

17-18 Junior Committee Report

We hit it out of the park with the kids this year with over 30 Apta Level 1, 2 or 3 events on our APTa Junior calendar. (We had 6 events 4 years ago).

The anchor of Apta junior play has always been the **Viking Junior Tour**(Level 1 Events).

For these events, The Apta now offers online signups, email marketing, apta approved formats, national ranking points, favors, prizes, food, snacks with several hours of play with 2 our of 3 set final. All events cost 40 /player. We added late fees to the signups resulting in 660 bucks into our junior pot. Our timeline of expectations from the apta and from tournament directors has led to a successful two years of sanctioned events with very little parental complaints!!!! Our ranking system continues to be tweaked as needed and we hope that next year we will have online results posted within a week of every Tour event.

We added 4 new tour stops this season. Massachusetts, Bronxville, Long Island and Jersey Shore. Jersey Shore and Long Island went from level 2 events last year to Level 1 events this year. We had Patterson, Indian Trail, Philly Jrs, Ct. Open, Paddle Battle at Brandywine and Jr Nationals for a total of 10 Viking Tour Events. Scott leaving Patterson is a concern but Scott has already committed to running a junior event out of his new club.

Our Level 2 and Level 3 events, introduced 2 years ago and now supported partly by our "FIRST SERVE" initiative is working well to fulfill the need for fun, cheap, low stress, intro type events with modified rules to introduce kids to paddle. Fun, casually formatted events seem to keep kids coming back, especially the less competitive ones.

Our "first serve" initiative supported the following this past season :

Level 3 events which were our free introductory events for kids under 12 mostly, with a combo of play and drills to teach kids the basic rules with some modifications to make it easy to learn and more fun! (2 serves, 2 bounces, four players starting point from baseline, singles)

We had APTA sponsored events in Boston, Cincinnati and in Ct. Many other intro junior offerings were held where Pros volunteered their time but in areas that are struggling with junior participation, our financial support is huge towards growing the junior numbers.

Our home run of the year was High School Play!!!! Most of our money was used to pay for Pros to teach beginners proper fundamentals in the hope that we keep em playing for a long time. Next up, doubling the number of high school club teams in NJ and in other states as well.

Another huge great piece of the junior puzzle is the money i have raised thanks to the ongoing support in the last three years from Viking of course but from Court Pro, Total Platform Tennis, Reilly Green Mountain and from the NJ Men's Platform Tennis Association and the NJ Women's Platform Tennis League. I think the total is up to over \$17,000.

We have great support for the junior game and the Apta's support of junior paddle, now under the umbrella of our "First Serve" initiative is producing great dividends already with about 400 high school kids playing paddle for at least 6 weeks in a row this past season.

Our Tour events are self sufficient but our Junior Introductory events and our High School effort (our two biggest growth areas) and hopefully this year, college play, (yup) will need ample Apta financing to continue. I am hoping the board votes to keep my Junior budget the same for next year so i can do my best to grow the junior game.