

**NOTE:** *All resolutions in these minutes were approved by the USTA NorCal Board as of December 10, 2025, except that the Topic #4 – 2026 Monterey 4-Tournament Series has been tabled and not presented to the Board at this time. These minutes were approved by the committee on January 7, 2026.*

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Luis Reis, vice chair of the Adult Tournament Committee, called the meeting to order at 7:02pm and roll call was conducted. The meeting was held by Google Meet video conference.

**Committee Members Present:** *Luis Reis (Chair), Mariko Fritz-Krockow, Wendell Pierce, Marina Wills, Craig Pasqua, Mark Fairchilds, Brian Martinez*

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

1. **Approval of Minutes.** The Committee considered approval of the minutes of the meeting held June 17, 2025. The following motion was duly made by Wendell Pierce, seconded by Mark Fairchilds and **approved** by a vote of 7 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Adult Tournament Committee meeting held June 17, 2025, be approved as presented.

The Committee considered approval of the minutes of the meeting held September 18, 2025. The following motion was duly made by Marina Wills, seconded by Craig Pasqua and **approved** by a vote of 7 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Adult Tournament Committee meeting held September 18, 2025, be approved as presented.

The Committee considered approval of the minutes of the meeting held October 20, 2025. The following motion was duly made by Wendell Pierce, seconded by Marina Wills and **approved** by a vote of 7 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions:

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Adult Tournament Committee meeting held October 20, 2025, be approved as presented.

## 2. **Staff Report**

- Item 1: Joanna Broda-Schunck presented to the Committee the current participation numbers in Adult and NTRP tournaments. She explained that the number of unique players is below the number from the previous year. She mentioned that there is a promotion approved for 2026 to give new players 50% off of their first tournament. She also said that growing participation will be the focus of the committee for 2026
- Item 2: Joanna Broda-Schunck reported to the Committee that the Grand Prix tournament was a success with almost 300 players participating in NTRP 18+, Age Group, and Open divisions. The usage of the ELC system was well received with good feedback from players.

- Item 3: Joanna Broda-Schunck told the Committee that the preparation for the NorCal Qualifier 2026 is on the way and that the tournament websites should be open by the time new ratings come out.

### 3. **Topis #1 – Assigning levels for NTRP and Age Group tournaments**

The Committee went into a closed session at

Based on the current criteria staff prepared a list of tournaments recommended for Level 4 (Gold Cup) and Level 5 (Tournament of the Year) designation, as well as reviewed the Age Group tournaments to designate a level

#### **Part A.**

After a discussion, the following motion was duly made by Wendell Pierce, seconded by Marina Wills, and approved by a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 recusals (Mark Fairchilds and Brian Martinez due to their tournaments being considered)

