



## **2015 Family Circle Cup Ball Crew Protocol and Training Manual**

Thank you for your interest in the 2015 Family Circle Cup Ball Crew Program! We are grateful that you are willing to lend your time & talent to this very important aspect of the FCC.

Ball Crew persons are an important part of the tournament, as the FCC players and Officials rely on the Ball Crew to keep the flow of the match going. Whether you are a “Rookie” or “Veteran”, all will have to go through some rigorous training and practice in order to be the very best when the matches begin! Those members of Ball Crew that are students, please let us know if we can sign off on any community service hours for your school.

The Family Circle Cup is a world class event, with over 90,000 spectators and is broadcast on ESPN 2, as well as ESPN3. We are starting a new decade for the Family Circle Cup and we are excited about our 43rd year in tennis. Enjoy seeing your friends from last year and making new memories with new friends as well!

Please take the time to read through the Ball Crew Protocol to become familiar with the way we would like things to go.

Feel free to ask the Ball Crew Coordinators questions; they are a dynamic group with years of experience to assist you!

## Ball Crew Protocol 2015

**Applications:** Ball crew applications can be found:

- Online at: [www.familycirclecup.com](http://www.familycirclecup.com)
- Front desk at the Family Circle Tennis Center
- From any of your coordinators
- Email [fccballcrew@gmail.com](mailto:fccballcrew@gmail.com)

**Work Schedules:**

- On the application there is a place for you to fill in what days you will be available to work during the tournament. We will use this information to post a working schedule and to make sure that we have enough people scheduled for each shift (we need extra crew if a match goes three sets).
- **We would like to emphasize the need for Ball Crew the first five days of the event is crucial, due to the number of matches.** We appreciate your taking this into consideration when completing your application!
- Closer to the event, if you find you are available for additional shifts, please let us know and you will be scheduled if there is availability.

**Qualifications:**

- Ball crew rookies (1<sup>st</sup> year volunteers) must be at least **11 years old** if they play tennis on a team or competitively in tournaments, or **12 years old** if they take lessons or do not play at all. To qualify as a 2015 FCC ball person, you must pass the required training sessions which include the necessary skills you will need to have during the tournament.
- You may submit your application by email: [fccballcrew@gmail.com](mailto:fccballcrew@gmail.com) or mail to: Ball Crew, Family Circle Tennis Center, 161 Seven Farms Drive, Charleston, SC 29492 or drop off at the Tennis Center front desk.
- You may submit your applications on February 21 at the Parent Orientation; however the Ball Crew may be full by then! If it has not been received within this time frame, you may not be allowed to participate.
- Veterans must have their applications in by **February 1st** or they will not be considered for the “**all star**” ball crew for the finals weekend. There will be no exceptions!

**Practice:**

- Practice starts February 21st and continues every Saturday until the tournament begins.
- A practice schedule with locations and times will be posted on the Family Circle Cup web site: [www.familycirclecup.com](http://www.familycirclecup.com). Participants must attend at least 4 of 6 practices or have contacted a coordinator when they will not be present for a particular practice date.
- Veterans must attend at least 3 of 6 practices/ or two practices if you are a 5+ year veteran.

- There will be a sign in sheet at every practice that you will be required to sign. If you forget and do not sign in, you will be considered not present! You may not sign in a friend's name that is running late or not present.
- Veterans are expected to help the staff train the rookies.

### **During the Tournament:**

- Uniforms will be given out at the 5th practice.
- Jackets will be given out at the 6<sup>th</sup> and final practice.
- Ball crew must arrive at least 2 hours before the first match is scheduled to begin.
- You must sign in every day when you arrive in order to be assigned a match.
- If you do not have the correct shoes, if you do not have on non-logo shorts, or if you are missing any part of your uniform **YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO GO ON COURT!**
- Match schedules will be announced during our morning ball crew meeting held around 9:30 every morning and before the first match at 10:00. Thursday thru Sunday matches start at 11:00, match assignments will be announced during the morning meeting at 10:30.
- If you are late or not present at the morning meeting, you may lose your match assignment.
- If you do not get assigned to a match during the first assignments, keep checking back every 30 min. until you get your assignment.
- If you are **MIA (missing in action)** or late for a match assignment, you may be replaced and may not get another assignment for that day.
- If you do not show up to 2 scheduled shifts during the day you may be sent home and maybe asked not to return.
- You will be graded on how well you perform on each match assignment.

### **Match Assignment during Tournament:**

- Daily match assignments depend upon:
  - When you may have signed in
  - Your attitude towards your fellow ball crew members and staff
  - If you are skilled enough to be able to do the net
  - Your overall skill level
  - Your past performances on court
- Morning only crew's may have priority on the first match assignments of the day.
- All day members of the crew may have second priority on matches depending on ability.
- Afternoon only crew may have priority over anyone who has already worked a match earlier in the day.

