



Rules and Regulations

“Road to the Little Mo Nationals” & “Little Mo” Internationals

The “Little Mo” tournaments are designed to provide outstanding competition at the regional, national, and international level while also encouraging players to develop new friendships, learn good sportsmanship, and most of all, have fun.

“Road to the Little Mo Nationals”

The Road is the only circuit of its kind for talented, high-performance boys and girls in the United States who compete against others born in the same year.

- **Eligibility:** The Road begins in the spring with the four “Little Mo” Regionals (North, South, East, West) held in different cities across the United States. The Regionals are only open to players who live in the United States (ages 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12). There are no other special qualifications or ranking needed to register for the regional events – the top 32 USA player who register will be accepted into the draw based on their verified UTR rating. **Please note that players must have lived in the United States for at least one year prior to the tournament start date in order to be eligible for a regional event. If a player does not meet this requirement, they will be withdrawn from the tournament.*
- **Entry Limit:** We will be accepting the first 32 players in each division by their verified UTR rating. For divisions that have players with no verified UTR ratings, we will take into consideration player WTN and the date and time of entry.
- **Multiple Events:** Players may play in any regional event regardless of where they are currently living in the United States. Players may also play in as many regional events as they would like, but they only need to compete in one regional event and finish in the top four (yellow ball division only) to qualify for the “Little Mo” Nationals.
- **Event Type / Guaranteed Matches:** The “Little Mo” Regionals and Nationals are Singles only tournaments (no Doubles or Mixed Doubles events). All players will be guaranteed at least two Singles matches during the tournament.
- **Age Eligibility / Registration by Birth Year:** Players must register in the proper age division according to their birth year. This ensures that our players are competing against others who are born in the same calendar year (i.e., a player born in 2016 must play in the 10’s division since they will be turning 10 this year).
 - Boys and Girls 12’s - born in 2014
 - Boys and Girls 11’s - born in 2015
 - Boys and Girls 10’s - born in 2016
 - Boys and Girls 9’s - born in 2017
 - Boys and Girls 8’s - born in 2018 (Players born in 2019 will **not** be eligible).
- **Divisions:** Yellow (regular) ball divisions will be offered for boys and girls ages 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 in addition to a green dot option for ages 8, 9, and 10. **Players must register for only one Singles division.** This means that players competing in the 8’s, 9’s, and 10’s divisions must choose to play with either the yellow (regular) ball **or** the green dot ball for their age group. Players in the 11’s and 12’s must play with the yellow (regular) ball. All divisions will be played on a full 78’ tennis court with either the yellow (regular) ball or green dot ball.

