

Executive Director's Report

2025 Year End

2025 has been filled with a lot of great highlights, and has had its challenges as well. While we're down in USTA Adult League participation and overall participation on the Dashboard, our state has had a lot of tennis events and new initiatives to be proud of. I'll highlight some of the initiatives below that our staff and volunteer base have accomplished.

- Mark Robbins, the Northeast MS JTT Local Coordinator, won the Janet Louer USTA JTT National Organizer of the Year Award.
- Piloted the Scala USTA Flex App in 7 new cities in 2025, with more set to launch in 2026. This gives players another option for getting involved in organized tennis without having to find a team or play on a set schedule.
- Meridian's Northeast Park, led by Pete Mazzella and the Meridian CTA, were one of only 6 sites in the nation (and only 2 in the Southern Section) to be chosen to host a "US Open Family Day." They will host the event on August 24 and will have a US Open viewing party after their on court event.
- Continue to try and build our Intro to Play programs for adults and juniors. Facilities across the state are hosting Ready to Rally programs for juniors and Tennis Apprentice sessions for adults. The goal of these programs is to introduce tennis to participants in areas that don't always have structured programming or lessons available in their area, and to market a 6 week beginner class to the public.
- Bringing more Adaptive Tennis programs to the state with new programs being held in three new areas. "Tennis 4 Fun's" Adaptive tennis program in Hattiesburg won a national award.
- Continued to partner with a 3rd party company to create videography highlights of some of our association's marquee events.
- Continued to build on some of our newest and most successful initiatives of the last three years with our College Showcase and NJTL Cup.
- Partnered with Mississippi State and the University of Southern Mississippi to give away six (6) tennis camp scholarships, and gave out two new College Scholarships to outstanding high school seniors that are renewable for 4 years.
- USTA has launched the USTA Coaching Initiative, which you will be hearing more about.
- Pledged nearly \$60,000 to public facilities across the state through USTA Mississippi's Facility Grant.
- Vanita Phinisey's Golden Triangle NJTL was selected to take part in the Net Generation On Court Experience at the US Open, where they will take 24 kids to the US Open to play on the court before the opening match on August 26.

January 13, 2026

Director of Adult League Tennis Annual Report

2025 was a successful year for MS league tennis. We had several teams compete at the National Championships:

- 40&Over 3.5M Branch/EC (National Champion)
- 18&Over 4.5W Buffington/JXN
- 40&Over 3.0M Biddle/JXN
- 18&Over 3.5 Mixed Worsham/NC

Other notable Sectional Finalists:

- 18&Over 4.0M Sumrall/PB
- 18&Over 2.5 Bayati/JXN
- 18&Over 4.0-3.0W Marley/NC
- 18&Over 4.0-3.0M Boykin/DLT

Notable Regulation changes

- Adult 18 and Adult 40 & Over Sectional Championship or National Championships players cannot appeal their NTRP level down.
- A captain can only represent one team in the same age division and NTRP level at championships
- In MS a One team is a team registered in a local area with no other team in its age group/division/level. To be offered accommodations, a One Team must maintain a roster of 50% or more of its players domiciled in the geographic area of the local league in which the team is registered.
- All local league matches must be played within the geographic boundary of the local league in which teams are registered.

2026-2027 Championship hosts were selected.

- 65&Over-Meridian, MS
- 55&Over-Tupelo, MS
- 40&Over-Oxford, MS
- 18&Over-Ridgeland, MS
- Mixed Doubles-Tupelo, MS
- Tri-Level-Hattiesburg, MS
- Adult 70&Over Multi-State Invitational-Vicksburg, MS
- 18/40 Combo-Ridgeland, MS
- 55&Over Combo-Vicksburg, MS

Areas of focus for 2026: Captain Recognition, Lapsed players, and social leagues

January 14, 2026
2025 Annual Report
William Foreman
Director, Competitive Pathway

