**LAKE NORMAN TENNIS ASSOCIATION**

**JUNIOR TEAM TENNIS**

**LOCAL LEAGUE RULES & REGULATIONS**

Lake Norman Junior Team Tennis (JTT) is a program of match play that brings boys and girls, aged 5-18, together to play singles and doubles against other coed teams within a league. Beyond being fun and a great form of exercise, JTT is a competitive, level-based environment that promotes individual and social growth along with life skills. Players are grouped according to their general ability within different age categories. **Players participating in this league must be able to overhand serve into the appropriate service box, rally and know how to keep score.** \* It’s important to note that LNTA JTT is a league only and does not offer team practices. Practices should be managed on an individual basis by each team.

The following regulations apply to the “Lake Norman Tennis Association” and any special events which are intended for this program’s participants. **All this information, and more, can be accessed on our JTT pages under the Youth Tennis tab on our website:** www.lnta.org

Player Agreement: All participating players agree to abide and be bound by the USTA Constitutions and By Laws: The Friend At Court – the USTA Handbook of Tennis Rules and Regulations including THE CODE and the standards of good conduct, fair play and good sportsmanship.

**PLAYER REQUIREMENTS**

**USTA Membership**

* All participants must obtain a FREE Junior USTA Membership (separate from a Family Membership). Visit the JTT Parent/Manager corner on our website for more information. www.lnta.org. Membership must be active through the entire local season dates (through July 31 during Spring Season due to State Championships)

**Age Eligibility**

* A player must still be at, or under, the age of their division through the season ending date. (July 31 for Spring season)

**Level of Play Guidelines**

* USTA NC has established a Level of Play Guideline for use to determine a player’s on-court abilities and to strive for fairness in competition and to facilitate level-based play. There are three possible divisions for which to register your child on a JTT team: Beginner (Recreational), Intermediate, and Advanced. Lake Norman only offers the Advanced Division in 10U (Green Ball) and 12U (Yellow Ball). Please visit our website for the Level of Play Guidelines.

**SEASON OF PLAY DETAILS**

**Dates**

* Lake Norman offers a Spring and Fall season. Each season teams will be offered between 4 – 7 matches dependent upon the number of teams registered in their specific division. Schedule may be subject to change if unforeseen circumstances arise, such as excessive weather and host facility issues.
* Matches are played on Sunday afternoons with match times of 12:30, 2 and 3:30pm. The exception is 10U Rec which is played on Saturday mornings.

**Spring Season**

* First day of matches – Early April
* Last day of matches – Prior to Memorial Day weekend
* State Tournament: mid-July

**Fall Season**

* First day of matches – Mid to late September
* Last day of matches – Prior to Thanksgiving break

**Age Groups**

* 10, 12, 14 and 18 Beginner (Recreational) Divisions
* 10, 12, 14 and 18 Intermediate Divisions
* 10 and 12 Advanced Divisions
* See Level of Play guidelines here to determine which level is right for your player.

**Fee**

* $45.00 per player, per team (includes TennisLink fee)

**Registration**

* All players must be registered using the TennisLink system. A team number will be assigned to each team and provided to each player. If a player needs a team, please contact Keri Norcross at juniors@lnta.org. Player registration how-to’s can be accessed on our website.

**Team Composition**

* Minimum of **5** players per team, non-gender specific
* Teams must meet the minimum required players in TennisLink one week prior to season start in order to be included in the season.

**Team Match Format**

* 2 singles and 2 doubles
* Order of play shall be: #1 singles and #2 doubles followed by #2 singles and #1 doubles. To adhere to our commitment of offering level-based play, all efforts should be made to play more skilled players on the #1 singles and doubles lines. This is why those lines are staggered in the order of play.
* Players may play in one, or both, rounds provided they do not play both singles matches.
* In order to play a complete match, you must have 3 players, with a maximum of 6. A match can still be played with 2 players, but you will be required to forfeit one doubles line. If you realize you will be short players and need to forfeit any lines, **you must** notify the JTT League Coordinator. Best efforts should be made to contact her with ample time to notify the opposing team.
* Total games won determines the match winner. You can win more lines than your opponent and still lose the match so please be aware of this rule. Each divisions winner will be determined by the cumulative number of games won over the season.

