



Fiend at Court Request | July 21, 2020

Question 1: I take it that the new structure is a "done deal" for 2021. Is that correct?

*Yes, this is correct. The new structure was approved by the USTA board and Adult Comp Committee in March 2021.*

Question 2: It was stated that there would be no tournaments that had open events in conjunction with NTRP divisions. Did I understand that correctly? So if 5.0 doesn't make (and it won't most likely under this new format) then there is no open event to slide us up into?

*Currently, we do not have any nationally ranked tournaments at any NTRP level including NTRP Open events. Starting 2021 there will be an 18+ 5.0 NTRP sanctioned tournament division that will continue to be part of the NTRP nationals, so 5.0 players have the opportunity to play in those events.*

*As far as Open tournaments, we will have regular Open National Tournaments, but not NTRP Open National Tournaments. Starting 2021, the Open tournament players will receive tournament ranking points.*

Question 3: It was stated that there will be no mixed rankings. I am assuming that mixed events could still occur at tournaments. Is that correct? Why is USTA national so opposed to mixed doubles?

*There will be mixed rankings only on the open, family, and age-group tournaments. As far as NTRP tournaments, it is part of the strategic plan to include mixed tournaments but not in 2021. USTA is not opposed to hosting mixed NTRP tournaments, however, increasing age divisions for the NTRP tournament product has to be strategic with the understanding that an increase in divisions will mean more court time for a tournament director to add these events.*

Question 4: How does this impact the selection for NTRP nationals? One possible advantage of a national ranking system is that the top players regardless of where they reside could play the tournament rather than a sectional allocation. Is there any change?

*NTRP National selection is based on quota. Each Section has a set number of spots based on criteria agreed upon all Sections. The selection process for NTRP National will be the one put forth by your Section.*

*The Texas Adult Tennis Council plans to keep our current criteria for selecting the National NTRP Championships' players, and use the yearly USTA Texas Final Rankings.*

Question 5: I did a quick spot check in the data (to confirm my Texas bias) and it is clear that there are more tournaments, tournament players, and matches being played in Texas when compared to most (not all) of the other Sections. Did the USTA study the places where tournaments are working well and consider that in the path forward?

*The USTA studied the current adult tournament structure and took into account all Sections performance based on participation as well as the number of tournaments per location. The truth is, the Adult tournament participation has been on a decline for over 5 years, and we need to make changes that advocate for products that are more convenient for our consumers.*

Question 6: There were claims made about the wishes and intent of the adult tennis consumer. Were those claims based on studies or data collection? Is there any background data that might be helpful to understand the claim?

*We studied heavily the participation and retention numbers for national adult tournaments. Also, looked at various research papers on consumer spending habits, entertainment preferences, and free time and we found that it was important to provide players with various products that appeal to consumers based on their preferences.*

Question 7: I know that you participated in one of the early sessions. From the consensus timeline, it looks like the new proposal was unanimous from the get-go. Does that match your perception?

*The proposal was heavily studied by various stakeholders, board members, adult competition committee as well as Section staff. The proposal went through various voting including constitution and rules. So to answer your question, it was not unanimous from the get-go, it was a work in progress that took 11 months to get across the line.*

Question 8: The statement was made that this new system would ease the transition of juniors into adult tournaments. Was there any data behind that statement? I am assuming this is based on two similar leveled systems.

*This is correct - now that Junior and Adults will have similar nomenclature and days allocated per tournaments based on the level, it will make it easier for players to know what to expect.*

Question 9: Is there anything else you might be willing to share that I should know?

As a heads up, I am writing something about this on Monday. I am guessing that it will be the first broad exposure of the new proposal to the rabid part of the Texas tournament community. Help me guide the conversation and the reactions in a positive direction.

*The new structure will provide more playing opportunities at any level based on consumer preference. The new structure will provide a national ranking for NTRP levels based on the sanctioned age-division and level put forth and is something that is new for 2021.*