2025 in Review

Tournaments in Mississippi this past year didn't see the growth that we saw in 2024, but there are a lot of positive takeaways from this past year still. We saw increased involvement from high school teams using the USTA's High School Platform. We had a return to player development camps that we will continue in 2026. We launched a new WTN Circuit for our Junior Colleges. We continued to run events with a positive impact on our players and community, such as the annual College Showcase and our annual Tennis on Campus Mississippi Championship. We are looking forward to continuing these accomplishments and adding back tournaments and tournament numbers in 2026

We had a great player development camp in December at Mississippi College. Led by MC Coach Michael Ward and, as of this meeting, future MS Tennis Hall of Famer Walker Sahag, we had 40 players and an all star group of coaches who led a full day of on court and off court training. The players and parents not only got a lot of tennis feedback from our coaches, but the engaging community and social aspects for the players and parents is also impactful. We look forward to having more of these camps in 2026 and continuing to foster a better sense of community among our junior tennis players, parents, and coaches.

Our adult and junior tournament numbers both saw a decrease from 2024 to 2025. Some of the decrease is because of tournaments moving to different dates or having to cancel, and some of it involves smaller turnout at different events. This chart below on page 2 shows the breakout of by tournament type and tournament level for 2024 and 2025. In adult tournaments, we saw a decrease of 162 players. We lost two larger tournaments in 2025 that did not happen this year, totaling around \$250 or so players. If those two tournaments had happened, our adult numbers would have looked very strong. Hopefully we will get both of them back in 2026. Our junior tournaments saw a larger decrease of 819 players. In 2023, the L5 tournament in Ocean Springs had to move from December to January due to weather. This bumped our 2024 numbers up by about 230 players, since we had that tournament twice in 2024. In 2025, since we not only did not have that tournament twice, but actually it had to move again to January due to weather. So 2025 already was down 200+- players to start since 2024 was increased by a tournament that wasn't supposed to happen in 2024. Lost another 200+- players due to that tournament not happening in 2025. And lost another 200+- players due to the original tournament not happening in 2025. So 600+- of our deficit is from that tournament having to move twice, which was a good decision as it works best for the tournament and the players. We lost 100 players in junior circuits due to Emillia Viljoen not being able to run several tournaments as she had in the past, due to her having to seek new income opportunities that took her away from tournaments for most of 2025. We are on a good track now for 2026 to see a good increase in numbers, weather permitting!

		2024	2025
Adult Tournaments	Number of Tournaments	27	27
	Number of Registrations	2537	2068
Junior Tournaments	Number of Tournaments	87	73
	Number of Registrations	5635	4806
WTN Tournaments	Number of Tournaments	5	12
	Number of Registrations	246	553

Comparisons of 2024 Numbers to 2025 to Tournament Type & Level

Junior Tournaments			
	2024	2025	Difference
L3	129	128	-1
L4	282	285	3
L5	1290	764	-526
L6	2014	1758	-256
L7	281	363	82
Unsanctioned	1081	1060	-21
Junior Circuit	558	458	-100
	5635	4816	-819

Adult Tournaments			
	2024	2025	Difference
L3	70	70	0
L4	93	48	-45
L5	355	299	-56
L6	560	588	28
Unsanctioned	1236	920	-316
TOC	223	143	-80
WTN	246	553	307
	2783	2621	-162

We launched our new Junior College WTN Circuit, where junior colleges around the state received a grant for hosting a World Tennis Number Tournament on their campus. We had

4 tournaments on campuses in 2025: Co-Lin, Jones, Northwest, and Meridian. Each coach received \$400 (\$200 from USTA MS and \$200 from USTA Southern) for hosting the tournament, where players aged 11-25 were guaranteed 3 matches and had a lower cost entry fee of \$43. The feedback from the players and coaches was overwhelmingly positive, and we plan on expanding this program in 2026.

