



Maureen Connolly Brinker Tennis Foundation



P R E S S R E L E A S E



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"Little Mo" and "Mini Mo" Tournaments *A Choice for Young Junior Players*

Dallas, Texas...The Maureen Connolly Brinker Tennis Foundation announced it will continue to offer a choice in junior tennis for players ages 5-11. These young players can choose to play the "Road to the Little Mo Nationals" circuit using the traditional yellow balls on full court or the "Mini Mo" tournaments using the low compression balls on shortened courts.

The 15th annual "Road to the Little Mo Nationals" is a nationwide, year-long circuit of fun, competitive tournaments culminating in a national champion being crowned in boys and girls 8, 9, 10, and 11 & under. The "Little Mo" tournaments offer younger players an opportunity to compete against others who are the same age at the sectional, regional and national level. The "Little Mo" is unique in that players compete against others who are their exact age: 8s play 8s, 9s play 9s, 10s play 10s, and 11s play 11s.

The "Little Mo" circuit is designed for players who have been playing with the traditional yellow balls on full court. Players will be receiving points at the sectional, regional and national level for their results and will be rewarded with prizes such as iPads and iPods. This year marks the 15th anniversary of the "Road to the Little Mo Nationals" circuit.

The boys and girls circuit begins this spring with "Little Mo" sectional tournaments held in 17 cities. After the sectionals have been completed, the eight quarterfinalists from each age division will advance to the "Little Mo" regionals in the summer. After the regionals, the four semifinalists from each age division will advance to the "Little Mo" Nationals in October. The "Little Mo" Nationals will have a prestigious draw of 16 players in each age division and will feature the top 128 youngsters who are 11 & under in the United States - the future of American

tennis. The "Little Mo" Nationals is the only event in the country which offers the opportunity for boys and girls to become national champions in the 8, 9, 10, and 11 & under divisions.

The 2012 "Road to the Little Mo Nationals"

<u>Sectionals</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Date</u>
Texas	Arlington Tennis Center in Arlington, Texas	April 14-15
Missouri Valley	The Grand Health & Racquet Club in Tulsa, Oklahoma	April 20-22
Northern Cal	Natomas Racquet Club in Sacramento, California	April 21-22
Hawaii-Pacific	The Oahu Club in Honolulu, Hawaii	May 4-6
Middle States	Aronimink Tennis Center in Newton Square, Pennsylvania	May 4-6
New England	Harvard University in Boston, Massachusetts	May 4-6
Intermountain	U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado	May 5-6
Northern	LifeTime Fitness in Fridley, Minnesota	May 11-12
Southern	Racquet Club of the South in Norcross, Georgia	May 11-13
Eastern	Armonk Tennis Club in Armonk, New York	May 11-13
Southwest	Scottsdale Resort & Athletic Club in Scottsdale, Arizona	May 11-13
Midwest	Homewood-Flossmoor Racquet Club in Homewood, Illinois	May 26-28
Caribbean	Site / Date - To be determined	
Mid-Atlantic	Boar's Head Inn & Sports Club in Charlottesville, Virginia	June 2-3
Florida	Club Med Sandpiper in Port St. Lucie, Florida	June 8-10
Pacific Northwest	Sprinker Tennis Center in Tacoma, Washington	June 22-24
Southern Cal	Barnes Tennis Center in San Diego, California	July 6-8

Regionals

South (Northern, Missouri Valley, Texas, Intermountain)	Arlington Tennis Center in Arlington, TX	May 26-28
North (New England, Eastern, Middle States, Midwest)	Homewood-Flossmoor Racquet Club in Homewood, IL	July 13-15
West (Southwest, Pacific Northwest, Northern Cal, Southern Cal, Hawaii-Pacific)	Gold River Racquet Club in Sacramento, CA	August 3-5
East (Mid-Atlantic, Southern, Florida, Caribbean)	Club Med Sandpiper in Port St. Lucie, FL	August 24-26

"Little Mo" Nationals Austin Tennis Academy Austin, TX October 19 - 22

Concurrently, the "Mini Mo" tournaments (which began in 2010) follow the new USTA initiative for players (ages 5-10) who are beginners to the sport of tennis using the red, orange and green low compression balls on shortened courts. The low compression balls allow the young beginning players to keep the ball in play longer and improve their strokes. Each tournament will be played in one day with modified scoring to make the matches shorter. The "Mini Mo" tournaments will be held in various locations around the country and are designed to offer a fun experience for the players.

Both the "Little Mo" and "Mini Mo" tournaments emphasize the importance of good sportsmanship, fair play, meeting new friends, and having fun. Maureen "Little Mo" Connolly was known for her sportsmanship on and off the court and these tournaments honor her legacy.

In 1953, Maureen was the first woman to capture the elusive Grand Slam by winning the Australian Championship, French Championship, Wimbledon, and U.S. Championship in the same calendar year. She was only 18 years old when she accomplished that magnificent feat. She remains the youngest player and the only American woman to ever win the Grand Slam. To put that into perspective, only five players have won the Grand Slam in the history of tennis. In July 1954, "Little Mo" injured her leg in a horseback riding accident which ended her tennis career.

However, Maureen continued to promote her beloved game of tennis and in 1968 joined her dear friend, Mrs. Frank A. Jeffett (Nancy), to co-found the Maureen Connolly Brinker Tennis Foundation. Her tragic death to cancer occurred six months later on the eve of Wimbledon in 1969. She was 34 years of age. Mrs. Jeffett continues to serve as chairman emeritus together with Cindy Brinker Simmons, president, Brenda Brinker Bottum, vice president, Elizabeth Jeffett, vice president, Carol Weyman, executive vice president, and a capable advisory board.

In 1992, Andy Roddick won the "Little Mo" Nationals when he was 10 years old and became the U.S. Open men's singles champion in 2003. Andy has continued to "give back" to the foundation over the years. Other former "Little Mo" champions who are rising in the pro ranks are Ryan Harrison, Donald Young and Denis Kudla. Taylor Townsend, a former "Little Mo" champion, won the 2012 Australian Open junior girls' singles and doubles over the weekend. Many other "Little Mo" players competed very well "down under" in the juniors as well.

"It makes great sense for the Maureen Connolly Brinker Tennis Foundation to continue to offer two tracks for younger players in 2012," said Cindy Brinker Simmons, president of the Maureen Connolly Brinker Tennis Foundation and daughter of the late Maureen Connolly Brinker. "The 'Mini Mo' tournaments will continue to introduce young beginners to the game in support of the new USTA initiative, and the 'Little Mo' circuit will continue to benefit the high performance, elite players who have been training with yellow balls on a full court. The foundation has promoted junior tennis for 44 years with the goal to develop outstanding young players on and off the court."

For information on the "Little Mo" circuit and the "Mini Mo" tournaments, contact Carol Weyman - Tournament Chairman (214) 754-7065 or email: Cartennis@aol.com.
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