

JULY 2025



Newsletter

TENNIS COMMUNITY

HTA updates and expands its digital reach

HTA is making it easier for players, parents, volunteers and supporters to connect with the organization and get involved.

Our rebranding initiative, which includes a new website, logo and updated social media presence, allows resources to be more accessible and inviting for the Greater Houston tennis community.

The redesigned website, houstontennis.org, offers a more user-friendly experience, featuring simplified navigation and updated league and tournament information, scholarship details and volunteer opportunities. The rebrand also includes updated social media accounts across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter/X. These platforms will provide real-time updates, event highlights, player spotlights and announcements.

“Modernizing our digital presence allows us to better serve our players and supporters,” said **Caroline Champion**, president of HTA. “We’ve taken feedback from the community into account to improve the way people engage with us online. Our goal is to make sure that everything from signing up for a league to learning about NJTL programs is just a few clicks away.”

HTA’s mission is to grow the sport of tennis in the Greater Houston area. The new website and branding effort will support this mission by improving communication and expanding the association’s digital reach.

Read HTA’s [announcement to the public](#).

TENNIS SPOTLIGHT

HTA welcomes scholarship winners at annual luncheon



Beck's Prime in Memorial Park has been our go-to restaurant for hosting each year's scholarship winners. Nine of the selected students were able to attend this year, along with sponsor representatives, parents and siblings and HTA scholarship committee members. HTA awarded 18 outstanding students with \$30,000 in scholarship funds this year. For a complete list of the scholarships and winners, [click here](#).

JUNIOR TENNIS

Jammin' at the Slam



From left: Emily Golovanov, Elizabeth Smirnova, Robert Pheister

A number of local players won their divisions at the Texas Slam junior tennis tournament in Plano in June.

No. 8 seed **Emily Golovanov** of Katy, who won the girls 14s in 2022, claimed the girls 18 and under title this year.

Zoe Young of Spring and partner Siyona Das of Frisco were the girls' 16s doubles champions.

Elizabeth Smirnova of Spring was the girls 14s champion, and **Robert Pheister** of Houston was a finalist in the boys 14s division.

Rahul Aduru of Katy teamed with Sebastian Zavala of Allen for the boys 14s doubles title, and **Miyue Tao** of Sugar Land and **Elaina Jie** of Fulshear were the girls 12s doubles champions.

This was the second year of junior wheelchair tennis, and **Lily Terral** of Houston won the coed wheelchair doubles title with Jeremy Perez of Joshua.

The 2025 Texas Slam was hosted by the Dallas Professional Tennis Association in partnership with the City of Plano and High Point Tennis Center. The event is a USTA Level 3 Closed Junior Tournament, meaning only players residing in the geographic boundaries of USTA Texas are eligible to compete in the event. The tournament's history dates back to 1900.

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Captain's Spotlight

Mary Le



My name is **Mary Le**, and tennis has been a part of my life since high school. What began as a fun after-school activity quickly grew into a lifelong passion. I continued playing through college as a member of the club tennis team at Texas A&M University, where I built lasting friendships and deepened my love for the sport.

For over five years, I proudly served as a team captain, leading with heart, strategy, and a deep appreciation for the game. My team, *Sets in the City*, is more than just a clever name—it's a group of dedicated, supportive players who share a common goal: to grow, compete and enjoy every moment on the court.

Recently, I returned to tennis after one of the most transformative experiences of my life--becoming a mother to a beautiful baby girl. Since then, I haven't resumed captaining, but stepping back onto the court has been a powerful and emotional experience. It reminds me of the strength I carry, not just as an athlete but as a woman and a mother. Balancing motherhood and tennis hasn't been easy, but it's made every serve, every rally and every win even more meaningful.

Tennis has always been a constant in my life, and now, it's something I hope to share with my daughter one day. For now, I'm just grateful to be back on the court, doing what I love, surrounded by a team that feels like family.

NJTL



Top left: The kids practiced their cutting and drawing skills by making crowns to wear. Top right: Memorial Park ACE Curriculum students enjoyed a game of Tic-Tac-Toe. Bottom: Memorial Park ACE Curriculum class for 7 to 10 year olds.