- **Draw Size / Format:** The “Little Mo” Regionals will be using several different draw formats based on the division size:
 - For a 32-size draw, a **Modified Feed-in Consolation format through the Round of 16 with a 3rd/4th Place and 5th/6th Place playoff** will be used. This means that any player who loses before the Quarterfinal Round (Main Draw) will be fed back into the Consolation draw. The losers of the Quarterfinal Round will play into a 5th/6th Place playoff bracket and the losers of the Semifinal Round will play a 3rd/4th Place playoff.
 - For a 16-size draw, a **Feed-in Consolation format through the Quarterfinals with a 3rd/4th Place playoff** will be used. This means that any player who loses before the Semifinal Round (Main Draw) will be fed back into the Consolation draw. The losers of the Semifinal Round will play a 3rd/4th Place playoff. The Consolation Winner and Consolation Runner-Up are the 5th/6th Place winners in this format.
 - For an 8-size draw, a **First Round Losers Consolation format with a 3rd/4th Place playoff** will be used. This means that any player who loses in the First Round (Main Draw) will move into the Consolation draw (a Feed-in format is not possible because the Second Round is the Semifinal Round). The losers of the Semifinal Round will play a 3rd/4th Place playoff. The Consolation Winner and Consolation Runner-Up are the 5th/6th Place winners in this format.
 - A **Round Robin** format will be used for all divisions with 5 or less players.
- **Scoring Format:** All age divisions (8, 9, 10, 11, and 12) will use the same scoring format. All Singles matches (Main Draw and Consolation) will consist of two tiebreak sets (first to 6 games). At 6 games all, a 7-point set tiebreak (first to 7, win by 2) will be played. If players split sets, a 10- point match tiebreak (first to 10, win by 2) will be played in lieu of a third set. Regular scoring (**with ad**) will be used for all Main Draw matches and a 5-minute warm-up will be given before each match. No-ad scoring will be used for all Consolation matches including 3rd/4th playoff and 5th/6th playoff. A 2-minute rest period will be given between the first and second sets, and between the second set and match tiebreak. **No coaching is allowed at any time.** **Shortened scoring may be used in the case of rain.*
- **Advancing to the “Little Mo” Nationals:** The top four yellow ball players (semifinalists) in each age division from each regional event will advance to the prestigious “Little Mo” Nationals in Austin, Texas. These players will form a 16-size draw in each age division at the Nationals. If you advance to the Semifinal Round (top 4) in your age division at the Regionals and you (and your parent/coach) have followed the Code of Conduct, you will receive your Nationals invitation with a special code needed for registration by email from the MCB office following the event. The top 160 players who reach the Nationals are the youngest and brightest future stars in American tennis!
- **Alternate Players for the “Little Mo” Nationals:** If one of the top four yellow ball players (semifinalists) from a regional event cannot attend the Nationals, we will contact the 5th and 6th Place winners (if applicable) to take their place as the first and second alternates. If neither player can attend, we will consider other players in the draw and other regional draws as replacements based on their results and UTR. If there is not a 5th/6th Place Playoff, we will contact the Consolation Winner as the first alternate instead. If the Consolation Winner cannot attend, we will consider other players in the draw and other regional draws as replacements based on their results and UTR. The MCB office will let you know as soon as possible via email if there is an opening to attend the Nationals. *While the green dot players will **not** be able to advance to the Nationals, they might be considered as replacement players if there is an opening in the yellow ball division.*
- **Universal Tennis Rating (UTR):** All yellow ball results from the “Road to the Little Mo Nationals” (Regionals, Nationals) will count towards your player’s Universal Tennis Rating (UTR). All green dot results will also count towards the UTR colored ball rating.

“Little Mo” Internationals

The Internationals are the only tournaments of their kind for talented, high-performance girls and boys worldwide who compete against others born in the same year. Players may compete in any “Little Mo” Internationals regardless of where they are currently living in the United States or worldwide. Players may also compete in as many international tournaments as desired. If a “Little Mo” player can win their yellow ball division at all three “Little Mo” Internationals in the same year, they will receive the tallest trophy in junior tennis (6 feet tall) and the title of “Little Mo” Slam Champion!