We have continued to see success with our high school teams with more and more schools being onboarded onto the USTA High School Platform. Our private school association, MAIS, still is using the platform as their official tennis reporting system, with more schools using it in 2025 and even more coming onboard in 2026. We are continuing to partner with the MAIS and the public school association, MHSAA, on running their state championship tournaments. New for 2026 we are working with multiple homeschool teams around the state, and are looking to be more involved with them as they work towards tracking their season matches and having an end of season tournament for their teams as well.

We are looking forward to a successful and busy 2026, and so far have a solid foundation to make it all happen!

Jr Team Tennis/Ready to Rally

Jr Team Tennis

This was our third year to have 3 successful championships.

Spring League/Championship; teams are coed and the match format is one girl and one boys doubles, and one mixed court.

Spring Championship was held in Jackson on Cinco de Mayo weekend. We provided players with a photo booth keeping the Cinco de Mayo theme. Players who were nominated for sportsmanship during the championship were able to have a swing at the piñata.

Tacos and chips were served for lunch.

Summer League/Championship; this is our only league that advances to the new Mary Hatfield Invitational. The match format is one girl and one boys singles; one girl and one boys doubles. We provided lunch for captains and players. The photo booth theme was silly tennis props. Players who were nominated for sportsmanship during the championship was given USTA swag.

- Mississippi was represented well at the JTT Invitational with 5 teams in attendance. Tupelo's 10U team was champions in their age division.

Fall League/Championship; this is our college like format. Teams play 2 doubles courts and 4 singles. Players play both singles and doubles. We provided lunch to captains and players and provided a game zone for players.

Players who were nominated for sportsmanship during the championship were allowed to spin the prize wheel.

New JTT Coordinators starting in 2025 were Torean King for the Golden Triangle area and Erica Shrock for the Gulf Coast area.

- *USTA MS will be the host for the JTT Mary Hatfield Invitational that will take place on Labor Day weekend in Mobile, Alabama.*

Ready to Rally Programs

- Ready to Rally concluded the year with 27 locations with 521 participants who learned basic tennis in MS.

Jr Team Tennis, Ready to Rally, and Team Challenges had a combined participation of 3037 participants. JTT had an 8% increase from 2024.

Angie Deleon
Director of Junior Programs



**SOUTHERN
MISSISSIPPI**

USTA Mississippi Year End Community Development Director Report

January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025

DUE: January 20, 2026

Name: Jay Pacelli

CTA :

- Held CTA State Workshop, with the assistance of our CTA committee, on October 4 at River Hills Country Club. Workshop included our NJTLs and in conjunction with a planned Red Ball event the evening before and an adaptive workshop late in the day conducted by Jim Hamm, chair of the USTA Adaptive Committee.
- Met with various CTA's in the state to discuss strategic plan(s) for 2025. CTA visits included Northeast, Starkville, Oxford, Laurel, Gulf Coast, Brookhaven, Meridian, and Northwest. NJTL visits included Greenville, Golden Triangle, Ace2Deuce, Friends at Battlefield, and Family Biz. Emphasized the importance of grass roots programming to all regional CTA committees and incentives for planning Tennis Apprentices, Red Ball and Social Play events.
- Continued to look for leadership for our Hattiesburg CTA. Goal is to establish a CTA committee for Delta area in 2026.
- Oversaw MTA facility grant. USTA Mississippi had received 17 grant requests for projects in 2025. Pledges had been made to 12 organizations totaling \$54,515. Assistance for resurfacing and repair projects for Treasure Oaks and Bayou Bluff Country Clubs was honored in December 2025 totaling \$10,000.
- Oversaw community coordinator initiative on Gulf Coast as well as Northeast MS.
- Served as liaison for USTA National Facilities Grant.
- College Kids Day were organized with cooperation from the college programs and local CTA's and NJTLs. Events in March and April before and after college matches were arranged by USTA Mississippi at Mississippi State, Delta State and Mississippi College.
- Had CTAs and NJTLs throughout state participate with events for National Tennis Month this past May
- Conducted a free "Grow the Game" workshop in July in Oxford to help renew interest in the CTA. USTA Southern provided a grant for food and refreshments. Music, Red Ball Tennis, and a program promoting Tennis Apprentice was presented. Twenty five adults joined us on the John Leslie courts.
- Ten CTAs applied for the USTA Southern Community Growth and Participation Grant (CGPG) for this past year. The state office assisted with and approved applications in November and

December 2025. All CTA applicants will receive funding from this grant in early 2026. USTA Southern and USTA Mississippi approved a total of \$25,201.50 for Mississippi Community Tennis Associations.

