

May 16, 2020

Dear GCTA members:

The purpose of this communication is to update you on the status of our GCTA season and the efforts of the GCTA board over the past couple of months. We appreciate your patience as we have evaluated information about the disease and how it impacts tennis in the greater Columbus area.

As you are almost certainly aware, tennis is slated to “open” on May 26th per an order of the Governor. While we are excited about this announcement, there are still many items to address before play can begin. Fortunately, the Executive Committee has been meeting and planning for this eventuality since March 19 so we are well prepared to have a tennis season. **To that end, we have set tentative start dates of June 20 for the men’s league and June 22 for the women’s league assuming** that we will be able to check all the boxes necessary to begin GCTA play.

In the coming weeks as we prepare to play, there are several outstanding issues we continue to wrestle with. Among them are:

- **Safety standards.** Safety will continue to be our number one priority and I assure you that GCTA recommendations will meet or exceed the state’s required safety standards for play. You can view the state’s standards on the Governor’s website at <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/responsible-restart-ohio/Sector-Specific-Operating-Requirements/Sector-Specific-Operating-Requirements> for updates.
- **Court and club openings.** The Governor’s guidance calls for a certain amount of local control of decision making so we will need to communicate with local communities and clubs to see who will be opening their facilities and when those openings will occur.
- **Rules changes.** Our men’s and women’s committees will be meeting to discuss changes to rules that need to be made to facilitate play in a pandemic based on the latest safety standards and unique circumstances the pandemic presents. Additional thought is being given to potential liability issues for both the organization and individual players.

I also wanted you to be aware of the extensive efforts that the Executive Committee has undertaken to educate public officials and advocate for tennis players in the Columbus area. I have attached a document “The Case for Tennis” that was prepared by the Executive Committee and circulated to the Franklin and Delaware County Boards of Health and other government officials. It was also shared with members of the state task force looking at tennis safety measures. We have been meeting biweekly, and most recently weekly to continue our planning process and think through the many issues that need to be addressed in order to have a successful season with safety as our guiding principle.

Finally, I want to emphasize that GCTA tennis will look different this year than previous years, as does everything else in our lives. You are a member of GCTA because you love tennis, and

I'm sure many of you are excited that we will have the opportunity to play again. However, there are certainly people who will not be comfortable playing this summer, and we are 100% understanding and empathetic to those individuals' feelings. Tennis is not, and has never been, mandatory. The theme for tennis this year will be FLEXIBILITY and we will be striving to incorporate measures into our play that allow for greater flexibility in play to accommodate the many unknown variables that exist as we live and play tennis with COVID-19 amongst us. Now, more than ever, we need to respect each other and treat each other kindly. We need to be flexible and understanding and ENJOY the exercise, competition and camaraderie that tennis brings.

Stay tuned for more details which will be posted on the GCTA website and social media platforms as we work through the Governor's order and make final preparations for a season.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey Bibo
President
GCTA