- **Eligibility:** The international tournaments are open to players worldwide (ages 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12). The “Big Mo” divisions have also been added for ages 13 and 14. There are no special qualifications or ranking needed to register for the international tournaments. **Please note that players **do not** need to compete in the “Little Mo” Regionals or the “Little Mo” Nationals in order to participate in the “Little Mo” Internationals.*
- **Entry Limits:** We will be accepting the first 32 players in each division by their verified UTR rating. For divisions that have players with no verified UTR ratings, we will take into consideration player WTN and the date and time of entry.
- **Events / Guaranteed Matches:** The “Little Mo” Internationals will offer Singles, Doubles, and Mixed Doubles events for all divisions. All players will be guaranteed at least two Singles matches during the international tournaments in addition to one Doubles match and one Mixed Doubles match (only if the player is able to find a partner for each event).
- **Age Eligibility / Registration by Birth Year:** Players **must** register in the proper age division according to their birth year. This ensures that our players are competing against others who are born in the same calendar year (i.e., a player born in 2016 must play in the 10’s division since they will be turning 10 this year).
 - Girls and Boys 14’s (“Big Mo”) - born in 2012
 - Girls and Boys 13’s (“Big Mo”) - born in 2013
 - Girls and Boys 12’s - born in 2014
 - Girls and Boys 11’s - born in 2015
 - Girls and Boys 10’s - born in 2016
 - Girls and Boys 9’s - born in 2017
 - Girls and Boys 8’s - born in 2018 (Players born in 2019 will **not** be eligible.)
- **Divisions:** The “Little Mo” Internationals will be offering several different divisions based on the tournament: Yellow (regular) ball divisions will be offered for girls and boys ages 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 in addition to a green dot option for ages 8, 9, and 10. Players must register for only one division. This means that players competing in the 8’s, 9’s, and 10’s divisions must choose to play with either the yellow (regular) ball **or** the green dot ball for their age group. Players in the 11’s and 12’s divisions must play with the yellow (regular) ball. All divisions will be played on a full 78’ tennis court with either the yellow (regular) ball or the green dot ball.
- **Draw Formats:** All divisions will use the same draw formats regardless of age or ball type, but we will be using several different draw formats based on the event type and draw size:
 - **Singles:**
 - **64-size draw, 32-size draw, 16-size draw or 8-size draw:** A **First Match Losers Consolation format with a 3rd/4th Place playoff** will be used. This means that any player who loses in the First Round (Main Draw) will move into the Consolation bracket. Any player who has a bye in the First Round (Main Draw) and loses in the Second Round (Main Draw) will also move into the Consolation bracket. The losers of the Semifinal Round (Main Draw) will move into a 3rd/4th Place playoff.
 - **5 or less players:** A **Round Robin format** will be used.
 - **Doubles and Mixed Doubles:** A **Single Elimination format** will be used for all draw sizes. This means that any team who loses in any round will **not** advance in the draw. A Consolation bracket is not possible as there is only a Main Draw in this format.
- **Scoring Formats:** All divisions will use the same scoring formats regardless of age, ball type or draw format, but we will be using several different scoring formats based on the event type:
 - **Singles:** All Singles matches (Main Draw and Consolation) will consist of two tiebreak sets (first to 6 games). At 6 games all, a 7- point set tiebreak (first to 7, win by 2) will be played. If players split sets, a 10-point match tiebreak (first to 10, win by 2) will be played in lieu of a third set. Regular scoring (**with ad**) will be used for all Main Draw matches and a 5-minute warm-up will be given before each match. No-ad scoring will be used for all Consolation

matches in addition to the 3rd/4th Place playoff. A 2-minute rest period will be given between the first and second sets, and a 3-minute rest period will be given between the second set and match tiebreak. **No coaching is allowed at any time.** **Shortened scoring may be used in the case of rain.*