NJTL/Diversity:

- Staff liaison for MTA Diversity Committee and NJTL Committee. Set 4 meetings per committee per year. Goal is to speak to committee members about items they would want to accomplish throughout year and update/inform on current NJTL and DEI news. Had assistance from committee members on annual NJTL Leadership Camp.
- Oversaw and administered MTA Diversity Grant. Greenville CTA/NJTL has received a grant of \$1200. Assisted Mississippi NJTLs about grant cycles with USTA Southern Foundation throughout year.
- Ran our second NJTL Cup and State Leadership Camp on August 9 at the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum and Dorothy Vest Tennis Center. Had a play event, tennis clinic, quiz bowl and museum tour for participants of 4 of our state NJTL's. Participation and travel grants totaling \$950.00 was divided amongst all NJTL's.
- Planned our second CTA/NJTL Summit for October 4, 2025 at River Hills Country Club. Event looked to have all NJTL leaders and significant parties from their organizations. A NJTL tract that included a NJTL roundtable discussion was emphasized.
- Assisted Colombia and Natchez to establish and register as NJTLs for upcoming year.
- Offered assistance and scholarships to NJTL's and participants that attended NJTL Sectional Leadership Camps in Louisville. Five Mississippi NJTLs brought their athletes and chaperones.
- Served as MTA liaison to setup Adaptive programs. Have adaptive programming in Meridian, Hattiesburg, and the Gulf Coast with plans to start a program at Battlefield Park in 2026. Looking to expand to other areas of Mississippi and have CTA's and others aware of grants offered by USTA Mississippi and USTA Southern. Currently partnering with "Tennis for Fun" to deliver tennis opportunities for developmentally disabled individuals. Was state delegate at the USTA Southern Adaptive Tennis Championships on November 14-16 in Chattanooga. Mississippi had 3 athletes represent the state at the second annual tournament.
- Coastal Alliance CTA and USTA Mississippi offered Red Ball Tennis at the Hispanic Heritage Festival in mid-September 2025 to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month.
- Adaptive Holiday Clinic was held by Meridian CTA in December 2025. Guest included Miss Teen Mississippi 2025 and Santa Claus.

Schools:

- Served as liaison for USTA Schools Program. Continuing to look for schools to have a training workshop for their PE teachers. Target areas include Meridian, Brandon and Southaven. Organizing workshops for Meridian and Brandon for Spring 2026.
- USTA Mississippi continues to work with MAHPERD. Involved with MAHPERD conference every year. Goal is to connect PE teachers with school partners and equipment and to offer school workshops in their school districts.
- Focus for CTA Fall CTA workshop was to encourage CTA leaders to assist in connecting their local school officials and teachers with the USTA Schools Program.
- Started new after school Red Ball programs at Northeast Lauderdale Elementary and Brandon High School in Fall 2025. PE teachers were provided start up kits courtesy of USTA Southern and USTA Mississippi.

Parks:

-Was a vendor at the MRPA Convention in Natchez last February. Had representation from Scott Laakso from USTA Southern Parks Committee and Vanita Phinisey from Golden Triangle CTA/NJTL. Goal was to promote USTA Southern Parks Grant to Parks Directors and to encourage new Tennis Apprentice programs at various Parks Tennis Center locations.

