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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **USTA Southern Cancels 2020 USTA League, Combo Doubles Sectional Championships**

### **TOURNAMENTS WERE SCHEDULED FROM JULY TO DECEMBER**

**ATLANTA – MAY 18, 2020** – The United States Tennis Association (USTA) Southern Section Board of Directors announced the cancellation of its 2020 USTA Adult League championships due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The six events were scheduled between late July and early December in six cities.

USTA League and Combo Doubles are considered the flagship of the USTA, with 90,000 players in USTA Southern and 330,000 nationally. The leagues consist of teams of about six to 20 players in various age categories. Most teams start competing at the local level and advance to state and sectional championships. Last year, approximately 7,000 players and 600 teams participated in USTA Southern championships and contributed millions of dollars to local economies.

In many states in USTA Southern, most local league play was either halted, canceled or had not begun. Once the USTA announces when local play resumes, individual state associations will decide on the fate of their state adult league championships for 2020.

The USTA had announced in April that all 2020 USTA national adult league championships were canceled due to the COVID-19 epidemic.

Here are the six canceled events, with dates and locations:

- USTA League Adult 18 & Over Southern Sectional Championships; July 24-27; Rome, Ga.
- USTA League Adult 40 & Over Southern Sectional Championships; Aug. 7-9, Aug. 14-16; Auburn, Ala.
- USTA League Adult 55 & Over Southern Sectional Championships; Sept. 18-21; Asheville, N.C.
- USTA Southern Mixed Doubles Sectional Championships; Oct. 9-11; Lexington, Ky.
- USTA League Adult 65 & Over Southern Sectional Championships; Nov. 13-16; Dothan, Ala.
- Combo Doubles Southern Sectional Championships; Dec. 4-7; Mobile, Ala.

USTA Southern President & CEO Bonnie Vandegrift said, "It is with a heavy heart that we have had to cancel these important championships. USTA League and Combo Doubles are the backbone of local tennis participation in USTA Southern and throughout the country. The safety of our players is our priority. We are truly disappointed that we cannot stage these tournaments, which allows our players to be physically active and gives our cities significant travel revenue."

USTA Southern Adult League Committee Chair Helen Martin added, "Our USTA League and other adult players are so passionate about playing. That makes it especially disappointing that we won't be able to give them the opportunity to compete with other players from our nine states. The good news is that we will be able to focus on supporting local tennis programs."

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USTA Southern Director of Adult Tennis & Human Resources Chris Walling added, “This was not an easy decision and one that was ultimately decided on by what is best for our players. The health and safety of our players was the number one priority. Additionally, one of the many items we looked at was what our players told us. In a recent USTA Southern League survey with over 13,000 responses, an overwhelming majority of our players made it clear that they wanted to focus on local league options and were not comfortable with team events with more than 300 players in attendance.”

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The **USTA** is the national governing body for the sport of tennis in the U.S. and the leader in promoting and developing the growth of tennis at every level – from local communities to the highest level of the professional game. It owns and operates the US Open, the largest annually attended sporting event in the world, and launched the **US Open Series** linking six summer tournaments to the US Open. In addition, it owns about 90 Pro Circuit events throughout the U.S., and selects the teams for the Davis Cup, Fed Cup, Olympic and Paralympic games. A not-for-profit organization with more than 615,000+ members, it invests 100 percent of its proceeds in growing the game. It is divided into 17 sections, of which **USTA Southern** is the largest. The 163,000+ USTA members living in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee make up USTA Southern, and account for nearly 25 percent of the total USTA membership. A professional staff housed in Peachtree Corners, Ga., carries out USTA Southern’s daily operations, but policy is formed and much of the organization’s work is executed via a board and committee structure of more than 200 volunteers. For more information about the types of programs and services offered by USTA Southern, visit [www.southern tennis.com](http://www.southern tennis.com).

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