- **Doubles and Mixed Doubles:** All Doubles and Mixed Doubles matches will consist of an 8-game pro set (first to 8 games). At 8 games all, a 7-point match tiebreak (first to 7, win by 2) will be played. Regular scoring (**with ad**) will be used for all matches and a 5-minute warm-up will be given before each match. **No coaching is allowed at any time.** **Shortened scoring may be used in the case of rain.*
- **Bathroom Break Courtesy Point:** If a player needs to go to the bathroom, they need to get permission from an official. *To minimize loss of momentum during the set caused by a bathroom break, the player(s) taking the break will give a courtesy point to their opponent(s). This is not a penalty point. A courtesy point will not be given for a bathroom break taken at the end of a set. This rule is unique to the “Little Mo” tournaments.*
- **Doubles / Mixed Doubles Information:** The “Little Mo” Internationals entry fee includes Singles, Doubles, and Mixed Doubles so there are no additional fees to participate in these events. All registrations for Doubles and Mixed Doubles will be taken on-site during the tournament (no registrations will be taken in advance or by email). If a player already has a partner selected for Doubles and/or Mixed Doubles, there will be a desk on-site at the host site on the first day where they will be able to sign up together with their partner(s). If a player would like to try and find a partner before the tournament, we will be posting the official Player List in the weeks leading up to the tournament (not before the registration deadline) and players will be able to contact each other through the UTR system at that time. If a player **does not** have a partner selected before the tournament and they would still like to play in Doubles and/or Mixed Doubles, there will be a “Looking for Partner” sign-up sheet posted at the host site on the first day. Players will be able to place their name and cell phone on this sheet in order to connect with possible partners. Eligibility for Doubles and Mixed Doubles is as follows:
 - **Doubles:** Players must compete in the same exact age division and ball type as they are registered in for Singles. For example, a player registered in the Boys 10 (yellow ball) division for Singles must play in the Boys 10 (yellow ball) division for Doubles.
 - **Mixed Doubles:** Players may compete with someone younger or older in a different age division, but they must play in the division of the older player. Players may also compete in a different ball type, but a yellow ball player cannot “play down” into a green dot division. For example, a Boys 9 (green dot) player who decides to play Mixed Doubles with a Girls 10 (yellow ball) player must play in the Mixed 10 (yellow ball) division since that is the older division between the two players.
 - **Please note that there is no guarantee a player will be able to compete in Doubles and/or Mixed Doubles unless they have a partner for each event - players are ultimately responsible for finding their own partners.**
- **Universal Tennis Rating (UTR) / Color Ball Rating (CBR):** All yellow ball results from the “Little Mo” Internationals will count towards your player’s Universal Tennis Rating (UTR). All green dot results will also count towards your player’s Universal Tennis Color Ball Rating (CBR).



Tournament Rules

- **Late rule**

The clock starts when all three conditions are met:

- The **scheduled match time** has arrived.
- **Any court** is available and ready for play.
- One or both players have **not arrived/checked in**.

“Arrived” means the player is:

- Checked in at the designated desk
- Fully dressed and equipped
- Ready to walk on court and begin warm-up

0:01 – 5:00 minutes – loss of toss and one game

5:01-10:00 minutes - loss of toss and two games

10:01-15:00 minutes - loss of toss and three games

After 15:00 minutes until a reasonable time of arrival - default

Reasonable time: If a player goes to the wrong site, penalties will be assessed. The player is given sufficient time to travel from their location to the correct site – the amount of time is dependent on the distance between the two locations.

- All players must check-in at the tournament desk 15 minutes before the scheduled time. Checking in means they are ready to walk on court and play.
- Both players must return to the Tournament Desk after each match to report the score.
- All players will decide service and side before starting their warm-up for the match. There will be a 5-minute warm-up for all Main Draw and Consolation matches.
- The server must announce the score loudly before each point. Players are also responsible for keeping the score and using scorekeepers at all times.
- The receiver must play to the reasonable pace of the server. The maximum time between points is 25 seconds.
- If a player is unsure of a call, the ball is good (benefit of the doubt goes to the opponent).
- Whether on or off the court, officials will overrule any clear mistakes they observe. Officials will also be watching for any obvious foot faults.
- A player can request a medical time out for illness or an injury. The player may choose someone (a parent or coach) to treat them. An official will supervise the treatment. The maximum treatment time for a medical time out is 3 minutes. For a medical timeout involving bleeding, up to 15 minutes is allowed.
- The “Little Mo” Point Penalty System begins with a warning, then forfeiture of a point, then forfeiture of a game, followed by an additional loss of game (or default) as determined by the Referee and Tournament Director. An immediate default can also be used in egregious situations as determined by the Referee and Tournament Director. Violations include ball abuse, racquet abuse, obscenities, yelling out, crying or being a distraction, parental interference, coaching, and anything else that could be considered unsportsmanlike behavior.
- Only players (not parents) may call for an official to be on the court, but parents can be helpful in alerting officials of any emergencies. A player must first raise their racquet high so that an official can see it and come to the court. The only reason players may leave the court is to obtain an official.
- Parents are not allowed to lean on the fence or interfere with the match in any way.
- No cell phones, watches or electronic devices are allowed while on court. Also, please do not talk on your cell phone near the tennis courts and put it on “silent” while matches are in progress.
- If a player needs to go to the bathroom, they need to get permission from an official. To minimize loss of momentum during the set caused by a bathroom break, the player taking the break will give a courtesy point to their opponent. This is not a penalty point. A courtesy point will not be given for a bathroom break taken at the end of a set. This rule is unique to the “Little Mo” tournaments.
- When a true tournament error occurs, the Referee has the authority to correct it, even if it requires adjusting the draw or time.
- Always refer to the tournament homepage for match times and locations as this is the most accurate and up to date information. (Staff and officials should not be asked for information on match times/locations.)