- Veterans have priority on “Net” positions for all matches. Rookies may only work “Net” if needed and with the recommendation of a shift leader or a coordinator.
- **Evening matches may be only staffed by “Veterans” or select “Rookies” whenever possible.** Rookies may staff the baseline positions as they are needed or with the recommendation of a shift leader and/or coordinator for their excellent work ethic during their matches worked earlier in the day or week.
- All matches will be assigned by coordinators and shift leaders.
- Veterans may make ONE suggestion as to a match they would really like to work that week. Assignment to that match may not be guaranteed, but the coordinators will try to keep that in mind if at all possible.
- If you have crewed at least one “high interest” match, please do not expect a second match of the same caliber that day or maybe that week. We will try to rotate the crew as fairly as possible.
- A lot of thought and planning goes into court assignments. Unforeseeable situations such as weather, how many matches go three sets have to be taken into account. Coordinators have the final say on any initial court assignments. Questioning their decisions may result in not being assigned a court assignment for that day.
- Shift leaders or court monitors have complete authority to make courtside adjustments as needed regarding skill, behavior or court needs.
- All ball crew members are required to report to their shift leader or court monitor after the morning meeting and prior to the beginning of their assigned match.
- All second hour ball crew members are required to check in with their court monitor and be courtside at the start of the first hour.
- We will not use set shifts this year. We will use one hour shifts. This will give everyone equal time on court and will not cause a rush back to the court in case of injury to a player or a 20 minute 6-0 set. First hour ball crew should use the restroom and eat lunch or take a break after their shift and return to courtside 15 minutes before the third hour or their next assigned hour. They should report to the court monitor on their return to the court. The second hour crew will operate similar to the first hour crew. There may be a third hour crew if we have enough crew members and the first hour will be the fourth hour crew. Matches that go past 5 P.M. will be handled based on the number of crew members that can stay late. Please remember that missing or being late for your assigned set may result in not getting another court assignment for the rest of the day. It is very important that you be aware both of the time and the score of your match (if applicable).
- **Ball Crew drop off will be at the side gate in the morning, nearest the Ball Crew tent.**
- **Ball Crew drop off and pick up mid-day will be in the round- about by the shed. (same as before). Kids need to walk down sidewalk in front of Shed to the Ball Crew gate by their Tent.**
- **Ball Crew must sign out at the end of their shifts, even if they stay onsite to watch matches. Parents, please be aware that once your child signs out, we cannot be responsible to supervise your child, as we are busy working the matches.**

Appearance:

- The uniform should consist of your assigned shirt and/or jacket; shorts for the boys and skirts for the girls will be provided, white tennis shoes, and assigned hat/visor.
- Shirts **MUST** be tucked in the entire time prior to and while on court.
- No sunglasses, only prescription glasses, are allowed on court.
- Any obvious logos on shorts, skirts or pants must be covered up.
- No stripes, designs, waistbands or hems of any color other than navy are allowed.
- Ladies/Girls: Shorts should be of fingertip length and if deemed inappropriate, you may not be allowed on court.
- Gentleman/Boys: Shorts should fit and be worn properly; if your attire is deemed inappropriate, you may not be allowed on court.
- If you are missing any part of your uniform, you may not be allowed to participate in your scheduled match that day.
- ***CELL PHONES, DANGLING JEWELRY, OR I-PODS are not allowed on the court or courtside. This is for your safety, the patrons' safety, and the safety of all the players.***
- First set hour crew should be in position before the players enter the court or stadium.
- Second and Third set crews should be seated or lined up and ready to enter the court as soon as the previous set ends.
- In the event of a short set or a short match, the ball crew will remain at the court for the entire hour. Shift change will be at the court monitors discretion as near the top of each hour as possible. (As an example a shift may finish a match and then start the next match and be relieved after 3 games.)
- Always address the player first and then gather any balls that are near you.
- If a ball goes into a box or flower box, address the player and then look for the ball. If it takes too long to find it, return to your position and then look again at the next available opportunity. Do not delay the point if at all possible.
- If a large piece of trash or any object is blown or thrown onto the court, wait for the point to finish and pick it up as quickly as possible or as directed by the chair umpire. Please do not delay the point if possible.
- Should a player fall on court, the closest person to their towel should immediately bring it to them. Please do not assist the player in any way or manner. This could result in a player being penalized a point.
- If a ball is hit out of the court, unless it is easily accessible, allow other FCC staff, volunteers or spectators to return the ball between the next points.
- Try to remain as still as possible during the points. Excessive fidgeting may distract the players and result in a request that you be removed from the court.
- Should you begin to feel ill while on court, let the court monitor know immediately so that you can be replaced. "Accidents" on court can take a good deal of time to clean up, so try to avoid risking them at all costs.
- Do not speak while on court unless spoken to by the line referees or chair umpire. Please do not speak to the players themselves.