**Scoring Format**

* Individual matches play one short set to 6 games with no-ad scoring and a 7-point tiebreaker, win by 1, if the score becomes 5 all.
* Exceptions:
  + **10U Rec** plays first to 4 games with no-ad scoring and a game decider at 3 games all. No tiebreaks
  + **18U Int** plays an 8-game set with no-ad scoring and a 7-point tiebreaker, win by 1 if the score becomes 7 games all.

**Play Sites**

LNTA provides Site Coordinators at each location to answer questions, enforce rules and to facilitate play.

**Community School of Davidson Spartan Park:** 13828 Beatties Ford Rd, Huntersville

* Host site for 10 Int/Adv and 12s divisions
* All orange and green balls provided

Alternate sites may be used if necessary.

**Hornets Nest Park:**

6301 Beatties Ford Road, Charlotte

* Host site for all 14s and 18s divisions
* Home team brings 2 cans of unused balls

**MEDICAL TIME OUTS/RESTROOM BREAKS**

* A medical timeout can be called by a player (with the permission of the Site Coordinator) and will be allowed up to 3 minutes of on-court treatment. If the injury/ailment is treatable, then a player can have a maximum of two medical timeouts per match. However, if the injury/ailment is so severe that it can’t be treated any further, then the player will have to withdraw and forfeit the match.
* Players should only take restroom breaks at the end of their set to avoid disruptions and to reduce the tactical advantage of taking an extended break. Only one restroom break is allowed during the match. As with medical timeouts, time allotment for these breaks is 3 minutes.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

The safety of our players is our number one priority. Since courts can quickly become unsafe in certain situations, we will not allow our players to play in heavy rainfall, sustained drizzle, sleet/snow or when lightning is present. Weather calls can only be made by our LNTA personnel, and parents and coaches will be notified as soon as possible with weather plans. Our full policy can be accessed on our [www.lnta.org](http://www.lnta.org) JTT page.

**TEAM MANAGER/COACH RESPONSIBILITIES**

In an ideal world, each team in a league will have a coach. However, in this league it is most common to have a parent volunteer as the Team Manager. **No tennis experience is necessary to volunteer in this role**. Regardless of the scenario, each team must have at least one adult in charge of it. Please be sure to promote good sportsmanship on and off the court. Below are the responsibilities of the person in this role:

**USTA Safe Play Certification**

* In order to create a team in Tennislink, a coach manager is required to complete the USTA Safe Play Certification process.
* This is a two-part process which includes watching a 90 minute video, reading and acknowledging SafePlay policies and submitting your Drivers License for a background screening (7 – 10 days for green light approval). Once received, you may register the team.

**Online Team Creation**

* Register the team within Tennislink to obtain the team number. Share this number with the players on your team. Oftentimes the JTT Local League Coordinator will assist with this step.

**Team Organization**

* Determine your team’s best means of communication and be sure to keep the parents informed of the season’s schedule and any league updates.
* Ensure parents keep you informed of player availability for the season’s matches in a timely fashion.
* Create lineups for each week’s matches based on player availability. If you find that you are short players, please inform the League Coordinator as soon as possible. She will then ensure all parties are notified ahead of match time.
* On match day, ensure that the players arrive court-side at least 15 minutes prior to match start time. If players in the first round of matches have not arrived by match start time, move those players to the second round of matches.
* Print and fill out the scorecard in entirety with players full names and exchange the line up with the opposing Team Manager/Coach. Direction on how to print match scorecards can be found on our website.
* Assign ONE designated coach for the match that day and **write their name on the top of your scoresheet.** The coach does not need to be the Team Manager/Coach. Coaching is allowed on changeovers ONLY and should not interfere with the flow of the match.
* After each match is complete, notate the scores on the scoresheet. After all rounds are complete, ally up the final score and confirm with the opposing team manager/coach. Sign the scoresheet and turn in to the Site Coordinator
* Ensure that parents and spectators are respectful of the expectations of conduct and good sportsmanship on site. See below.

**PARENT/SPECTATOR REQUIREMENTS**

If you have ever been to a soccer match or football game, you know that there aren’t any set expectations or rules of etiquette around spectator behavior. As a result, these events can get loud and sometimes rowdy. Tennis is a different sport though, where just one or two opponents go head-to-head on a small court, versus a large field.