A NOTE TO PLAYERS:

The sun can be intense so please make sure you are well hydrated before coming to the court. Start drinking liquids the night before (starting the morning of your match is too late). Water and ice will be available at all playing sites. Be sure to use sunscreen and apply it at least thirty minutes before each match.

Since officials will be calling foot faults, you may want to check your serves during practice sessions to make sure your feet are not touching the baseline until after the ball is hit. Make sure all cell phones, watches, and electronic devices are turned off and left with your parent before entering the court. In order to be considered a good sport, you must display good sportsmanship both on and off the court.

Good sportsmanship includes:

- saying “good shot” to the opponent when deserved
- not pumping your fist at the opponent at any time, especially after a good shot
- not screaming out at any time during the match (i.e., “let’s go”, “come on”, “vamos”)
- not hitting the ball to the back fence or into the net in anger at any time
- handing the balls nicely to the opponent or hitting the balls softly and accurately to the opponent during the match (i.e., change of server, after a point, changing sides)
- not asking “are you sure” repeatedly after each of the opponent’s line calls

The officials will be roving the courts and watching for the behaviors listed above. It is very important to make proper line calls. If you are unsure of a call, the benefit of the doubt goes to the opponent. A ball that is 99% out is 100% in. When a player deliberately makes incorrect calls in order to gain an advantage, everyone in the crowd who is watching the match sees it and the opponent knows it as well. This reputation will follow you for the rest of your junior career and we do not want that to happen to you. Let the memory of your match be a good one for both you and your opponent, whether you win or lose. Please request an official at any time if you need anything. Also, please review the code of conduct/rules/scoring format before your first match so you understand what is expected.

A NOTE TO PARENTS / COACHES:

Watching the match can be a hard job for parents and coaches, especially if there is a problem or a questionable call. Although staying uninvolved is difficult, it is necessary. Once your player enters the court, it is their match. Explain to your player that they will be on their own once they step onto the court and that you will not be able to talk to or coach them in any way during the match. Emphasize and explain what good sportsmanship is to your player and why it is important. *Also, a friendly reminder that all multilingual parents and coaches must only cheer in English when their player is on court.* Please note it is your responsibility to educate any guests who attend your player’s match that they understand tennis court etiquette (specifically for larger groups) and how important it is to remain quiet during the match and not be disruptive in any way. Spectator behavior can result in penalty points to the player.

Parents and coaches are not allowed to talk on cell phones near the courts when matches are in progress. They are also not allowed to make any line calls or assist in any scoring disputes, as that is the job of the official. Coaching is not permitted at any time (i.e., hand signals or anything that is instructional such as “stay on your game plan”, “make him/her play”, “focus”). Also, inappropriate cheering is not allowed (i.e., clapping when the opponent double faults or makes an unforced error, excessive or constant cheering/clapping that is disruptive, making discouraging remarks about the opponent). It is proper court etiquette to cheer for the good shots of both players. Maureen Connolly was known for her competitive tennis as well as her good sportsmanship. It is our hope that as parents and coaches, you will set a good example for your player during the tournament and follow the gold standard of sportsmanship, integrity, and kindness.

If something is in need of attention (i.e., a player is out of water, a player is having a health issue, a racquet needs to be returned to the player, a ball is lost over the fence), the player must get an official’s attention and request their assistance. Only players (not parents or coaches) may call for an official to be on the court, but parents and coaches can be helpful in alerting officials of any emergencies.