

Tennis is a social game, a game involving simple politeness and consideration. Everyone will enjoy the game so much more if those standards are maintained. At Mount Clear we endeavour to promote the values of good sportsmanship and respect for all. This ensures that a player's time with the club is enjoyable and rewarding. To assist new club members (and as a reminder to existing players) we have made available a list of the type of behaviour we wish to encourage at the club.

General

- **Arrive at least ten minutes prior to a match commencing.** Make sure you allow yourself time to warm up. This prevents injuries.
- Wear appropriate tennis attire and footwear, not beach wear/jeans etc.
- Always come prepared. Bring water to drink and a hat when it is hot.
- Please make the effort to get to tennis practice at least once per week.
- Prior to a set commencing introduce yourself to your partner (if applicable) and the opposition players.
- To decide who serves first, spin your racquet or toss a coin. If you win the toss, the choice is yours. You may serve first, or you may choose to receive first or to pick which end of the court you want to start playing on. As a third choice you may make your opponent choose first.
- **Never** dispute the umpire/supervisor's decision. Please do not offer your opinion on whether a ball was in or out unless asked by the umpire. Accept that the umpire may make mistakes and proceed with the match.
- Try not to make too much noise on your court; you may distract your opponent or even people on the next court.
- When changing ends please walk around the net post, not under the net. Please do not lean on the net.
- You should be ready to commence play when the server is ready.
- Place discarded hats, clothing etc. at the net post, not behind the back of the court.
- Don't interrupt a point unless a safety issue has arisen.
- If you are not involved in a match please wait outside the fence until it is your turn.
- When the set is completed proceed to the net and shake hands with your opponent/s and thank them for the match. Then shake hands with your partner, and thank the umpire/supervisor.

Ball management

Getting the balls in the server's hands is the biggest time-waster. Everyone should make sure they help collect balls and get them to the server efficiently. Here are a few tips that will speed up the game and make it more fun for everyone:

- Send a ball directly to the server so that he/she can catch it easily with one hand. Wait until the server is looking or get their attention before returning the ball to him/her. Advanced players seem to be able to get the ball to bounce once, softly, to the server, but most less advanced players should make the ball bounce twice to ensure that it arrives at a low speed. For younger players it is recommended they return the ball by rolling the ball under the net, not hitting it with their racquet.
- **Never** hit a ball hard toward the server's side with the intention that he/she will eventually collect it off the fence. Aside from the possibility of hitting someone who's not expecting a ball to be coming, you'll also probably cause the ball to bounce off the fence and roll either too far away or into the court where it will become a hazard.

- Commence serving only when you have both balls in your possession. Balls should be kept either in hand, in a pocket or ball clip, or against the fence directly behind the centre mark. For safety reasons, putting the second ball at your feet is not recommended.
- Please refrain from returning a serve that is clearly a fault.
- If the server needs a ball, the player closest to a ball should get it and send it to the server.
- Never walk behind a court when a point is still in play. Wait until the point is over and then cross as quickly as possible.
- If your ball runs onto or behind the next court please wait until their point is completed prior to running to fetch it.
- If a ball from the next court rolls onto your court, please wait until their point is completed before returning the ball. Instead of waiting it may be preferable to roll the ball to the fence behind their court, but not if it means sending it across their court while play is still in progress.

Keeping score

- The server must announce the score clearly at the start of each game and at the start of the second point and each subsequent point in each game. If they forget it is advisable for another player to do so. It can be difficult to reconstruct the scoring point by point if a dispute arises.

Line calls

- If you're not sure whether your opponent's shot is in or out, it's in. If you cannot clearly see the ball as out, you must give your opponent the benefit of the doubt.
- No matter how obvious it may be to you that your opponent's shot is out, it may not be obvious to him. He/she is entitled to a prompt, clear call.
- In making a line call a player should not enlist the aid of a spectator.
- Any call of "out", "let", or "fault" must be made instantaneously; otherwise, the ball is presumed good and still in play. "Instantaneously" means that the call is made before either an opponent has hit the return or the return has gone out of play. Most important: a ball is not out until it is called out.
- Don't call an opponent's serve into the net "fault". It is unnecessary.

Demeanour

- During the set applaud good play from your partner and from your opponent/s.
- Give your partner lots of encouragement if they are not having much success. They do not need to hear the fact that they just missed an easy shot. We all have our bad days and it is nice to have the support of your partner, no matter what.
- Try to look like you're having fun, even if you're playing badly. Neither your opponent nor your partner wants to see you looking miserable or displaying bad behaviour (eg losing your temper, using bad language, slamming a ball in anger or throwing your racquet). You're likely to play better if you try to present a positive state of mind.

Always be a good sport and enjoy the challenge of competition. Remember that there's no disgrace in losing. Try to reach your personal best and you will enjoy the match. Tennis is a wonderful game, so have fun!

Good luck for the forthcoming season and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Raylene Reese
Mount Clear Tennis Club Inc.
Junior Coordinator