- If manning the umbrellas (the net person will hold the umbrella and the baseline person will assume the net person's position. During doubles both baseline persons will help with the umbrellas and the net person will stay in their assumed position), watch the shadow cast by the umbrella. If it is not shading the player, please position the umbrella so that it covers the player and not just you.

### Night Matches:

- Usually only 24 people are needed for the night matches. We will start signing in for those matches 2 hours prior to the start of the first night match.
- Those individuals scheduled for night matches only will get the first assignments until we reach the number needed.
- We will as usual, select by where you signed in for the night matches.
- Once everyone has been given time to sign in, we will fill in using other ball crew members from the day matches.
- **Ball Crew working evening matches will be given seating in the stadium together.**
- **At the end of both evening matches, ball crew will be walked as a group to the Ball Crew Evening Pick Up location, which will be the round about in the driveway.**

### Quarters, Semi's, & Finals:

- An "**All Star Team**" will be chosen for **Friday** by the **staff**, and **Sat. & Sun.** will be by a **lottery points system**.
- Quarterfinals will be staffed by Veterans and also by Rookies at the recommendation of shift leaders or coordinators as they are available for that Friday.
- How the All Star Team is chosen:
  - What is best for the tournament
  - Skill level while on court
  - On court grades
  - Attitude with fellow ball crew members and the adult staff
- Semifinal and Final crews will be selected ideally by a lottery.
  - Veterans with 5+ years experience will crew Finals and Semifinals at the Net positions.
  - First year veterans or rookies, may crew baselines.
  - We need 48 for the semifinals and 24 for the finals. The one's selected, may not be guaranteed a match; however, if any match goes into a third set, they may be assigned to help staff the third set.
  - Note that lottery system will be done by Ball Crew Staff.
- All ball crew members are invited to be present for the awards presentations and photos with the players on Sunday of the finals even if you are not scheduled to work.

### Meals:

- Everyone should have some money just in case you need additional food.

- Lunch will be provided every day for those who are scheduled to work that day.
- People who are working only night matches that day need to eat before arriving to the tournament or bring money for a meal.
- Only those ball crew members working a night match that have been there all day or those still working on a match may get a dinner ticket. We will only be allowed 25 dinner tickets each night.

*Infractions Resulting In Dismissal:*

- **Missing your assigned set may result in an immediate dismissal for the day.**
- **Multiple complaints from vendors, FCC staff, volunteers or shift leaders may result in a dismissal for the day.**
- **Disrespectful behavior towards fellow ball crew, crew leaders, spectators, or FCC staff or volunteers may result in a dismissal for the day.**
- **Cheating the lunch or dinner ticket system may result in either a revocation of dining privileges for all involved OR a daily dismissal.**
- **A second daily dismissal will automatically become a complete dismissal from the entire tournament.**
- **Any other serious infractions as agreed upon by the Ball Crew Coordinators ay result in a daily dismissal.**

**Before, Between or After Matches:**

- **Please, no autographs may be sought from players while in uniform. Also, please change your shirt (or put another shirt over the ball crew uniform) and remove your hat before getting anything signed.**
- Please never approach vendor's booths if they are very busy with paying spectators.
- Please, no samples or free gifts may be taken from the vendor's booths without the express permission of whoever is staffing the booth at that time. Complaints will result in removal of privileges for all ball crew members and specific complaints may result in the individual's dismissal for the day.
- Please, no running, yelling or playing recklessly on the main grounds or near the volunteer café and/or staff tent.
- If you are watching matches, do not block the view of paying spectators. Please do not disrupt them by speaking loudly, using your cell phones, or using inappropriate behavior. Continuous individual complaints concerning a ball crew member may result in your daily dismissal.
- The safety of the Ball Crew is of the utmost importance to us. The Buddy System should be used by participants whenever on site! This includes rest room breaks, food lines, etc.

**Inclement Weather:**

- We suggest you sign up to be a part of our Rained Out notification text system, please go to [www.familycirclecup.com](http://www.familycirclecup.com) ; click the Volunteer section, then Ball Crew. Just beneath the Practice Schedule link is the link for Rained Out. Sign on to get a text message sent to your cell phone for rain related issues.

**Ball Crew Transportation:**

- Adult Ball Crew members cannot provide transportation to and from practice or the tournament unless they are transporting their own child or children or have written permission from a parent to do so.

**Reminder:**

**Ball Crew will and should be an enjoyable experience, but please remember that you are a visible representation of the tournament and of Charleston itself. Therefore you are expected to conduct yourself in a responsible, respectful and mature manner. Reasonable concerns should be addressed in an open but, also private manner, no concern is “trivial”, please let us know!**