Dear Player & Parent:

Thank you for choosing the NTC Junior Programs! We appreciate the trust that you have in our staff’s ability to help the players to develop both on and off-court. While we will try to maximize their tennis potential, we also value the development of the player’s discipline level, work ethic, coachability, accountability, sportsmanship, and other aspects that will be extremely important to their lives off the court.

Please take a moment to review, with your child, the content of this packet. Here we will provide information that will ensure that all parties (player, Coaches and parents) are on the same page as well as minimize potential misunderstandings along the way. We are looking forward to being a positive influence in the player’s overall development and an important partner during their tennis journey!

Please do not hesitate to contact our NTC Program’s Office, at ntcprograms@usta.com, for any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Whitney Kraft, Director of Tennis
Joao Pinho, Head Professional

PLAYER’S PLACEMENT

− We understand the concept of a player performing better when playing “up”. However, in order to build a player it’s important not to skip any steps; dominating and standing out amongst your current peers is an important piece in that process.
− The Coaching Staff strives to create groups that are as cohesive as possible. In order to achieve that, we assess the following factors to determine one’s placement and day assignment (in the case of Feeder players):
  o Technical and tactical development
  o Physical capabilities
  o Tournament experience and UTR
  o Work ethic consistently displayed during classes
  o Overall level relative to the other players assigned to that group
− While we understand logistical difficulties, and other commitments that your child and family may have, we cannot consider those for placement
− Coaches will not discuss the placement of other players. We ask you to trust our decision and be aware that we are happy to adjust your child’s assignment once s/he shows, consistently, that s/he is ahead of his/her current group based on the criteria mentioned above
− Players will constantly be evaluated and changes of ratings and day assignment are possible at any time
− Continuous participation in the program is not guaranteed
  o If the player’s overall performance level and/or behavior is not up to par for his/her current rating or placement, an adjustment can be made
Parents will be notified, ahead of time, if the player is struggling to keep up with the current placement

OUR EXPECTATIONS OF PLAYERS

Given our program emphasizes both tennis and character development, it’s important that you and your child understand the requirements to participate in our Programs. The list below exemplifies some of these:

- Give full effort in all activities
  - These include dynamic warm-up, mini tennis, on and off-court fitness
- Listen to the Coaches with your ears and eyes
- Be responsible for your own equipment setup on a regular basis
- Display the highest levels of sportsmanship both during practice and in competition
- Have a growth mindset, and be willing to sometimes take a step back in order to take two forward in the future
- Understand that improvement is not always visible, and that plateaus and dips in performance level are part of the journey
  - Continue doing the right things, with a good attitude, during those phases
- Look to do additional work on your own, such as shadowing, additional fitness, hitting against a wall, playing practice matches, etc.
- Focus on your medium to long-term development, while emphasizing the improvement of your technical foundation and work ethic
  - Rankings and UTR ratings, and other outcome related goals, will improve as a consequence of focusing on the process on a daily basis. Focus on the process, not on the outcome.

OUR EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS

- While we encourage parents to provide feedback to Coaches on areas that the players may be struggling with in tournaments, please understand that we have to focus on the group’s needs first
  - We will provide individualized instruction during the sessions, but for very specific needs we encourage the players to add private lessons to their training routine
- Parents are not allowed to provide corrections or any other feedback to players during the training session or match play
  - Repeated issues may lead to limiting the parent’s access to the viewing areas and/or the removal of the player from the program
- Provide support during tournaments by:
  - Avoiding long speeches before and after matches
    - You can try to help your child to create 2-3 simple goals during the match, these can be tactical, mental and emotional, technical (in very simple terms)
    - Then, help then assess themselves against the 2-3 pre-determined goals
  - Maintaining a positive and calm body language during matches
  - Identifying positives aspects first, and areas of improvement second
  - Emphasizing sportsmanship, effort, competitiveness, body language, and other “controllables” over results
Inform the Head Pro of the tournaments your child will be participating in by entering that information on the link below (on the tab called “Your Child’s Tournament”)

