

Minutes of the USTA NorCal Adult Leagues Committee Meeting Monday, March 31, 2025

NOTE: All resolutions in these minutes were approved by the USTA NorCal Board as of April 16, 2025.

NOTE: These minutes were approved on April 21, 2025.

Andrea Barnes, Chair of the Adult Leagues Committee (the "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 (chair), Leslie Airola-Murveit, Anoosh Davoudzadeh, Marilyn Morrell-Kristal, Tuesdai Powers, Paul Startz

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

Guests Present: Sarah Robinson

- 1. Approval of July 29, 2024 Minutes.** The Committee considered for approval the draft minutes of the meeting held on July 29, 2024.

The following motion was then **APPROVED** by a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of Adult Leagues Committee meeting held July 29, 2024 be approved as presented.

- 2. Approval of October 8, 2024 Minutes.** The Committee considered for approval the draft minutes of the meeting held on October 8, 2024.

The following motion was then **APPROVED** by a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of Adult Leagues Committee meeting held October 8, 2024 be approved as presented.

- 3. Approval of November 25, 2024 Minutes.** The Committee considered for approval the draft minutes of the meeting held on November 25, 2024.

The following motion was then **APPROVED** by a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of Adult Leagues Committee meeting held November 25, 2024 be approved as presented.

- 4. Approval of December 9, 2024 Minutes.** The Committee considered for approval the draft minutes of the meeting held on December 9, 2024.

The following motion was then **APPROVED** by a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of Adult Leagues Committee meeting held December 9, 2024 be approved as presented.

Anoosh Davoudzadeh joined the call at 6:51pm.

- 5. Adult 70 Sectionals.** Staff explained that the Adult 70 Sectionals was scheduled for December 10-12. December 12 was rained out. It was then approved by the Adult League Committee to reschedule the event for March 5, 2025 with rain date being March 12, 2025 if it rained on March 5, 2025. Both dates were rained out again. It was also noted that all teams had a chance to play the rained-out matches on their own by March 5 and some teams did. The event was cancelled on March 11 due to the high forecasted rain on March 12. At that time, a decision to end the whole event was made by the Championship Committee. There were 4 matches left to play and there were concerns from captains about not being able to field teams due to current leagues in progress. There were also concerns that so much time had passed since the local league and the initial date of the Sectional Championship. It was also explained to the ALC that some captains are requesting

to have some extra time to play the matches on their own and one is asking for a partial refund because the event ended without all matches being played due to inclement weather.

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

RESOLVED: To end the 2024 Adult 70 League Sectionals event with no refund awarded to the players

Rationale: At the time the event ended, some of the teams found it difficult to continue with the event. It would not be fair to give an extension to play the match when some team captains may no longer be able to field teams because of the other leagues currently occurring. If all matches are not played, a winner may not be able to be determined and it would be unfair to penalize the teams that are no longer able to play past the scheduled date of the event and the rescheduled dates. The team entry fee for Sectionals was \$165 per team which goes towards helping to offset costs for the event which includes but is not limited to paying for player gifts and captains gifts (which the teams received), snacks and for paying site fees and umpire fees. The teams also played at least 2 out of the 3 team matches.

- 6. Reimbursement for Qualifying National Teams.** Currently, USTA Northern California contributes towards the expenses of qualifying teams that participate in USTA National Championships. For five-line leagues, NorCal will contribute \$650; for four-line leagues, NorCal will contribute \$550; for three-line leagues, NorCal will contribute \$450. Contributions are paid directly to the individual listed as captain of the team on the date of the national championships and will be mailed at the conclusion of the USTA National Championships for each league.

The NorCal Accounting Department has recently been advised that USTA NorCal needs to report stipends being awarded to captains to taxes and that USTA NorCal will need to collect a W9 from the captain before paying out the stipend in case NorCal pays a captain over \$600 in a calendar year. Some captains had concerns of needing to submit a W9 to receive the stipend as they felt it was too much personal information being given for the stipend to help with going to League Nationals.

