



December 2014, Issue 4

Overrules is the official quarterly newsletter for all tennis officials in USTA Northern. Items included in each quarterly issue are upcoming news and notes, trainings/evaluations, rules and procedures updates, milestones, introductions to new officials and a showcase about an official working in our Section. Ideas and information is always welcome. If you have anything you would like to add, please e-mail Kristi Bushinski at bushinski@northern.usta.com.

A Message From Our Chair of Officials ... Tim Kurtt

We have reached the end of another successful year and I want to thank you for all your hard work and dedication on the courts. It is truly appreciated.

Moving forward into the New Year, we will continue to have Official's Get-Togethers once a quarter that will be preceded by Officials Committee meetings which are open to the public. The following individuals will serve on the Officials Committee for the next two-year term (2015-16): Tim Kurtt (Chair), Kristi Bushinski (Staff Liaison), Heather Landrus, Mike Yates and Richard Arians. Please welcome the new committee members.

The process of making the selections is the same as any other USTA Northern committee and is as follows. The Sectional Chair of Officials (Officials Committee Chair) is selected by the President of USTA Northern. The members of the Officials Committee are selected from those individuals submitting an online application before the October 31, 2014 deadline. You should have received notification of the process in the form of an email that was sent to every USTA Northern member. Unfortunately there was only one applicant before the deadline and it was a second choice of committee involvement. As is standard procedure with all committees in USTA Northern, Kristi Bushinski, Staff Liaison, reached out to a number of officials asking if they would be willing to serve on the committee during the two-year term. Those individuals that were interested in serving completed an online application and the slate of committee members was presented to Kathy Lundberg, USTA Northern President, for approval.

I encourage everyone to consider serving in the future. Your involvement is very important to make our working conditions and processes and training better for everyone.

Upcoming Trainings/Evaluations/School

If anyone is looking to move their ranking up, (i.e., college level) and would like to attend a Level 2 chair clinic or be evaluated please let **Kristi Bushinski** know.

Please mark your calendars!!! The USTA Northern National Officials School will be held in the Twin Cities on Saturday, Jan. 24 and Sunday, Jan. 25, 2015. USTA National has gone back to a two-day schedule this year with the Saturday school intended for officials with more than two years of officiating experience

and the Sunday school intended for officials with two years and less officiating experience. The Saturday training will include the USTA Umpire, ITA and Referee schools. The Sunday school will include a more comprehensive USTA Umpire school and the ITA school. As with last year, there will be a webinar available for those official not able to attend in person.

Tentatively the school will be held at the Fred Wells Tennis and Learning Center near the Minneapolis St. Paul airport and there is no cost for the school. Listed below is the schedule of events with drinks, coffee, breakfast items, and lunch provided.

Saturday Tentative School Schedule (More Than 2 Years Experience)

8:00-12:00 p.m. - USTA School
12:00-12:30 p.m. - Lunch
12:30-3:00 p.m. - ITA School
3:00-5:00 p.m. - Referee School

Sunday Tentative School Schedule (Less Than 2 Years Experience)

8:00-12:00 p.m. - USTA School
12:00-12:30 p.m. - Lunch
12:30-1:30 p.m. - USTA School Continued
1:30-4:00 p.m. - ITA School

The school dates are currently on NuCula as events and you may make yourself available at any time. If you do not have a NuCula account, have questions on how to make yourself available, or unsure which school to attend please let me know. A few reminders will be sent out in the coming weeks as more details are confirmed.

At this point in time the required tests for each school and the Friend at Court have not been completed, they should be available around the first of the year. Look for an announcement from USTA National when they become available.

All officials will be required to take the appropriate tests and attend a school this year. Make up schools will be offered via webinar taught by a National T/E. These dates will be announced after the first of the year.

Any questions, please contact Tim Kurtt at (651) 260-4853 or timkurtt@aol.com.