- https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1-3IFV7Nf2GJxeR2T5mjKWRgdqkbxHkJl1StA13p-NU/edit#gid=0
- This link will also be shared through an email from the Head Pro

MAKE-UP GUIDELINES

- If your child, needs to miss a class then please email ntcpromotes@usta.com with the subject "Class Absence Notification".
  - Verbal notifications, or via other methods such voicemails, will not be accepted.
- We do require 24-hour notice for all cancellations (groups and privates).
- Absences that are not previously notified will not qualify for a make-up.
- Missing a make-up class will not qualify for an additional make-up.
- Absence notifications that are "tentative" will not be accepted. For example: "My child may be playing a match on date X and may not come."
  - We understand that you may only know with certainty at a certain time. However, please understand we can't provide make-ups/try-outs to others unless I know for sure your child is not coming, as we don't want to overbook the class. Therefore, only email once you know for sure s/he is not coming; while considering the guidelines above.
- Our limit of make-ups per session is one per registered day.
- Make-ups cannot be moved into a new session or used as credit.
- In some cases, make-ups options may be offered on a different level (still appropriate to your child).
- Whenever your child is attending a make-up class, please ensure that s/he picks up a make-up voucher at the front desk upon arrival. That voucher should be handed to one of the Coaches at the beginning of class.
- We do not provide make-ups for Match Play; you do NOT need to notify us if your child will miss Match Play on any given week.
- In the scenario that you notify us that your child will be missing a class but then the conflict you had is no longer an issue, please do not bring your child to class without consulting with the Program’s Office first. There’s a chance that your child's spot was already given to a different player, for the day, and we don’t want you to come to the NTC for no reason.

TOURNAMENTS 101

We would like to remind you of the importance of competition as part of your child's developmental journey. Participation in tournaments, Junior Team Tennis, Match Play, Youth Tennis Leagues, and Play Days is a key component when developing a player and making stronger ties with the sport. While competing, it's important to remind young players that sportsmanship, effort, and problem-solving are amongst the key concepts they should be focusing on; not the outcome.

In order to facilitate the tournament search and registration process, we are including the necessary information below. Additionally, we are including, below, important reference guides, explaining the different levels, progressions and other relevant information for players aged 10 and under and 12-18. Please understand that the information provided can, and will likely, be updated overtime so please refer to the USTA Eastern Section page for the most up-to-date material.
To register for a tournament:

1. Sign-up or renew your child's USTA account
   b. For players 11 and older or who had a membership in the past: https://www.usta.com/en/home/membership/individual-memberships.html

2. Register for tournament(s) at TennisLink
   b. On the search box, include the tournament ID or search for other tournaments using the "Tournaments Advanced Search" functionality located near the search box
      i. There you’ll be able to narrow down the location, type of events being searched
      ii. Usually, you’ll want search by selecting:
         1. “Junior” as the age group
         2. The month that you are looking for tournaments
         3. “Sanctioned Tournaments”
         4. “Eastern” under the National/Section/District
      iii. NOTE: These selections should change based on the type of events you are looking for
   c. Click on "Register Online" (shown if registration is open)
   d. Add membership ID # (which may automatically populate)
   e. Click on Continue
   f. Add e-mail address & phone number

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

– Ensure to control your child’s page at both UTR and TennisRecruiting.net
  o Ensure there are no duplicate profiles on UTR
  o Strongly consider signing up for the premium profiles with both of the websites above to have access to additional features and services
– Visit Parenting Aces website for a series of helpful tips and resources guided for “tennis parents”
  o www.parentingaces.com
  o Consider the premium content for additional access
– NCAA Eligibility Center
  o Visit ncaa.org to learn more about the differences between the NCAA Divisions if your child hope to play at the collegiate level
– USTA Player Development
  o Parent resources: http://www.playerdevelopment.usta.com/parent_resources/
  o Video channel: https://www.dartfish.tv/ChannelHome?CR=p611