**RESOLVED:** That the following NTRP 18+, 40+ and 55+ tournaments be designated as Level 4 (Gold Cup) for 2026

18+

3/27-29 -> Sutter Lawn Tennis Club -> Sacramento

5/1-3 -> USTA NorCal Parks & Recs -> Fremont

7/3-5 -> Napa Valley Tennis Association -> Napa

7/25-26 -> Operation Pride -> Berkeley

8/29-30 -> Del Norte Tennis Club -> Sacramento

9/4-7 -> Lifetime Activities -> San Francisco

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40+

9/26-27 -> Lafayette Tennis Club - Lafayette

6/27-29 -> Operation Pride -> Berkeley

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55+

8/1-3 -> Operation Pride -> Berkeley

**FURTHER RESOLVED:** That the following NTRP 18+ tournaments be designated as Level 5 (Tournament of the Year) for 2026

6/19-21 -> Laguna Creek Sports Club -> Elk Grove

7/10-12 -> USTA NorCal Parks and Recs -> Stockton

7/17-19 -> Johnson Ranch Sports Club - Roseville

8/15-16 -> Lafayette Tennis Club - Lafayette

10/17-19 -> Park Terrace Swim and Tennis Club - Sacramento

11/14-16 -> Operation Pride -> Berkeley

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40+

3/28-30 -> Operation Pride -> Berkeley

7/25-26 -> Lafayette Tennis Club -> Lafayette

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55+

9/18-20 -> Operation Pride -> Berkeley

**Rationale:** The selection was made based on the criteria with the tournaments meeting the criteria being considered first. The committee considered geographic distribution, however, due to a limited number of tournaments held in the previous year that would meet the criteria, the Committee decided to designate more tournaments in the same areas that meet the criteria to give players more opportunities to play in a Level 4 and Level 5 tournament to work on their ranking. This deviates from the previously approved criteria that permits one Gold Cup tournament and one Tournament of the Year in each region. At the time the tournaments were reviewed for Level 4 and Level 5 designations, there were no tournaments that applied in other areas that met the criteria to be designated a Level 4 or a Level 5 tournament.

#### **Part B.**

After a discussion, the following motion was duly made by Wendell Pierce, seconded by Mariko Fritz-Krockow, and **approved** by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 1 recusal (Mark Fairchilds due to Laguna Creek being considered in the designation)

**RESOLVED:** That the following Age Group tournament be designated level 4 and 5 for 2026

#### **L4s:**

4/23-25	4	Bay Area Senior Games - USTA NorCal - Palo Alto
10/23-25	4	Age Division 45 - 80+ Laguna Creek Sports Club - Elk Grove

#### **L5s**

3/13-15	5	Age Division 45 - 80+ Laguna Creek Sports Club - Elk Grove
5/1-3	5	NTRP 18+ 2.5-5.5, Age 60-80+ - USTA NorCal - Fremont
7/10-12	5	NTRP 18+ 2.5-5.5, Age 60-80+ - USTA NorCal - Stockton

**Rationale:** The selection was made based on the criteria with the exception that level 5s are not team tournaments as there are no team events sanctioned.

After the vote, it was mentioned that per USTA Adult & Family Tournament Regulations there should be more level 5s than level 4s in a section. The current USTA NorCal Adult Tournament Regulations allow for only 6 Level 5s (tournaments of the year). It was proposed to amend the regulations to allow for up to 10 Level 5 tournaments per division.

After a discussion, the following motion was duly made by Mariko Fritz-Krockow, seconded by Marina Wills, and **approved** by a vote of 7 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 0 recusals.

**RESOLVED:** That effective immediately, the following amendments to the Regulation #33 regarding NTRP Tournament of the Year Designations. 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~~ 10 NTRP tournaments, in different regions, may be designated as a Level 5 Open: Tournament of the Year Tournament by the Adult Tournament Committee.

Each year, an Organization Member is eligible to have one tournament designated as a Level 5 Open: Tournament of the Year Tournament.

Tournaments that meet the following criteria may apply for this designation:

1. Offer all divisions that qualify for the NTRP National Championships:

- For 18 & Over Adult NTRP: singles, doubles, and mixed doubles events must be offered in the 2.5-5.5 divisions.
- For 40 & Over Adult NTRP: singles and doubles events must be offered in the 3.0- 5.0 divisions.
- For 55 & Over Adult NTRP: singles and doubles events must be offered in the 3.0- 5.0 divisions.

2. Draw limits must be no smaller than 16 for singles, 8 for doubles, and 8 for mixed doubles. 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:

- Applicants that have hosted at least one Level 4, 5, or 6 Tournament in the previous calendar year at least one of which received an evaluation score higher than 80% (4.0) with a minimum of 15% of the total participants completing such evaluation; and
- Applicants with a history of compliance with all applicable USTA NorCal Tournament and Sanction Regulations.

When an applicant has organized more than one Level 4, 5, or 6 Tournament in the previous calendar year, the results of player evaluations from all such tournaments may be considered when the Adult Tournament Committee makes the designations.

**Rationale:** The current Regulations give the Adult Tournament Committee the ability to designate only six Level 5 Tournament of the Year. This is the same number as Level 4s. However, the USTA Adult & Family Tournament Regulations say that there should be more level 5s than level 4s. In addition, other sections offer more than six level 4s and six level 5s giving their players the ability to earn more ranking points and therefore be higher on the National Standings List.