In an effort to promote fairness and to assure a physically and mentally healthy experience for all players, tennis has expectations around spectator behavior. All Junior Team Tennis spectators are asked to abide by these rules of conduct:

**Cheering** Clapping for good shots is encouraged and will be allowed. It’s good sportsmanship to clap for both teams’ good shots. Here are some rules around cheering:

* Please wait until the point has finished before clapping. Clapping during play is a distraction for all players.
* Support all players on both teams, not just your own child.
* Please refrain from cheering when a player makes a mistake. This is considered poor tennis etiquette.
* Please keep cheering respectful in tone and volume. Cheering that gets out of control can intimidate children on the court, disrupt other matches in progress and cause conflict between opposing teams.
* If cheering gets out of hand, it is at the discretion of the Site Coordinator to decide if any cheering or clapping will be allowed for the remainder of the match.
* If abuse continues, the person(s) will be asked to leave the site. Any violation of rules will be addressed with the League Coordinator who may take further action to prevent future incidents.

**Spectator Assistance/Coaching** Spectators are **PROHIBITED** from assisting/coaching players. This can be particularly tough, especially when watching your own children. It is possible to feel that your child has been treated unfairly by their opponent. Naturally, parents want to stand up for their children. Please control any urge to address a perceived injustice. Remember that these are children, and they are still learning the mechanics and rules of the game. In addition, they are also learning how to manage their own behavior and how to make good decisions on the court.

Spectators need to be outside of the fence / off-court during matches; spectators may not offer advice on line calls, scoring or telling players where to serve/receive.

Only one designated person on-site each week can coach the players and ONLY on changeovers from outside the fence. Parents/coaches are NOT ALLOWED on the court during a match.

* Parents are not allowed to speak to their child while playing a match, not even to ask them if they need a drink. Allow the assigned coach to handle these matters.
* Speaking to players in a language other than English during match play may be construed by other spectators as coaching.
* No parent coaching of any kind is allowed during match play. This includes telling players to “move their feet”, “hit to their backhand” or similar comments.
* Even though it is typically done in good faith, refrain from assisting players with advice like serving from the incorrect side, calling out the wrong score or calling lines from outside the fence.
* If there is a dispute between the players regarding a line call or the correct score, allow the players to settle it themselves. This is how they learn on their own. Ask the assigned coach to use the changeovers to correct any observations made during the match.
* Please discuss line calling, double bounces (players call their own) and how to handle score discrepancies with your child BEFORE they play. As a reminder, balls that land on the line, or that touch the line, are in. Encourage your player to be fair with his or her own calls. When in doubt, the ball is in.
* Conversely, let your child know that it is acceptable to politely ask an opponent of his or her certainty with a call. However, make sure your own child knows that constant questioning of an opponent’s calls is not acceptable. Players should speak to the Team Manager/Coach on a changeover to discuss concerns about calls.
* Use the time after the match to follow up on any on-court calls that could have gone a different way. A good practice is to try to wait 24 hours before discussing the match (unless your player brings it up).

**COACHING RULES**

Each team is allowed ONE designated coach per match whose name shall be notated on the top of the scoresheet. This person can be anyone and does not need to be the Team Manager. The designated coach must abide by the following rules:

* Coaching is allowed on changeovers (odd games) only and from outside the fence.
* Coaching is not to interfere with the flow of the match. Players are allowed 90 seconds on changeovers and coaching must be completed within this 90 second window.
* There is to be no coaching during tiebreaks, to include assisting with score. If players do not know how to do a tiebreak, please obtain permission from the Site Coordinator to assist.
* Coaching is **PROHIBITED** during match play. Changeovers only.
* If a parent notices a court is having trouble with line calls, keeping score, or any other issues, please do not interfere. Notify your designated team coach and allow them to address this on the changeover.

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One of the goals of Junior Team Tennis is to put junior players in a competitive setting without the pressures of tournament play. Ultimately spectators are asked to use common sense. Think how your child would feel in a situation before subjecting another child to unfairness. Both teams are responsible for controlling spectators' conduct during matches. Junior Team Tennis is about promoting collaboration as a team, and maximizing

the fun and love of the game for all players.

Support your children but from afar. Tennis is a great sport that can teach kids a lot about self-worth, confidence, and integrity. Let them learn while on the court then discuss the matches with them after they have finished playing and had time to process. It is exciting to see what they learn from match to match.

Please be respectful of all players, parents, coaches, and LNTA staff and volunteers.

***"Success is a journey, not a destination. The doing is often more important than the outcome"*** ~ Arthur Ashe

We look forward to seeing your players on-court this season and to watching them grow into our future tennis generation.

Keri Norcross

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