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & TIPS

Program Goals
1. Teach life skills through tennis
2. Emphasize proper fundamentals and good habits
3. Further develop the players’ passion and commitment to tennis (“I’m a tennis player” versus “I play tennis”)
4. Move players along the pathway while ensuring they master key skills in each stage
5. Help to shape the players & parents’ views towards the “mastery process”

The Key Components
- The Player / Coach / Parent triangle is crucial to create a competitive player
- All three parts must do their part in order for the player to achieve his/her highest level

- Defining the roles
  - Players
    - Be coachable
    - Do extra work
    - Develop a growth mindset
    - Work his/her hardest consistently
    - Look to develop character in addition to tennis skills
    - Focus on what they need to work on versus on others
  - Coaches
    - Help create good habits
    - Make it fun and challenging
    - Motivate and help to create goals
    - Teach proper fundamentals (technical and tactical)
    - Help shape character traits (sportsmanship, behavior, etc.)
    - Have a medium to long-term approach throughout the journey
  - Parents
    - Teach strong character traits
    - Provide appropriate training and playing opportunities
      - Number of hours per week = age value + 1(roughly)*
* For a competitive player with college tennis aspirations
  - Find a program that emphasizes more than just FH/BH
  - Help hold the player accountable for their training habits
  - Learn about the process of developing a competitive player
    - Hint: It’s not about moving to the next level and who else is on the class
  - Focus on the personal development more than tennis development
  - Have a medium to long-term approach throughout the journey

- The most common questions/comments made by parents / players... (all with good intentions)
  - “Who are the other kids in the group?”
  - “My child / I need(s) to be challenged by better kids.”
  - “When can my child / I move to the next level?”
  - The more you understand the process, and the big picture, the more you’ll see that the questions above are borderline irrelevant...

- Understanding the process
  - Fighting the “next level” mentality
    - Focus on the priorities of the player at that stage
    - Learn how can you help the player to improve in those areas
  - Fighting the “who else” is in the class mentality
    - Focus on your goals/needs
    - While it’s important to train with players of similar ability, progress can be made regardless of the training partners

- Fighting the “my kid / I need(s) to be challenged by others” mentality
  - The REAL challenge is to get a player to:
    - Develop strong fundamentals
    - Train his/her hardest consistently
    - Be fit (both physically and mentality)
    - Learn to enjoy pushing pass his/her limits
    - Understand his/her game plan and have alternatives
    - Develop a strong character and skills that will be helpful off-court
    - Do all that because s/he really wants it despite what the outcome will be at the end of the journey

- Recognizing a great junior program
  - What are the Coaches’ qualifications and background?
  - How engaged are the Coaches during the sessions?
  - What are the standards being taught during the sessions?
  - Are players held accountable for their behavior?
  - Do the Coaches display the actions and behaviors demanded from the players?
  - Are the Coaches emphasizing fundamentals or is it simply hitting and point playing?
  - What’s the environment of the classes like? Is there a good balance between instruction, fun, structure and discipline?
The “Secret Sauce” for developing a great player