Pending the Board's approval of this amendment, the Committee will revisit Level 5 designations again in 2026 as more organizations apply to see if any returning tournaments applied for after the primary sanction period meet the criteria to be considered a Level 5 tournament.

*Vinod Herur joined the meeting during the discussion*

#### **4. Topic #3: On-call Referee option for Level 6 tournaments**

It was explained that the Junior Council has recently endorsed the idea of having "On-Call Referees" for Level 6 tournaments. This idea was also discussed at an Officials Committee meeting. The option would create opportunities to host tournaments in more remote areas, where access to certified referees is difficult

After a discussion, the item was tabled due to the fact that adult tournaments require only one official on site, and having a referee on-call would mean that there is no official there. The committee

would like to add an option for an on-call referee depending on the number of players. This item will be discussed again at the next meeting

## **USTA Options for Level 6 Tournaments That EXHIBIT A Are Unable to Secure an On-Site Referee**

*The use of either of these options must be authorized by USTA NorCal staff. Level 6 Tournaments are not permitted to employ either option without such prior authorization.*

### **Option 1: On-Call Referee at Level 6 Tournaments**

Level 6 Tournaments may use an On-Call Referee provided the following conditions are met:

- The Tournament Director has completed the course to serve in the dual role of Referee and Tournament Director and will serve as the Site Referee.
- The Tournament has made a good faith effort to hire a certified Referee, which must be evidenced by solicitation of a Referee no later than 4 months before the start date of the tournament, *except that* if a tournament is sanctioned after such 4-month deadline, the sanction holder must solicit a referee within one week of being notified the sanction has been approved.
- The Minimum Officials set forth in Table 4 must be met, with the Tournament Director/On-Call Referee fulfilling one of the Certified Official requirements, and all other persons may be Approved Court Monitors.
- Tournament Director is required to be on site at all hours of tournament play.

### **Role of On-Call Referee & Fee:**

- On-Call Referee will be paid no less than \$125 per day, unless a lower rate has been agreed to by the Sanction Holder and the Referee. In the unlikely event the Referee needs to go to the tournament site, the On-Call Referee will be paid the self-employed mileage rate as annually determined by the IRS (currently the 2025 rate is 70¢ per mile; such amount will be adjusted annually as needed).
- The On-Call Referee will be available by telephone during all hours of play to answer questions of law and to hear appeals of a unilateral default made by the Tournament Director acting in their dual role as the Site Referee.
- The On-Call Referee can also be consulted before any significant action is taken (such as a lateness penalty is assessed, a scoring dispute is settled) to ensure that proper procedures are followed.
- The On-Call Referee and the Tournament Director will have at least one pre-tournament meeting to review the procedures for the tournament.
- The On-Call Referee and the Tournament Director will have at least one check in call mid-day each day of the tournament and a check in call at the end of each day of play.

### **Option 2: Certified Official (who is not Certified as a Referee) Fulfills Role as Referee**

Level 6 Tournaments may use an USTA Certified Official (such as a rover or chair umpire) who is not certified as a Referee as its Referee provided the following conditions are met:

- The Tournament has made a good faith effort to hire a certified Referee, which must be evidenced by solicitation of a Referee no later than 4 months before the start date of the tournament, *except that* if a tournament is sanctioned after such 4-month deadline, the sanction holder must solicit a referee within one week of being notified the sanction has been approved.

- The Minimum Officials set forth in Table 4 must be met, with the USTA Certified Official serving in the role of Referee fulfilling one of the Certified Official requirements, and all other persons may be Approved Court Monitors.
- Tournament Director is required to be on site at all hours of tournament play.

*Note: Persons who are not certified as a Referee will not have their work shown as Referee days worked in Officials First.*

*Craig Pasqua and Vinod Herur left the meeting after the discussion about on-call referees*

## 5. Topic #4 – 2026 Monterey 4-Tournament Series

It is being proposed to initiate and sponsor a Monterey Tournament Series in 2026. In 2025, there were very few sanctioned Adult Tournaments in the Monterey/Gilroy/Salinas area. Some of those tournaments had to be canceled due to low participation. The Committee previously tried to help that region with a L7 2.5-3.0 tournament mini series. However, there were no applications. We are hoping that by helping with a series of L6 tournaments that include all divisions, there will be more interest.

