

# USTA Southern Wheelchair Tennis Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2023

**Welcome** to the newsletter for USTA Southern Wheelchair Tennis! Quarterly, we will provide you with information on upcoming tournaments, wheelchair tennis programs, tips on how to take your game to the next level, and all things wheelchair tennis.

## Junior Spotlight: Lucy Heald

Meet Lucy Heald, a 13-year-old wheelchair tennis player from near Chattanooga. Three years ago, while at the US Open with friends, Lucy's mom first saw wheelchair tennis and began researching it for her daughter. Lucy had been involved in sports before and was interested in taking up a new sport entering middle school. She began taking lessons with her sister from a coach who had not worked with a wheelchair athlete before, but he watched YouTube videos to learn to coach Lucy. Two years ago, Lucy received a donated tennis wheelchair and hasn't slowed down since!



She has been to wheelchair tennis clinics in Birmingham, AL, Atlanta and Rome, GA. She played in her first tournament in Cincinnati in 2021, where she not only got to meet Coco Gauff but also other junior wheelchair tennis players, and she realized how much she had in common both on and off the court with her fellow wheelchair tennis competitors. Lucy has played in lots of other tournaments and clinics since then. This year, she tried out for her school tennis team and didn't make it, but it motivated her to improve her game, now playing multiple times per week with able bodied athletes.

Because Lucy doesn't have a wheelchair tennis program in her city, she and her family are in the process of connecting with a coach to work with her with the help of USTA resources, including experienced wheelchair tennis coaches who will provide advice to her new coach. Lucy's future goals include improving her strokes and participating in more tournaments. Good luck, Lucy!

Additional Photo: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/e388rp7rqtblklnj/Lucy%202.jpg?dl=0>

## Congratulations Noah Schepman! USTA Southern Wheelchair Excellence Award Recipient



## Grants & Scholarships

USTA Southern offer grants and scholarships twice a year. The deadlines are January 31<sup>st</sup> for Cycle 1 grants and May 31<sup>st</sup> for Cycle 2. These program grants help to fund and expand wheelchair tennis programs and assist collegiate wheelchair teams in the 9 Southern states to fund their pursuit of wheelchair tennis play and tournaments. For eligibility and application instructions, visit [Tennis Program Grants & Assistance | USTA](#)

## **2022 Grant Recipient Update:**

**Cobb County Community Tennis Association** in Georgia used their grant for medals and hospitality for the Doubles Fun Tournament. They had 21 wheelchair players in A, B and C coed divisions. The wheelchair doubles tournament was so full of fun and competitive play that it was hard to narrow down just one memorable moment, however, it started to rain a little on the players in the middle of the day. One player asked if they were going to stop play. His opponent then asked that if they were going to melt in the rain, could they get a forfeit. Everyone had a good laugh. They were able to keep playing and, in fact, did not melt! These players were very appreciative of the grant that made this tournament happen. The tournament was a complete success, and players have already asked to have the tournament again!

Cobb County Tournament Photos



## 2022 Grant Recipient Update:

**Wheel Serve NC** is a statewide wheelchair tennis nonprofit with 5 programs in North Carolina, 60 players, and 35 able-bodied volunteers playing weekly or bimonthly in addition to year-round special events. The Southern Wheelchair Grant has been a source of funding since Wheel Serve NC's creation in 2019, allowing them to continue their mission to grow, promote, and support wheelchair tennis in NC. Because of the grant, Wheel Serve NC was able to afford court reservation for its programming, ensuring availability and consistency of play. They also utilized the funding for promoting programming and special events. For more information visit

[Wheelchair Tennis | Wheel Serve NC](https://wheelchairtennis.wheelservec.org)



## Southern Wheelchair Tournament Calendar

Tournament Name	Sanctioning	Dates	Location	Contact	Email
Georgia Open	ITF Level 1 - USTA NA	March 8-12	Rome, GA	Ann Hortman	ahortman@romeega.us
Cajun Classic	Super Series USTA Level 1	March 14-19	Baton Rouge, LA	Jennifer Edmonson	jennedmonson@aol.com
Montgomery Open	USTA Level 4	March 31- April 2	Montgomery, AL	Jessica Weyreuter	dreamcourtinc@gmail.com
Mississippi Rock-N-Roll	USTA Level 4	April 28-30	Brandon, MS	Emillia Viljoen	viljoen@sta.usta.com
Garden City Wheelchair Tennis Classic	USTA Level 4	May 5-7	Augusta, GA	Margaret Faughnan	mfaughnan@augustaga.gov
Clemson Tournament	USTA Level 3	July 21-23	Clemson, SC	Jeff Townsend	jeffdtownsend@gmail.com
PTR Hilton Head	USTA Level 2	September 22-24	Hilton Head, SC	Julie Jilly	julie@ptrtennis.org
Alabama Open	USTA Level 1 - Junior Nat'l Championship	October 6 - 8	Tuscaloosa, AL	Evan Enquist	eaenquist@crimson.ua.edu
Hallowheel	Non-sanctioned	October 27-29	Baton Rouge, LA	Jennifer Edmonson	jennedmonson@aol.com
Auburn	USTA Level 4	November 11-12	Auburn, AL	Bret Peterson	bpeterson@auburnalabama.org
America Championships	USTA Level 1 - Adult Nat'l Championship	November 16 - 19	Locust Grove, GA	Harlon Matthews	hmatthews@co.henry.ga.us
Clocktower Classic Indoor Junior Nat'l Championships	USTA Level 3	December 1-3	Rome, GA	Ann Hortman	ahortman@romeega.us

## Instructional Video

There is more than one way to hit a backhand! Watch as Paralympic wheelchair tennis player and USTA Net Gen Regional Provider Shelby Baron teaches you how to hit an inverted backhand. Try it out the next time you are on the court!

View here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/jmdl1k02pxc6qpw/Inverted%20Backhand%20Demo.mp4?dl=0>



## Need Help Starting?

Have you hesitated to start playing wheelchair tennis because you do not have a wheelchair tennis program or other wheelchair tennis players in your area? Or are you a coach who hasn't worked with wheelchair tennis players before but want to start? USTA can help you! Contact USTA Southern Committee Chair, Jennifer Edmonson, at [jennedmonson@aol.com](mailto:jennedmonson@aol.com).



## Southern Section Committee Contacts

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