



# HOW TO START A TENNIS PROGRAM ON CAMPUS

**10 EASY STEPS FOR DEVELOPING A  
SUCCESSFUL TENNIS ON CAMPUS PROGRAM**

In Partnership with:



# 1

## CONTACT A USTA SECTION COLLEGIATE COORDINATOR



The first step to starting a Tennis On Campus program is to contact your USTA Section Collegiate Coordinator, who will be excited to hear from you and glad to help. A list of all coordinators and their contact information is provided on the CD.

Your Section Collegiate Coordinator may already be in touch with key people on your campus or other interested parties that you can team with to start a Tennis On Campus program.

Your Section Collegiate Coordinator may also have additional resources and strategies to help start a Tennis On Campus program, such as equipment, grants and staff, and volunteer support.

# 2

## MEET WITH CAMPUS RECREATION PROFESSIONALS

Set up a meeting with the Recreational Sports Director or IM/Sport Club Director on campus. These individuals are crucial links to establishing a successful Tennis On Campus program. Discuss your vision for the Tennis On Campus program and see how you can best work together to meet this goal.

Together, identify who will be leading the Tennis On Campus program. Will it be a qualified tennis professional, professor, volunteer or student leader? Is the person energetic, enthusiastic, and organized enough to ensure the continued success of the program?

Educate yourself on the policies and procedures necessary to comply with the university and recreational sports department.

# 3

## SECURE TENNIS COURTS



Assess the campus community and identify tennis courts that are readily available to the student body. The campus recreational sports department or varsity tennis coach should be able to assist in this process.

Some campuses will not have tennis courts at their disposal. Look to work with the local Parks and Recreation Department, commercial tennis club, or neighborhood facility in these situations.

Make sure to identify days and times the courts are available and if there are any court fees or other requirements. Make court reservations if necessary.

# 4

## NETWORK, RECRUIT AND ADVERTISE

The key objective is to create excitement so the student body will come out and be a part of the action. Create a general e-mail address to use for your new program. Consider creating a website to promote your new program.

Use the customizable flyers on the CD to promote your new program. Include a brief overview of what will be offered, the website address, and the e-mail address. Post flyers in campus recreation facilities, the student union, dorms, and by campus tennis courts. Make sure flyers are stamped for posting by the proper campus authority.

Identify groups of current tennis players on campus and get them involved, and use their social networks. Some of these players will likely step up and assist with the further development of your program.

Use new relationships with campus recreation professionals and varsity tennis coaches to gain more support for your program. Show them how the new Tennis On Campus program will benefit their existing programs and create a larger on campus tennis family.

Work with all available campus resources to promote the new Tennis On Campus program, including the school newspaper, school radio, student center, student activity groups, school websites, the rec-sports department, and the athletic department. Identify how other campus sport programs are being promoted and mimic their successful strategies. You may even solicit the assistance of leaders on campus who already play tennis and want to see the program thrive. Above all, make it clear that students will have FUN!!!

# 5

## STAGE AN EVENT



Most universities have events built into their fall schedule, where different organizations can self-promote, such as freshman orientation, rec-sports day, and welcome back to school events.

Use these crucial days to reach a large portion of the student body. Stage a free “Tennis On Campus Block Party” event to create excitement and interest in tennis.

Create a variety of fun-filled tennis activities to generate interest in the sport and motivate sign-ups and registration for the new Tennis On Campus program.

Offer awards/prizes to campus organizations (dorms, fraternities, sororities) that bring the most people to the event. Invite the varsity tennis team and coaches to participate and help run the event.

# 6

## ACTIVATE STUDENT REGISTRATION & ORGANIZE

Create special offers for immediate registration, such as a complimentary can of tennis balls, a T-shirt, or a hat for the first 50 registered participants, or for everyone who registers that day.

This gets people excited about signing up. Consider group discounts (e.g., dorms, fraternities, sororities). Have extra flyers on hand for registrants to pass out to their friends.

Host an organizational meeting soon after the advertising and events are implemented to capitalize on the energy and excitement created.

Include other key players in the meeting process (e.g., rec-sports director, varsity tennis coaches, student leadership).

Distribute information and discuss the new Tennis On Campus program at the meeting. Make sure to have plenty of handouts that describe the program, outline fees, list schedules, and give locations and times of play.

# 7

## PLAY TENNIS & HAVE FUN

Utilize resources and materials available from the USTA to promote and administer your program.

Develop rosters, rules and a match schedule, and make sure all participants are aware of when matches will be played.

If you need assistance, enlist the support of your nearest USTA Campus Coordinator (a list and contact information is provided on the CD). The USTA Campus Coordinator can provide valuable guidance and inform you about any potential funding opportunities or equipment discounts that may exist for your program.

Make sure your Campus Coordinator informs you about specific program guidelines to ensure you will qualify for any special benefits or playoff opportunities that may be available, such as the USTA Campus Championship. They may also have contact information for other local campuses you may want to play against.

# 8

## COMMUNICATE YOUR SUCCESS



Consider providing team standings and updates on a weekly or biweekly basis to generate enthusiasm and provide recognition for participants.

Use the website you created to post these standings, match schedules, etc.

Contact the school newspaper's sports department or sportswriter and ask them to do a feature story to promote the program. One way to gain press coverage is to offer prepared press releases announcing the Tennis On Campus program's activities.

Create e-mail blasts to keep the campus informed of results and happenings throughout the season.

Consider using testimonials from players encouraging others to take part in the action.

Share a team's triumph over its competitor and build anticipation and excitement surrounding an "upcoming rematch."

# 9

## HOLD A SEASON ENDING EVENT



End the season with a special event, such as a championship playoff, team social night, or awards banquet to highlight the triumphs and tribulations of the season.

Create fun awards that keep the program exciting, and encourage nonparticipating students to feel comfortable about taking part in the future.

# 10

## MAKE PLANS FOR NEXT SEASON

With one season under your belt, it is time to identify areas for improvement and to modify your program to ensure maximum participation for the upcoming season.

Put together a brief survey and distribute it to participants.

Remain open-minded to suggestions and improvements in responses. Continuing to adapt and change to meet the needs of the participants will ensure the program's long-term success.

Keep working to improve all areas of the program and continue to include new students each season.

Look to develop creative ways to promote your program and recruit new students.

Make sure to pre-register participating students for next season.

Have existing players recruit new players. Offer incentives to students who bring in new players.



**GET SOME LOVE**



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