-Continued to be active in establishing Tennis Apprentice programs in Parks, Colleges, CTA's, and with Tennis Pros. USTA Mississippi sponsored 15 Tennis Apprentices around the state this past Spring/Summer. Goal was to establish 15 more Tennis Apprentice sessions for Fall 2025, particularly in the parks. USTA Mississippi assisted in 16 Tennis Apprentice programs during the Fall season. Tennis Apprentice workshops have been offered to park associations.

Conducted one in Vicksburg in November, 2025 with 10 participants learning games and drills proper for a 6 week Tennis Apprentice session.

-Brandon City Courts was site for the summer Tennis Apprentice playoffs in August, 2025. Adult beginners from 4 central Mississippi programs played their first doubles matches with assistance from their coaches.

2025 Marketing Report

I was onboarded in April 2025 and immediately began preparation for hosting the **USTA Southern Annual Summer Leadership Meeting** in Oxford in July. Mississippi hosts this meeting once every nine years, and the event was a great success. Leaders from across the Southern Section enjoyed a well-organized, memorable experience that showcased Mississippi hospitality and culture.

Southern Annual Summer Leadership Meeting – July (Oxford, MS)

- Procured and curated Mississippi-themed welcome items for participants, including:
 - A commissioned print by Mississippi artist **Ellen Langford**
 - Piroline wafers
 - Mississippi cheese straws
 - Cathead Vodka
- **Glenn Waddle**, renowned PA announcer known for the iconic “First Down, Ole Miss,” welcomed attendees onto **Hollingsworth Field at Vaught-Hemingway Stadium**, creating an electric and unforgettable moment.
- Live entertainment was provided by guitarist **Barry Leach** during Saturday night dinner.

Marketing & Promotions by Month

- **May**: Promoted **National Tennis Month** and associated programs.
- **July**: Promoted **National Parks and Recreation Month**, highlighted local parks and facilities, and hosted the **Southern Annual Summer Leadership Meeting**.
- **August**: Promoted the launch of **USTA Coaching** and hosted a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity—the **first-ever US Open Family Day** in Meridian, MS.
 - Only six cities nationwide were selected.
 - **Northeast Park Tennis Center (Meridian)** was chosen as one of those exclusive locations.
- **September**: Attended the **Southern Section Marketing Meeting** in Nashville.

Community Engagement (April–October)

- Hosted **Red Ball Tennis activations at Fondren's First Thursday**, engaging both youth and adults and introducing new audiences to the sport.

Leagues & Events

- **October–December**: Successfully hosted the **3rd Annual Cathead Corporate League**.

Annual Awards

- Solicited nominations for **Annual Awards**, with the Awards Portal closing October 1.
- Collaborated with the **Awards Committee and staff** to review submissions and select award recipients.

Merchandising

- Purchased new **branded merchandise** and attended **State Championships** in Tupelo, Oxford, Brookhaven, and Vicksburg to sell merchandise promoting tennis in Mississippi..

Social Media

- Since April 2025, Facebook engagement has increased **90.8%**, with **540 new followers gained** (**+9.9%**).
- Instagram analytics reflect the most recent **90 days**, during which the account gained **69 new followers** (**+1.5%**).
- Engagement across **Facebook and Instagram continues to trend upward**, driven by improved reach, consistency, and audience interaction.
- **YouTube and TikTok channels are active**, with a combined **140 subscribers** and nearly **4,000 total views**, demonstrating early-stage growth and expansion into video content.
- **2026 Opportunities**
 - Expand **short-form video strategy** across Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube to increase visibility and engagement.
 - Leverage **program highlights, player spotlights, and behind-the-scenes content** to strengthen storytelling and community connection.
 - Increase **cross-promotion with leagues, tournaments, and partner organizations** to drive follower growth and participation.

Current & Ongoing Work

- Preparing the **slideshow presentation** for the **Awards Banquet and Hall of Fame Ceremony** (January 30–31, 2026).
- Coordinating **event logistics**, including:
 - Registration table setup
 - Tent cards
 - Silent auction layout and flow
 - Procuring items for the Silent Auction