By Madonna Medina

ACE classes are in full swing for the summer. The 4 to 6 year old students are enjoying Reader's Corner. "Where the Wild Things Are" was a favorite amongst the students. After listening to the story, the kids practiced their cutting and drawing skills by making crowns to wear. They had a lot of fun identifying with both King Max and the scary monsters.

Leagues

Ann Wilde ann.w@houstontennis.org

Melinda Hampton melinda.h@houstontennis.org

Fall leagues are opening in July

USTA 40 & Over Mixed Doubles:

Team registration opens February 28, 2025 and closes March 28, 2025; Player registration fee \$35

<u>Division</u>	<u>Day/Time</u>	<u>Lines</u>	<u>Playing Season</u>	<u>Last Day to Add a Player</u>
7.0, 8.0 & 9.0	Wednesday Evening	3 Doubles	April 23-June 25	May 28

Note: Playing season includes time for makeup matches; completion deadline September, 2025
40+ Mixed Sectionals September 5-7, 2025 in Georgetown

USTA 65 & Over Leagues:

Team registration opens June 6, 2025 and closes June 27, 2025; Player registration fee \$35

<u>Division</u>	<u>Day/Time</u>	<u>Lines</u>	<u>Playing Season</u>	<u>Last Day to Add a Player</u>
65+ Ladies	Tuesday Evening	3 Doubles	July 8-September 9	August 12
65+ Men	Thursday Evening	3 Doubles	July 10-September 11	August 14

Note: Playing season includes time for makeup matches; completion deadline September 14, 2025
65+ Sectionals TBD

USTA 55 & Over Mixed Doubles:

Team registration opens June 6, 2025 and closes June 27, 2025; Player registration fee \$35

<u>Division</u>	<u>Day/Time</u>	<u>Lines</u>	<u>Playing Season</u>	<u>Last Day to Add a Player</u>
7.0, 8.0 & 9.0 Mixed	Sunday Afternoon	3 Doubles	July 20-September 7	August 24

Note: Playing season includes time for makeup matches; completion deadline September 14, 2025
55+ Mixed Sectionals October 4-10-12, 2025 in Abilene

USTA Combo & USTA Tri Level:

Team registration opens May 30, 2025 and closes June 27, 2025; Player registration fee \$35

<u>Division</u>	<u>Day/Time</u>	<u>Lines</u>	<u>Playing Season</u>
USTA Combo	Sunday	3 Doubles	July 13-August 31
USTA Tri Level Ladies	Wednesday Evening	3 Doubles	July 23-September 10
USTA Tri Level Men	Monday Evening	3 Doubles	July 21-September 8

Note: Playing season includes 2 weeks for makeup matches; completion deadline September 14, 2025
Combo Sectionals TBD; Tri-Level Sectionals TBD

HTA Fall Leagues:

Team registration opens July 25, 2025 and closes August 29, 2025; Player registration fee \$35

<u>Division</u>	<u>Day/Time</u>	<u>Lines</u>	<u>Playing Season</u>	<u>Last Day to Add a Player</u>
18+ Ladies' Doubles	Tuesday Evening	4 Doubles	September 16-November 18	October 21
18+ Ladies' Doubles (Day)	Friday Day	4 Doubles	September 19-November 21	October 25
18+ Men's Doubles	Thursday Evening	4 Doubles	September 18-November 20	October 24
18+ Mixed Doubles	Sunday Afternoon	4 Doubles	September 21-November 23	October 27
18+ Ladies' Singles	Wednesday Evening	4 Singles	September 17-November 19	October 23
18+ Men's Singles	Monday Evening	4 Singles	September 15-November 17	October 21

Note: Playing season includes 2 weeks for makeup matches; completion deadline November 30, 2025

For questions or additional information, please contact Ann Wilde at ann.w@houstontennis.org.
For players looking for a team, please contact Melinda Hampton at melinda.h@houstontennis.org.
Looking forward to a tennis-filled 2025!

Tennis Calendar



Correction



We misidentified Ellen Miller, left, in our June issue Red Ball article. Sincere apologies Ellen!

On & Off the Court



The third annual Play for Pride tournament at Memorial Park Tennis Center attracted even more players than the year before. Sarah Flood, Troy Toole and Justin Hensley kept the matches moving and the players happy. The group ended the tournament with lunch at Beck's Prime with the traditional specially prepared pride cake.



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