

# ROYAL PARK TENNIS CLUB

## INFORMATION FOR PLAYERS JOINING JUNIOR TEAMS & THEIR PARENTS

The Royal Park Tennis Club is a community-based facility that exists to provide a healthy environment for all to enjoy the recreational benefits of this popular game.

One of the opportunities we provide is for children to get involved in competition and team tennis.

To gain the maximum benefit from playing competition and team tennis, everyone who becomes involved should gain an understanding of the systems and protocols that have been established to provide an orderly and fair environment for all.

The following information will hopefully give an insight into these systems and help new players and their families to familiarize themselves with this new world of competition tennis.

You do not need to commit to memory everything in this document before commencing competitive play, rather, it is designed as a resource to help you to participate and fit in as quickly as possible

### COMPETITION FORMAT

Most matches are played on Saturday mornings in seasons commencing in February and July. The relevant grades and starting times are:

- *A Reserve grades commence at 7.45am Saturday with some away matches at different times*
- *B Grades commence at 7.45am Saturday with some away matches at different times*
- *C Grades commence at 8.30am Saturday with some away matches at different times*
- *D Grades commence at 9.30am Saturday with some away matches at different times.*

All grades may find that some away matches start and finish at different times. There are occasions when it is necessary to request a different start time for some of our teams. When this occurs, details will be advised to the teams involved.

Play normally concludes between 11.00 am and 11.30am at Royal Park *for home based matches.*

Matches on Friday nights are organized for the:

- *A grades commencing at 7.00 pm*

All matches are played between teams selected to represent Royal Park and teams from other clubs.

To be eligible to play, a boy or girl needs to turn a minimum of ten years old in that season and not turn a maximum of *eighteen* years old in that season. Each season a nominal fee *per player* applies to cover the cost of registration and tennis balls (*also lights for Friday night teams*).

Players are graded into appropriate levels of ability and not specific age groups. *Teams may be mixed with boys and girls, all boys, all girls, or unisex. Match formats usually consist of a total of*

nine sets, based on the following:

- A Grades – each player plays one singles (8 games) and one doubles (6 games) match,
- B & C Grades - each player plays one singles (6 games) and one doubles (6 games) match
- D Grades – each player plays 3 doubles sets (6 games)

Matches are played on a home and away basis over fourteen rounds and the highest qualified four teams play in a finals series at the conclusion of *the home and away matches*.

### **TEAM MANAGERS**

Every team has a team manager. The team manager organizes a roster that shows who plays on what day and which parents are on supervising duty. You should call another team member's parent to organize a swap and then notify your team manager if you:

- Are unable to play on a rostered day or  
Need to swap a rostered day with somebody else

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

All players need an adult to be available to help on a rostered basis. This can be a little intimidating to Parents new to tennis, but there are many experienced adults around that will be happy to talk you through the little things that you need to know. Parent supervision includes:

- About three duties in a fourteen week season when your child is rostered in.
- Driving team members to away matches and supervising the team at that venue.
- Supervising the team at our home venue with getting matches organized and umpired, courts maintained in good order and the match result sheet accurately completed.
- Assistance in the club canteen when the team is rostered on.
- Encouraging your child to practice regularly and develop a team mentality.

It is very important that Parents do not interfere with their child's match other than general assistance with the supervision. Parents or other team members are not allowed to offer advice to or coach players during matches, but *they are encouraged* to acknowledge the good play of both participants in the match *while not* turning the contest into a 'football type' level of barracking. Sports such as football are more aggressive in their vocal support and the crowd is further away from the action, whereas tennis is less combative and the supporters are a lot closer to the action. Players can easily be intimidated by an overbearing Parent and this is unfair to the purpose of the contest and such behavior is likely to breach the competition rules for which penalties apply, such as being asked to leave the venue.

### **TEAM ETIQUETTE**

When you're playing in a team you need to respect the other people in that team. Some ways you can do this are by:

- Turning up for team practice.
- Making yourself available to play on a non rostered day.
- Turning up on time for matches. This is a very important issue.
- Trying not to pull out at the last minute. If you are unable to play, try to arrange a swap as soon as you are aware of an unavailability so that there is no last minute panic trying to find another player or alternatively the team having to forfeit the match.