News and Notes

Calendar/Schedule Blocking – Thank you to everyone for keeping their calendars updated with their availability in Arbiter. We are moving into another very busy time with ITA scheduling. If you want to be considered for ITA work please make sure to continue to keep your calendars updated.

Who is Working Higher Level Events Outside of the Section? – Look at all the USTA Northern officials who are working professional events around the country. For more information on how you too can apply to work professional events, please contact **Tim Kurtt** at timkurtt@aol.com.

- **Ron Jacobus Jr.** will be working the Midland Bay Saginaw women's pro tournament as a line official in February, and as a chair umpire for the Men's 10K pro tournament in Sunrise, Fla., at the end of February..
- **Vyasachar Mohan** will be working the Dallas 100K in February, and Indian Wells and the Miami ATP/WTB in March. **Mohan** is also going to be at the Clay Court championships for the Houston ATP in April.
- **Jan Schreier** has bids in for Delray Beach, Fla., in February and Indian Wells, Calif., in March. Good luck Jan!

- **Tony Stingley** and **Lisa Mushett** have been selected to work the 2015 Women's Big Ten Championships in Lincoln, Neb., in April.

Way to go Northern Officials, keep up the great work! Please forward information for future newsletters to **Kristi Bushinski** at Bushinski@northern.usta.com.

Changes to Rates of Pay for 2015

During the past few years there has been a concerted effort to bring into line the rate of pay for work in USTA Northern as compared to other areas of the country. Your professionalism and excellence on and off court has helped in justifying these increases, and we will continue to do everything in our power to maintain these increases going forward.

- A. Junior/Adult/High School
2015 - Roving \$18
2015 - Chairs \$45
2015 - Referee \$20

- B. MIAC - Division III
2015 - MIAC –Twin Cities \$85
2015 - MIAC - Moorhead/Concordia \$85+\$15 mileage from MIAC
2015 - MIAC - Sartell/CSB/St. Joseph \$85+\$15 mileage from MIAC
2015 - MIAC - Gustavus \$100
2015 - MIAC - Owatonna \$100
2015 - MIAC - Winona \$85+ \$40 mileage from MIAC
2015 - MIAC – Carleton/Northfield \$95

- C. 2015 MIAC Playoffs
\$90 per match, Referee will be designated and will work entire event, officials will be offered housing and either a meal card or a meal stipend, standard government mileage will be given

- D. Gophers - Division I
Duals
2014/2015 Referee - \$130
2014/2015 Doubles/Singles Chair - \$120
2014/2015 Singles Chair - \$110

Tournaments/Invitationals
2014/2015 Referee - \$24
2014/2015 Roving - \$20
2014/2015 Chair - \$60

- E. Other ITA Events - Division I, II and III
2015 Referee/Roving - \$20

Assigning Information

Sectional Official's Procedural Assigning Expectations

1. When there is an issue or question concerning an assignment at your location the first call should be to the assignor and they will decide what action to take.
2. When fielding a question or call from a parent or coach you may answer a rules question. It is inappropriate to discuss an official's specific actions or rulings with the parent or coach under any

circumstances or to investigate on their behalf. An email to the assignor or the Official's Chair should be sent by the player, parent, or coach and it will be thoroughly investigated with the appropriate steps taken. It is a standard practice within the USTA Northern Office that all parents and coaches wishing to stay anonymous on any issue understand that no action or follow-up will take place and this should be communicated to them specifically. This does not apply when the official is the referee at a tournament and it is part of his/her duties. The referee should always offer the option of contacting the assignor or the Official's Chair if they are not satisfied with the conversation. The referee should report specific performance issues that are personally observed so that we are aware of the situation in a timely manner and can take appropriate steps.

