



After School Middle School Tennis League Information and Guidelines

Mission Statement

The purpose of this GWTA league is to enable as many middle school students as possible to learn and play the game of tennis. Our goal is to work with parents of middle school children to form teams based on the school in which the player attends. Forming the teams this way allows for the players to play with friends from school and makes carpooling easier. This program is designed to introduce and develop a love for tennis. This is not a competitive league in the sense that we do not keep statistics and no winner is declared at the end of the season. From this program we hope the players will continue to play tennis by joining our Junior Team Tennis program, Tennis in the Parks, Play Days, L-6 tournaments and other programs offered in our community. For more information on these programs, please email youth@wilmingtontennis.com

Equipment

- GWTA will provide the balls for practice and matches
- When necessary, loan racquets to players through the coaches
- Green Dot balls will be used for all practices and matches
- Coaches agree to return equipment at the end of the season

League Guidelines

These teams are not school teams therefore the school is not responsible for contributing anything to the league including transportation to and from practices and matches. Established middle school teams who are part of another conference or organization may join with ours provided they follow the guidelines established by the GWTA.

- Teams will meet two times per week. The first two weeks will be practice, the second two weeks will have 1 match / 1 practice per week, the last two weeks of the season will be matches only.
- This program is for 6th – 8th grade players only. No child outside these grades will be permitted to play or practice with the team.
- If a coach/AD allows a player to play/practice who is not in 6th-8th grade, both player and coach will forfeit the ability to participate in the program the following year.
- GWTA has a no-cut policy. No child may be turned away from the team; all children are welcome to be on the team and come to practice although only players who can serve and rally the ball may play in matches.
- If the opposing team has players of the same ability, exhibition matches may be played.
- All players must register, complete and submit a program waiver, which can be found at www.wilmingtontennis.com. No player whose parent has not completed and submitted the waiver before the player's first practice will be allowed on the court. If a player whose parent has not submitted a waiver shows up for practice, said player must wait

outside the fenced area and will not be allowed to participate in any practice or match until the waiver has been submitted. No exceptions.

- Match format will be 3 singles and 3 doubles with exhibition matches playing as time and number of courts permit.
 - All matches will be a 6 game pro-set, no-ad scoring with a 7-point tiebreak at 5-5 *The set score should never reach more than 6-5.*
 - If the score reaches deuce in either singles or doubles the receiver(s) decide on which side to receive the ball (deuce or ad)
 - Tiebreakers are regular tiebreakers *not* the Coman Tie Break.
 - All practices are limited to 4:00-5:30 unless otherwise arranged.
 - All matches are limited to 4:00-6:00 unless otherwise arranged.
 - *Coaches may agree to modify scoring and match format based on players' ability and length of time needed to complete a match, this includes drop serving.*
- Players must be ranked in order of strongest to weakest and the strongest players play first court singles/doubles etc. No Exceptions, no stacking of teams is allowed.
- Coaches shall communicate with each other before the match to match-up skill levels of players in order to keep matches level.
- Coaching:
 - **Coaching on changeovers only and from outside the fence**
 - Coaches may be on court to help with tie-breaks and to facilitate learning of scoring and where to stand etc.*
 - Parents, friends, relatives may not be on the court or coach at any time; it is up to the coach to keep spectators in check*
 - Problems with opposing teams' players must be handled through that player's coach
 - Problems between coaches, players, spectators or anyone else in connection with any practice or match must be handled calmly and respectfully. Coaches will communicate with league coordinator regarding any problem out of the ordinary.
 - On Court Issues – When a player feels that the opponent is making bad calls, consistently calling scores incorrectly, or any other problem that may occur on court
 1. Offended player may suspend play and call for his coach. The coach should watch a few points – from outside the fence to see if there is a problem
 2. If there is a problem, that coach must deal directly with the opposing player's coach, not the player him/herself to resolve the issue
 3. If necessary, both coaches may stand on the court to monitor, not coach, the match.
 1. At this point, you are not a line judge; you are not making calls for the players or injecting yourself in the match in any way.
 2. If a player is calling in balls out, then you may stop the match and show the offending player what is considered in and what is considered out. Reminding them that if it touches any part of the line the ball is considered good.
 3. Once these things happen, the coach of the offending player should overturn bad calls. If the player exhibits un-sportsman like conduct, that player should be removed from the match.
- What happens when a parent exhibits unsportsmanlike conduct?
 - This is a touchy situation because you do not want to alienate parents but it does need to be addressed, as they are the example for the players. Ask to speak to them privately and explain the need to keep everything on a positive note. If they made negative or derogatory comments to a player and if appropriate, you may want to ask them to apologize to the offended player.

- What happens when a player exhibits unsportsmanlike conduct?
 - The coach of the offending player should give a warning to the player and explain the offense. If the behavior continues then a 3 strike and you're out rule should be applied meaning they are removed from the match.
- Above all, this is to be a fun, learning and encouraging environment for all players.

**Coaches may be on the court during tiebreakers to help facilitate the learning of the scoring and area of court in which to stand. If players do not fully understand how a match is played or are not competent in scoring, a coach/parent/volunteer may be on the court to guide (NOT COACH) the players through the process.*

Coaches and Volunteer Policies

- Each coach and assistant coach must register on www.netgeneration.com, create an account, take the Safe Play course and be background checked.
- Each coach must pass a background check every two years.
- Each coach and assistant must read and be familiar with the "GWTA Safe Practice Guidelines" and agree to follow the recommended practices to the best of their abilities
- Each coach will abide by the GWTA Safe Practice Guidelines of having "two-deep leadership" present at all team functions.
 1. This can occur by:
 1. Recruiting an assistant
 2. Assigning each parent a volunteer time during either a match or practice
- Coaches and volunteers agree to make the League Coordinator aware of any deviation of policy or conflict between coach/volunteer and participant
- Coaches/assistant coaches agree not to transport players to practices, matches or events without prior permission from League Coordinator *and* written and signed permission from parent

Parental Involvement

- Each parent must agree to volunteer at one or more practices or matches so that a parent or assistant coach is present at every match and practice
- Coach shall circulate a volunteer sign-up sheet to recruit parent volunteers before the first practice
- Regular Tie-Break General Rules
 - Next in line serves first point of tie-breaker from deuce side
 - Next in line serves second and third point starting on the ad side
 - Next in line serves forth and fifth point starting on ad side
 - Next in line serves sixth point from ad side and then teams/players switch ends of the court where the same server serves the seventh point from the deuce side
 - Next in line serves the next two points starting on the ad side
 - This continues until one player has earned 7 points winning by a margin of 2 points
 - As a note, switch ends of the court every multiple of 6 points played, example after the score reaches a total of 6 points, 12 points, 18 points etc.