## **HOSTING AT HOME**

When you host other clubs at home you should always be friendly and welcoming. Some ways you can do this are as follows:

- Arrive at the club before the starting time so that you can be there when the opponents arrive.
- Before you begin a match introduce yourself to your opponents and their supervisor.
- When you host at home you will have to fill out a match sheet. Your manager should get this for you and the fully completed sheet *must be left in the office for checking and posting.*

## **ARRIVAL TIMES HOME MATCHES – CHECK FIXTURE FOR AWAY MATCH TIMES**

*All players should arrive at the match venue at least 15 minutes prior to start time.*

- Players in "B" Grade commence their matches at 7.45 am. All warm-ups need to be completed and the first point started at this time to reduce interference with the matches commencing at 8.30am.
- Players in "C" Grades commence at 8:30am,
- "D" Grades commence at 9.30 although you should arrive earlier to ensure a punctual start.

## **HOSTING FINALS**

*Usually, semi-finals and finals matches are allocated to courts at participating clubs and teams from those clubs are responsible for hosting the matches. If your child's team is not participating in finals matches, it is expected that each child and parent will assist with the hosting activity. This involves umpiring, court preparation and canteen duties (parents). Thus, if your child has been a team member during the season, they should be available to support the club in hosting; this is a vital part of team sport, and is seen as an integral part of player and parent commitment to junior competition at our club.*

## **TEAM RECORDS**

The supervising parent needs to keep a copy of the formal match sheet for the purpose of monitoring the team's performance and assisting the grading process for future seasons. *This can be done in various ways:*

- *Details are written into a book included for this purpose in the team's folder where one is provided.*
- *A copy can be made either as a photocopy or a photo taken by a mobile phone, and forwarded to the Team Supervisor to be kept for the season's record.*

## **COURT ETIQUETTE**

When you are playing on the court there are some basic rules you should follow. This is called court etiquette. Here are some of those rules:

- Never throw your racquet.
- Never swear on or off the court.
- Do not yell loudly during a match as it will distract your opponents and maybe even your team mates.
- If one of your balls is hit onto or behind another court nearby, you must wait until the point on that court is over before you retrieve it.
- After each point on your court is played you should make sure that the server has both the balls before starting the next point.
- Always return the ball to your opponent by hitting it under the net.
- You should try not to leave the court during a match unless it is urgent.
- *With home & away matches for A grades, B Grades and C Grades, sets are not umpired unless requested. "A" grade matches are self-umpired except in finals*

### COURT MAINTENANCE

There is more to a tennis court than just playing on it. Courts have to be cared for in order to stay in good condition and to be safe by limiting players from slipping over. Some things you should do when you play tennis that will keep these courts in good order are:

- Water each court **before** play commences.
- Before you start to play you should sweep the lines.
- Bag and water from fence to fence **after** each set or every half an hour if not playing a match or in hot weather when the courts dry out quickly.
- When you water the courts, it is vital to hold the hose at an elevated angle. That means, not holding the hose pointed directly onto the court as this will allow the water pressure to dig into the court and create holes in the playing surface which damages the court.

### TENNIS ATTIRE

When it comes to what you should wear to tennis there are a few guidelines that you can follow:

- Try to wear plain tops without advertising.
- Collars are preferred but not compulsory.
- You may wear track pants in the warm-up, but before your match commences you should remove them and compete in a skirt or shorts. Common sense is applied in very cold weather.
- The tennis shoes you wear should be appropriate for the type of courts. The porous surface at Royal Park requires flat-soled runners that do not chop up the top of the court. **Definitely no cross trainers.**

### ROYAL PARK TENNIS CLUB TOPS

Club tops may be purchased from the Club for your child. *Add something here? To encourage use?*

### QUERIES RELATING TO CONTROVERSY OF PLAY

If a contentious issue arises, you should **first** talk to your team manager and then if it is still not settled you should then call *Kevin Walsh on 0417 538 705*

### HAVE FUN

We want you and your child/children to enjoy the experience of tennis and have fun playing competition. If you have any feedback or general queries please contact *Carole Houston our Club Manager*, whose contact details are on the notice board at the club, and who will be happy to assist in ensuring that we do our best to provide a happy, fun and enjoyable tennis experience.

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*January 2015*