To address this, it was proposed to amend the language in the FAQ to specify that USTA Northern California will contribute towards a team dinner for the qualifying teams that participate in USTA National Championships in lieu of giving a stipend. It was noted that this has been approved by the NorCal Accounting Department which has been approved by the auditors.

After discussion, the following motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstention (Startz):

RESOLVED: That effective immediately, the language in the NorCal League Rules FAQ be amended as follows (proposed deletions are stricken through and proposed additions are underlined in red):

Expenses for Qualifying National Teams

Q: Does USTA NorCal help with the expenses of taking a team to Nationals?

A: Yes. USTA Northern California ~~contributes~~ provides an allowance towards ~~the expenses of~~ the expenses of a team dinner for qualifying teams that participate in USTA National Championships. For five-line leagues, NorCal will ~~contribute~~ provide a per diem allowance up to \$650; for four-line leagues, NorCal will ~~contribute~~ provide a per diem allowance up to \$550; for three-line leagues, NorCal will ~~contribute~~ provide a per diem allowance up to \$450. ~~Contributions~~ Per diem allowances are paid directly to the individual listed as captain of the team, for use by the captain and teammates, on the date of the national championships and will be mailed at the conclusion of the USTA National Championships for each league upon the captain submitting a request for a per diem, or by submitting receipts to USTA NorCal.

Rationale: It is nice for NorCal to contribute something for a team that attends League Nationals. Some captains are concerned to provide their W-9s to NorCal for the stipends. The NorCal Accounting Department has confirmed that the auditors advised that it is okay to reimburse for a meal and code it to a GL Account, so long as the funds are used for meals, and are provided as a per diem or substantiated via receipts.

- 7. USTA NorCal League Regulations Proposal Procedure & Timeline.** Staff proposed to initiate a USTA NorCal League Regulations Procedure & Timeline and have the process and timeline be similar yearly. During discussion, it was noted that having a USTA NorCal League Regulations Procedure & Timeline will be similar to National as they have one for National regulations change proposals.

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

RESOLVED: That effective immediately, the 2026 USTA League Regulation Proposal Procedure & Timeline be approved as shown in Exhibit A

Rationale: Having a Procedure & Timeline to submit proposed changes to the regulations will be more of an open, transparent and orderly process to accept rule change proposals from the public. There will also be an understanding on when rule change proposals will be considered. This process mirrors the National process. The NorCal deadline is different from Nationals. When determining NorCal deadline, consideration was given on approximately when the next year's National Regulations may be published and when the following early start leagues for the following year would begin.

- 8. Rule Change Proposals for Tennislink Transition.** In closed session, the Committee reviewed and discussed regulations proposals as it relates to the Tennislink transition. When the Committee came out of closed session, the approved resolutions were authorized to be reported as part of the minutes of the meeting

A. Refund/Credit Policy

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

RESOLVED: That, effective with the transition of USTA Adult League to the TennisLink platform, the (NorCal LLAR) Registration Credit rule be amended as follows (proposed deletions are stricken through and proposed additions are underlined):

~~(NorCal LLAR) Registration Credit. A player who is rostered on a team and has not played any matches or received any default wins (and is not required for the at-level requirement) will receive a credit after the end of local league. The credit will expire on December 31 of the year following the date the credit is issued, is not transferrable, has no cash value and will not include the processing fee charged by TennisLink. All such players expressly waive any and all rights to a transfer of the credit or to request a cash value refund of said credit, or to challenge or dispute this provision.~~

(NorCal LLAR) Registration Credit/Refund. No refunds or credits will be issued after a player has registered in TennisLink.

Rationale: NorCal has been automatically awarding many credits to players who register for a league but do not play a match every year using the NorCal system. TennisLink does not have the functionality to support this. This proposal removes the credit policy and specifies that no credits or refunds will be given after a player registers for a league in TennisLink, regardless of the reason for pulling out of the League. This is similar to how some other Sections operate.

If the policy would remain unchanged, Staff would need to apply credits one by one which takes 3-5 minutes a player. 1,815 players received credits in 2024. Based on the 1,815 credits that were awarded in 2024, this would take about 121 staff hours to process each individually in TennisLink. Notice of this regulation change will be given to all players in advance of their next registration, and withdrawals would be treated the same in terms of refund/credits.

