



McKinney ISD High School Tennis
Middle School Athlete and Parent Packet

Dear Athletes and Parents:

Congratulations on making your Middle School tennis team and becoming part of the rich tradition of McKinney ISD tennis. As you are now members of our tennis feeder programs we wanted to take some time to outline the path from Middle School player to High School player as that journey begins now for many of you. We hope that you find this guide informative and useful as you begin to prepare for competitive world of High School Athletics in the State of Texas. This is intended to be a general guide help you progress and be ready for your freshmen year of tennis. Each program in our district has slightly different policies and procedures, but this packet is a guide to good practices for any player wanting to play High School Tennis regardless of attendance zone. If you have specific questions regarding your particular High School please see below contact information for all three High School Tennis Coaches. We wish you the best of luck on your Middle School Season and look forward to each of progressing towards our High School Programs.

Thanks,

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3 Keys for Overall Success

Key #1: Repetition. You've got to get yourself fully engaged in the sport. By this, we don't mean you pick up the racquet only once or twice a week. Instead, we mean you must play as much as you possibly can. Giving yourself the repetitions will in itself improve your overall skillset. Think about it this way, when you're taking a math class in school, the best strategy to succeed on the tests is to constantly be refreshing your mind, daily if possible. This keeps the information right on the front of your mind and you'll easily be able to use it come test time. The same is true in tennis. Making yourself familiar with the game and consistently repeating the action of playing the sport will help you excel.

Key #2: The Offseason. It's one thing to play your sport frequently during the sport's main season, but it's another to play year-round. This is an absolute necessity if you are trying to be all you can be. You can almost think of the offseason as the actual regular season, because it is just as important, if not more important. You need to do your best at getting yourself involved in as many offseason camps, training sessions, or other activities as possible.

Key #3: Making a good impression. Going into tryouts, we cannot stress enough the importance of making a good impression on your coaches. You can do this by making sure you bring a positive attitude every day and by listening to everything your coaches have to say. Having a positive attitude can be anything from cheering on your peers to keeping your head up when you make a mistake. Everyone makes mistakes sometimes, even the best of the best. The difference between some athletes and others is their ability to cope with, and even learn from a little bit of failure. If your coaches see that you cope well with mistakes and take something away from them, they'll realize you're coachable, which gives you a huge advantage. And when your coaches tell you to do something or attempt to make an adjustment to your game, listen to them! Coaches are coaches for a reason. They have had years of experience in the sport, and you must extract every bit of knowledge from them as possible.

The Seasons:

High School Tennis is broken into two seasons: Fall and Spring. The Fall seasons is team season when the team plays dual matches against other teams and within an UIL assigned district. The team wins and loses as a team. The Team has to finish in the top 4 of its district to advance to the playoffs. The Falls Season stretches from early August until late October. The Spring Season is individual season, where the players compete in tournaments and some dual matches for individual accolades. Individual players who place 1st or 2nd in their event in the district tournament will advance to the Region tournament with a chance to participate in the State Tournament. The Spring Season generally runs from mid January through April.

Tryouts and Practice:

Each of the three High School programs have their own tryout process for specific information can be obtained from each school's head coach. What is universal across the board is that High School Tennis like other Fall sports does begin before the actual beginning of school. During the seasons after school practice is part of the commitment to our programs. If you are an 8th grader you will want to keep this on your radar screen as not to miss your opportunity to tryout for your team.

Year Around Sport:

As you can see from the Seasons High School Tennis is a year around sport in Texas. It is important for incoming athletes to be training and playing a similar amount before entering high school. Many experienced players are participating in Junior Development Programs and USTA tournaments year around even prior to their Freshmen year.

Where can I take lessons or train?

Tennis is a skill specific sport so it is very important to develop those skills before entering high school. McKinney is fortunate to have four training centers for tennis players within our own city. Whether just starting out or if you have been playing for years it isn't too late to get started with some quality technique instruction. Locations are listed below. You do not need to be club members to participate.

The Courts of McKinney www.mckinneytennis.org

The Select Tennis Academy www.selecttennisacademy.com

Eldorado Country Club www.eldoradocc.com

Stonebridge Country Club

www.clubcorp.com/Clubs/Stonebridge-Ranch-Country-Club/Amenities/Tennis

Consistent Approach:

The best approach to improving at tennis is a consistent approach. Tennis is a game of repetition and so it is best to have a structured practice plan when attempting to improve. For example, it is better to play 3 days a week for a long period of time than 6 days a week for a short period of time. A baseline for good training is as follows:

Junior Varsity level player during school year:

2 days a week at a training center and 1 USTA tournament a month

Junior Varsity Level player during Summer:

3-4 Days a week at a training center and 1 USTA tournament a month

Varsity level player during school year:

2-3 days a week at a training center and 1-2 USTA tournaments a month

Varsity level player during Summer:

4-5 days a week at a training center and 2 USTA tournaments a month

United States Tennis Association:

The USTA is the governing body of tennis in the United States. It offers tournaments and leagues year around for youth through adult participation. It is a great opportunity for players to compete outside of school tennis and the vast majority of successful high school players are participating in these tournaments year around. The USTA offers different levels of tournaments for players of all ages. At the junior level of tennis the open level are called "Challenger Tournaments". These are open to lower level players. The "Championship" and "Super Championship" levels have to be qualified for by going through the Challenger level first. For more information and to join please visit www.usta.com

Getting Started:

Taking the first step is the hardest part in becoming a good tennis player. It is never too late to get involved and doing so will make you more likely to accomplish your goals of making your respective high school team. We want to encourage all players to be part of our programs and getting them on the path to success starts today with the above information.

