before would get their first league free. Staff indicated that \$5,000 has been approved in the budget for a new player promotion. It was explained that this promotion could entice a new player to play Adult Leagues which could lead to playing more leagues. During the discussion, it was suggested that NorCal could do a promotion for people recruiting new players which Staff will consider.

Following discussion, the following motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 7 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

**RESOLVED:** That effective immediately, the New Player Promotion be approved to give free registration to up to 155 players who are participating in a USTA NorCal Adult League for the first time.

**Rationale:** Giving 155 new players their first ever NorCal League free will provide new players with an opportunity to try Adult Leagues which could lead to them to playing more leagues or participate in other NorCal programs in the future. Funding for this promotion exists in the 2023 budget.

- 6. New Captain Promotion Proposal.** Staff presented to the Committee a proposal for a promotion for new captains where up to 50 new captains and their mentors will receive a ¼ zip pullover when their league has been completed. Staff explained that in order to grow leagues, more captains are needed and this is an opportunity to get some new blood amongst the captaining ranks. In conjunction with this promotion, Staff would be hosting new captain's webinar. During the discussion, it was mentioned that NorCal will also be looking at sustained captain's program which would recognize captain milestones.

Following discussion, the following motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 7 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

**RESOLVED:** That, effective immediately, the New Captain Promotion be approved to give a ¼ zip long sleeve shirt at the end of the season to up to 50 persons who are captaining a league for the first time and also to their mentors, the person who has previously captained a USTA NorCal team and are guiding the new captain throughout their first season. If the number of new captains exceeds the promotion, it will be based on the registration date of the teams.

**Rationale:** More captains are needed to help grow adult leagues and this promotion would provide assistance and tools to new captains in order them to have a successful experience. NorCal would recognize the new captains and mentors with a ¼ zip long sleeve shirt at the end of the season. Hopefully this directed focus will entice new captains to continue captaining and they could encourage others to captain for the first time. The funds for the apparel are in the budget.

- 7. NTRP Self-Rate Committee Recommendation.** The ALC was notified that the NTRP Self-Rate Committee met and has made the recommendation to the Adult League Committee to have Combo League count towards ratings. It was mentioned that Staff will do more research, including collecting player feedback, so that the Committee could have additional information when considering the recommendation.
- 8. Calendar of 2023 Adult League Meetings.** A calendar of 2023 Adult League Meetings was presented to the ALC. It was also mentioned that a calendar was being developed so that the Committee knows what may need to be addressed at each Committee meeting.
- 9. Staff Updates.** Staff gave an update regarding sites for upcoming sectionals events and requested that Committee members volunteer to help at the events when available. It was noted that a calendar of Sectionals events with locations will be sent out to the Committee soon. During the discussion, Staff also gave

an update around trying to find locations throughout NorCal to host as a result of player feedback last year. It was noted that it is often difficult as large sites are needed for these events.

Staff also informed the Committee that different Adult League webinars have been scheduled in an effort to better educate players around items like regulations and to help players to become new captains. The webinars are:

New Captains webinar - February 9

New Players webinar -February 16

2023 New Rules and Regulations webinar - February 23

During discussion, a suggestion was made regarding player gifts at sectionals. The Committee discussed giving a credit that players/captains towards USTA NorCal items, such as shirts. Staff agreed to consider different options and it was noted that NorCal is currently looking into starting an e-store.

There being no further issues or discussion to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.