Fiscal Impact: Unknown savings in terms of staff hours that would need to be dedicated to processing credits, approximated at 121 hours based on credits given in 2024, if the policy were to remain unchanged.

Marilyn Morrell Kristal left the meeting at 8:23PM

B. Move-Up/Split-Up rule for NorCal Leagues.

After discussion, the following motion was **APPROVED** by a vote of 4 in favor, 1 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

RESOLVED: That effective with the Tennislink Transition, the (NorCal LLAR) USTA NorCal Options for the Move-up/Split-up rule be amended as follows (Underlined language in red is proposed addition):

2.06 MOVE-UP/SPLIT-UP / Q&A INTERPRETATIONS.

2.06A National Championship Teams.

2.06A(1) Move-Up. Teams and team members that advanced to, or qualified for, any National Championship may play together as a team, in whole or in part, if they move up one NTRP team level.

2.06A(2) Split-Up. No more than three (3) players who were on the roster of any team that advanced to, or qualified for, any National Championship team the previous year may play together in the same Division, same Age Group and at the same NTRP team level as the National Championship team(s), if their NTRP rating allows. Split-Up requirements only apply to all players other than Self-Rated and Valid Computer Rated Appealed players who participated in three (3) or more matches (one default received shall count) and Self-Rated and Valid Computer Rated Appealed players who participated in at least four matches (no default received shall count), for that team during the championship year.

2.06A(3) If a Section has a regulation that limits the number of players on a roster that are at a specific level, the Section must suspend that regulation for one year for any team that advanced to, or qualified for, any National Championship the previous year and chooses to move up one NTRP team level.

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 18 & Over (2.5 men only), Mixed 18 & Over (combined 5.0 only). If a team is found to be in violation of the Move-up/Split-up rule, the first three players from the team that won Sectionals, advanced to, or qualified for, any National Championship team the previous year in registration order will be considered eligible. Any additional players registered from that team will be disqualified. All matches played by the disqualified players shall be considered a 0-6, 0-6 loss for standings purposes. The original match scores will be used for year-end rating calculations.

(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

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.

Rationale: The move-up/split-up rule helps to keep players who win Sectionals from building the same exact team the next year at the same level to give others a chance to win and not continuously build the same power team. Tennislink helps supports this rule for National advancing leagues by having the system not allow more than three players from the past years National advancing team to be on the same team at the same level then they register the following year. Tennislink does not support this for non-National advancing leagues because it is a section option and not a requirement. Because Tennislink does not track the move-up split up rule for non-National Advancing Leagues, the proposed addition explains what happens if a team is in violation of the rule.

There being no further matters to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:39 pm.

USTA NORCAL LEAGUE REGULATION PROPOSAL PROCEDURE & TIMELINE - 2026 REGULATIONS

**THE USTA NORCAL LEAGUE REGULATION PROPOSAL PROCEDURES AND
TIMELINE SHALL BE PUBLISHED PUBLICLY ANNUALLY.**

WHO CAN SUBMIT A USTA NORCAL LEAGUE REGULATION PROPOSAL:

- NorCal Committee Members
- NorCal Staff
- Individual USTA Members

TYPES OF USTA NORCAL LEAGUE REGULATION PROPOSALS:

- Change to an existing USTA League Regulation
- New USTA League Regulation

HOW TO SUBMIT A USTA NORCAL LEAGUE REGULATION PROPOSAL:

- All proposals to USTA NorCal League Regulations MUST:
 - Include
 - Rationale for the change
 - A description of how it will encourage participation
 - Empirical (not subjective) information to support the proposal
 - A description of how it will positively impact a large portion of NorCal League Players
 - Be submitted and filled out in full on the [official form](#) no later than May 4, 2025

USTA NATIONAL LEAGUE REGULATION PROPOSALS:

- All proposals to USTA National League Regulations submitted are subject to all the requirements above, but will be submitted for **2027**.