3. ITA coaches are specifically instructed to send an email to the assignor asking that an official not be assigned for their future matches. It is preferred that they do so without listing specific reasons. In the MIAC, coaches are not allowed to request specific officials per an agreement with Dan McKane, MIAC Commissioner. All coach's evaluations from ITA matches (Gophers and MIAC) may be requested by sending an email to the assignor or Official's Chair. Only evaluation information specific to the official requesting the information will be shared.
4. It is not acceptable to accept an assignment and decide to take another assignment without consulting the assignor to ensure there is appropriate coverage and there is a qualified substitute available. The assignor should be used as a resource to verify all dates of tournaments within the Section to ensure there is no overlap or double acceptances.
5. If an official is unable to fulfill an assignment, the assignor should be contacted immediately and will decide if the official needs to find a replacement based on the assigning requirements and level of officials available.
6. If an official has concerns regarding assigning, leadership or lack thereof from the Section, staff, or Official's Chair, please communicate these concerns with the appropriate parties directly. We all need to work together to address the concern and get things right.

General Assignments

Below is what is currently in the USTA Northern Officials Policies and Procedures Manual

Assigning Policies

A. General Assigning

- All assigning is done through the ArbiterSports system.
- Assignments are listed on the Google calendar. You may access the calendar by going to www.northern.usta.com under community and officials to view this calendar.
- Scheduling will begin approximately mid-month for the following month, so officials should block their calendars accordingly.
- The official will have 5 days to accept or decline any assignments they have received.
- The time that is listed on the assignment is the time the official should report.
- The end time that is listed on the assignment is flexible in that it may end earlier or may go later, especially if it is the last assignment of the day. Assignments that end earlier will have a guaranteed pay for at least two hours.
- Assignments are made according to the level of tournament and the rank of the official. Once that information is determined, then it is attempted to spread assignments among those that show available.

The following information will be added to the Officials Policies and Procedures Manual that will be updated in January.

There have been some questions about assignments and what the protocol is when they need to be changed. In an effort to be transparent, please note the expectations upon accepting an assignment.

B. Adjusted Assigning

- Draws for tournaments are made typically 3-5 days prior to the event. Once that takes place, the assignor is notified by the tournament director of the actual

needs for officials. The assignor then determines what changes need to be made to the originally scheduled assignment.

- On some occasions, assignments are completely deleted out of the system due to smaller draws, later start times or earlier end times. The official will get an email generated from Arbiter that their assignment has been declined.
- Many assignments need to be adjusted. The adjusted assignment is sent to the original official and it then needs to be reaccepted. On occasion an official may decline the adjusted assignment.
- It is completely understandable that an official who has accepted an assignment may not be able to come earlier or stay later, but it is expected that if the assignor cannot secure someone else for the adjusted assignment, the original official assigned will work some variation of the original assignment. If the original official assigned cannot flex and work too much earlier or later, the assignor may have to assign them to a much shorter assignment than they originally received. The official will be guaranteed a minimum two hour assignment and will need to reaccept the adjusted assignment. If they do not accept the adjusted assignment within 24 hours, the assignor will override and accept the assignment for them.

USTA Referee Information

USTA Northern currently has five certified USTA Referees. If anyone is interested in becoming a USTA Referee, please contact Kristi Bushinski and she will explain the criteria that is needed to become certified. Below are the beginnings of a list of expectations of USTA Referee's in our Section (assigned in ArbiterSports, and paid by the Section office) and any certified referee working within the section. This list is not exhaustive and may be updated at any time and sent out to officials via ArbiterSports.

A list of known events that require or have requested a USTA Referee (Junior Level 3 and 4, US Open Qualifier) will be provided to all Northern USTA Referees in late December for the first quarter, February for the second quarter, May for the third quarter and August for the fourth quarter. A list of events that the USTA Referee would like to be considered for will be submitted to the assignor by January 1, March 1, June 1 and September 1. The events that the USTA Referee has indicated they are available will be submitted to the tournament director and they will select who their USTA Referee will be. The assignor will communicate who was selected as the USTA Referee for each event. Provisional and Sectional Referee's will be considered for assignment to events that do not require a USTA Referee level certification.

