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Dear North Carolina Parents/Coaches/Players:

The North Carolina USTA would like to let you know of some changes which have been made to the junior tournament structure which will be effective January 2017. Specifically, we are talking about the 12-18 age groups. (The USTA nation-wide has changed the 10 & under program.) We at the NCTA along with several different committees, (the Sanction & Schedule Committee, the Junior Tournaments Committee along with our Board of Directors) across the state who approved these new rules believe whole-heartedly this was a much needed change and is a positive step in the right direction for our children.

The tournament levels we use currently have no “real” structure and therefore do not promote level based play. Anyone can get in, which in some cases, most cases, make for a bad experience for the child which in turn does not help them want to play another tournament. Our junior membership numbers have dropped drastically and we want to fix this! We are striving for a consistent product across the state, one that families and coaches alike will know for certain what they are signing up for when registering for a tournament.

This letter serves as a detailed explanation, but as always you are welcome to contact our office with any questions.

1. In L3's, L4's and L5's the draw limits will be 16 per age division with a FICQ (Full feed-in Consolation through Quarterfinals) and  $\frac{3}{4}$  playoffs. We will keep staggered deadlines and try to allow for different level of tournaments in close proximity so opportunities for players are maintained and/or increased.
2. There will be NO Friday play unless it is needed for doubles and if so play cannot begin before 5:00p.m. Singles will be played on Saturday and Sunday only.
3. In certain areas of our state where we cannot place two tournaments of two different levels near each other, we will allow for dependent draws for the age groups that need the extra level. This ensures play opportunities for all.
4. The Sanction and Schedule Committee has waived distance limitations for tournaments so there can be more playing opportunities across ALL levels on certain weekends.
5. The word “Futures” is no longer a part of the L5 title. The ceiling for an L5 will be 100 NC current standing only in that age group. This helps players with the age up process. There is no longer a restriction that a player ineligible in one age division is ineligible in all.
6. To play in an L4, players MUST have an NC standing at the time selections are made. (Currently, there is no threshold.)

The overall goal is for us to put out a better overall product to our customers and hopefully this is the just first step in the process. We want to make sure our pathway for junior tournaments helps accommodate the busy families of today so we can ultimately position youth tennis for success for years to come.