- Ensure the child plays for his/her own reasons
- Develop sound fundamentals from an early age
- Understand that the journey is a marathon, not a sprint
- Train and compete an appropriate volume based on age
- Play different sports to develop a strong athletic foundation
- Take into consideration stage of the mental and physical growth the player
- Ensure that Coach or team instills life-lessons that go beyond forehands and backhands
- Work with a Coach or team that has significant experience developing competitive players
- Balance the amount of group classes, private lessons, and independent practice based on age
- Instill high standards in terms of practice habits, work ethic, attention to details, sportsmanship, and coachability from an early age
- Applying the above consistently, over a long period of time, is the “secret sauce”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>USTA Eastern Junior Events (12 &amp; Under – 18 &amp; Under)</strong></th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **L3 UPS** | Entry Level | Unranked; non-elimination (typically Round Robin) events for entry level players. Matches may be either short sets or timed matches; and typically take place over a 2-4 hour block of time.  
  » **12U** L3’s will be played on a 78’ court, with a Green Ball; racquet length must be 29” or less. |
| **L2 Opens** | Intermediate | Intermediate events open to all USTA members. Draws are not limited to players of a specific ranking.  
  » **12U** divisions will utilize a Short Set format (the 1st player/team to wins 4 games by a margin of 2 games, with a 7pt tiebreak at 4-all) and include a consolation match; providing each participant with at least a two matches.  
  » **14U-18U** will utilize a full set (6-game) format with a deciding match tie-break in lieu of the 3rd set. Draws may be single elimination. |
| **L1B Challengers** | Intermediate /Advanced | Intermediate/Advanced tournament play open to all USTA members. The match format may be best of three sets with a mandatory 10- minute rest period after the second set; or may include a deciding match tie-break in lieu of the 3rd set, with a 2 minute rest period after the 2nd set. Draws may be single elimination and are not limited to players of a specific ranking. |
| **L1 & L1A Championships** | Advanced | Advanced tournament play open to all USTA members. The match format may be best two of three sets with a mandatory 10-minute rest period after the second set; or may include a deciding match tie-break in lieu of the 3rd set, with a 2 minute rest period after the 2nd set. Draws may be single elimination and are not limited to players of a specific ranking. |
| **Eastern Sweet 16** | High Performance | A 16-player Compass Draw event open to **Eastern players** only. Players will play up to 4 consolation matches. A deciding match tie-break in lieu of the 3rd set will be used. Selection into the event will be limited to the top 16 ranked applicants from the most recent standings list in the age division of the event. |
| **Empire Cup Doubles** | National L3’s & L4’s | A six tournament **doubles ONLY** circuit, in which **Eastern players** have the opportunity to compete for National L3 & National L4 ranking points. Empire Cup tournaments are open to all Eastern players who register; there is no selection process or ranking requirement. Draws include a consolation bracket. |
| **Eastern Super Six** | National L3’s & L4’s | National L3 (January/June) & National L4 “sectional” tournaments; limited to **Eastern players**; selected based on their section standing in the age group of the event and the next youngest age division. (Up to 2 players will be selected to the event from the next youngest age group, provided the applicants are in the top 25 of the Eastern Standing list of the next youngest age division; please note this will not occur in the 12U division: players will not be selected from the 10U division.)  
  » **14U-18U** Main Draw and 3/4 playoff singles matches will be the best two of three sets;  
  » The **12U** division and **14U-18U** Consolation draws will use a 10 pt. deciding match tie-break in lieu of the 3rd set. |
### USTA Eastern Junior Events (10& Under)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L3 Orange</td>
<td>Entry Level</td>
<td>Ready to play your first competitive event? These tournaments develop game play, are skill based, non-elimination and last no more than 3 hours. L3 UPS are open to any junior who is ready to begin sanctioned competitive play or who wishes to hone their competitive skills. Matches may be either short sets or timed matches; and typically take place over a 2-4 hour block of time.</td>
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### Youth Progression Tournaments – Your Quest for Stars & Trophies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L2 Orange</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>If you are new to tournament play and 7 years or older, you can participate in this level of play. L2 tournaments are open to any junior who is ready for Advanced Beginner / Intermediate level competition. Juniors are encouraged to play tournaments in all regions to compete against a variety of players to help develop their game. Match play will last no more than 6 hours, tournaments can be co-ed or single gender and match format will be determined based on the number of players. (click here for match formats)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 Orange</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Mastered Orange Level 2? Earned 20 stars and/or trophies? You can now play in Orange Level 1 events! Match play will last no more than 6 hours, tournaments can be co-ed or single gender and match format will be determined based on the number of players. (click here for match formats)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 Green</td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Mastered Orange Level 1? Earned 20 stars and/or trophies? You can now play in Green Level 1 events! Match play can be one – two days depending on the number of entrants. Green L1 tournaments are single gender and match format will be determined based on the number of players. More than 6 players run a first round consolation and less than 5 players run a round robin *played to completion; at least 2 matches guaranteed. These use no-ad; 2 out 3 short sets; at 3-all play a 7 point tiebreak - (in lieu or 3rd set -10 point tiebreak). (click here for match formats)</td>
</tr>
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</table>