USTA Northern USTA Referee Responsibilities

1. Once a USTA Referee is selected for an event, it is the responsibility of the USTA Referee to submit the first draft of their officials needs to the assignor one month before the event.
2. The USTA Referee is responsible for working with the Tournament Director to ensure there is a Tournament Committee for each tournament.
3. The USTA Referee will communicate with the tournament director when they will be making the draw and the referee must be present for that task.
4. Once the draw has been made, the USTA Referee will work with the Tournament Director to schedule the tournament based on courts available, draw size, and match formats. It is ultimately the responsibility of the USTA Referee to ensure the tournament runs smoothly and the match schedule is maintained.
5. The USTA Referee will then log into ArbiterSports to determine if any changes need to be made to the official's assignments. If changes need to be made they will email the assignor with the changes at a minimum of three days prior to the event.
6. As a reminder, there is a specific chain of appeals outlined in the Friend At Court. A player may appeal a rover's or chair's ruling of law to the referee. The referee's decision is final. A player may appeal a referee's ruling of law to the Tournament Committee. The Tournament Committee's decision is final. To that end the USTA Referee should be off court as much as possible (not an

active rover) unless enough roving officials cannot be secured or coverage is needed for roving officials needing breaks. The USTA Referee should make his/her presence known and should directly observe courts as needed.

7. USTA Referee's will follow the standard rate of pay the Section has in place for their compensation and will not negotiate other rates unless employed by the facility hosting the tournament.
8. At the completion of the event, the USTA Referee will report their actual hours worked to the assignor. The USTA Referee will also ensure that all code violations are written up and forwarded to the Junior or Adult Competition Director along with a summary of withdrawals during the tournament identifying any without merit.

Sectional Trainer Evaluator Information

USTA Northern currently has two Sectional T/E's. If anyone is interested in becoming a Sectional T/E, please contact Kristi Bushinski and she will explain the criteria that is needed to become one. Below is the current list of expectations and responsibilities of a Sectional T/E. This list is not exhaustive and may be updated at any time and sent out to officials via ArbiterSports.

USTA Northern Sectional Trainer Evaluator Responsibilities

1. Work with new officials on roving training per the assignor or the Section Chair's request.
2. As part of the overall USTA Northern Officials Evaluation Plan, perform formal chair evaluations, discuss with each official and promptly enter the evaluations into NuCula.
3. Provide feedback on performance of officials to the assignor and Official's Chair when appropriate.
4. USTA Northern Sectional T/E's do not have control over nor may they request for specific assignments to be made within the Section.

Milestones

Birthdays this Quarter:

- Jocelyn Renault – January 1
- Tim Heck – January 27
- Sarah Foley – February 8
- Tim Wynne – February 16
- Tim Kurtt – February 26
- Marisa Jacobus – March 7
- Tony Stingley – March 16

Happy Birthday to all!

Getting To Know USTA Northern Official ... Heather Landrus

How long have you been an official?

8 years.

How and why did you get started?

I saw one of the ads on the USTA Northern website and being an official sounded like a fun and interesting second job.

What has been your biggest highlight as an official?

Lately it has come from the junior players themselves when they are disappointed when they find out I won't be refereeing a tournament they are playing. I am touched that I have achieved a level that many of

the players want me to be at every tournament they play in. I enjoy referee work and knowing that the players and parents think I do a good job with it, is a very wonderful highlight.

What are the best reasons to become an official?

You get to spend your time watching lots of good tennis. If you work hard at it, you have the ability to travel to tournaments and work at higher-level tournaments. You can be a teacher of the rules of tennis one minute and then help enforce one of the many rules of tennis before you move to another court and assist with a tie break. What you get from this should be that officiating has a large amount of variety making it an interesting position to have.

Why should someone else become an official?

I think because officiating can be very rewarding from helping new players understand the rules of tennis to being on court promoting fair and but competitive play.

What advice would you give young officials who are looking to advance to the professional level?

Start small. Do a great job no matter what the assignment and then a more senior official will be willing to recommend you for advancement.