Initiating and sponsoring a series of tournaments, will hopefully encourage new players to play tennis and try a tournament to see how much fun it is and play more in their area. By helping up to 4 tournaments in the same area, players will have more of an opportunity to continue playing near their area and not have to travel as far. Having more tournaments in one area can also help an area to grow participation in other products such as Adult Leagues or Flex Leagues as players can be made aware of these products as an option to play. This will also give current Flex League players in the Monterey Bay area another option to play. By helping the tournaments financially in the first attempt, they will be able to keep the registration fee lower and attract more players. If they do well, the players would return and potentially bring friends. If the series and tournaments do well, the organizations hosting them may be more inclined to host tournaments in future years helping to grow the area. If this program works well, we can try to do this in other areas in future years.

After a discussion, the following motion was duly made by Wendell Pierce, seconded by Mark Fairchilds, and **approved** by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 0 recusals.

### Resolution:

**RESOLVED:** Provided that funds are allocated in the 2026 budget the following funds should be spent towards four tournaments in a Tournament Series in a specific area.

**RESOLVED FURTHER:** That the first series will concentrate on the Monterey/Gilroy/Salinas Area

**RESOLVED FURTHER:** That USTA NorCal will provide up to 4 cases of balls, player gifts and awards for the events:

**RESOLVED FURTHER:** That the tournament will charge no more than \$60 for Singles and \$35 for doubles as entry fee

**RESOLVED FURTHER:** That the series will be advertised on one common flyer and cross-promoted between the organizations

**RESOLVED FURTHER:** If this program works well, we can try to do this in other areas in future years.

<b>USTA NorCal Age Group Tournament Expenses</b>	
Player gifts: \$10 per player for 400 (100 per event)	\$4,000
Awards: \$10 x 224 (56 per event)	\$2, 240
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$6, 240</b>

Financial impact:

**Rationale:** We are trying to grow participation in USTA events in the Monterey area. In the last year there were only three Level 6s and four level 7s offered in the area, some of which needed to be canceled due to low participation. We hope to revive the area and encourage players to partake in USTA NorCal's offering and grow the number to reach the goal of 35 by 35.

This would be a partnership with the organizations hosting. If USTA NorCal helps to provide balls, player gifts and awards, the tournament director will be able to charge less to the players as USTA NorCal is helping with the costs of the event and the new players will be able to try an Adult Tournament at a lower entry fee. It would also attract players from other areas to travel and stay in the area. If the tournament is successful, players will be likely to return for a future event. Having more tournaments in one area can also help an area to grow participation in other products such as Adult Leagues or Flex Leagues as players can be made aware of these products as an option to play. This will also give current Flex League players in the Monterey Bay area another option to play.

If the series and tournaments do well, the organizations may be more inclined to host tournaments in future years helping to grow the area. If this program works well, we can try to do this in other areas in future years.

## **6. Topic #5 – 2025 Outstanding Competitor of the Year award**

In a closed session the committee reviewed the nominations for the 2025 Adult Tournament Outstanding Competitor of the year award. After a discussion the, the following motion was duly made by Mark Fairchilds, seconded by Luis Reis, and approved by a vote of 5 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, and 1 recusal (Mariko Fritz-Krockow due to her nomination being considered

**RESOLVED:** That the 2025 Adult Tournament Outstanding Competitor of the Year Awards will go to:

1. Mariko Fritz-Krockow
2. Fernando Ramos
3. Caitlin Beatty

## **7. Topic #6 – Adult Tournament Player Survey**

Staff informed the Committee that there is a plan to send out a survey to Adult Tournament players in the December monthly newsletter. The Committee supported the idea.

The proposed questions were shared with the committee and the members were asked to send in additional questions or feedback by December 7th.

There being no further issues or discussion to come before the Committee, at 8:89 pm the meeting was adjourned.