



**PERFORMANCE<sup>®</sup>**

# **NATIONAL TOUR 9U & 10U**

**SUPPORTED BY WINTER REGIONAL TOUR**

**SEPTEMBER 2025**

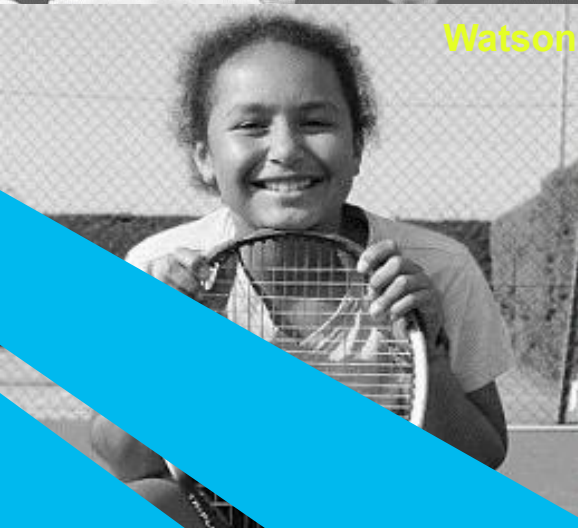




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# NATIONAL TOUR 2025-26

Parents,

The 2024–2025 season saw the successful delivery of the 9U and 10U National Tour circuits. For those of you who were involved, thank you for your commitment and support – It's been a pleasure to follow the players' progress throughout the year. For those joining us for the first time, we're excited to welcome you to the 2025–2026 circuit.

The upcoming season will again include the Winter Regional Tour (September–March), which provides an additional layer of competitive opportunities at venues across the country. These events are designed to be more accessible locally, and winners will earn places in selected National Tour events.

The National Tour will run throughout the year, creating regular "best vs best" match play and a high volume of competition. Specifically designed for players aged 8–10 at the start of their performance journey, the 9U and 10U circuits offer a high-quality, developmentally appropriate tournament schedule. Our priority is to ensure that all players have a positive and productive experience, with opportunities to learn and develop through competitive play.

Whether you've taken part in the past or are new to these events, the following pages outline key information about the tour, along with helpful tips for parents. An additional attachment provides an overview of the National Tour structure across the year. Further details and entry information are available on the LTA website.

We look forward to seeing you at the events. The 10U National Pathway Coaches will be in attendance throughout the season.

Best wishes,

David Kirby

**10U National Pathway Manager**



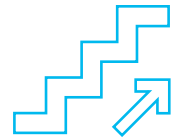


# BENEFITS OF THE NATIONAL TOUR



## Supportive

To create a great atmosphere at the start of each event, 10U National Coaches will facilitate the on-court physical and tennis warm-up. We're keen to ensure every player has time to familiarise themselves with their surroundings and settle any nerves. Individual coaches are, of course, welcome on court if they are accompanying a player. This is the only time players will be on court prior to the start of play. In the 10U age group, as the year progresses, responsibility for the warm-up will gradually shift to the players, helping them take ownership.



## Progressive

The yearly tour includes Grades 3, 2, and 1 events, offering multiple opportunities to progress through levels. To prepare players for the journey ahead, the format of competition starts to mirror that of the next age group.



## Transition

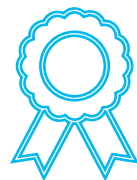
Over the past three years, the tour has evolved to incorporate changes in ball colour and extended scoring formats. These adjustments are designed to better prepare players for progression into the next stage.



## Earned progression

From September to March, players have the opportunity to earn a place in a Grade 2 National Tour event by competing in a linked Winter Regional Tour event. In events where no link is in place, wild cards may be used. Players must have entered by the event's closing date to be eligible.

**No player needs to request a wild card** – all players are automatically considered in line with our wild card policy.



## Performance awards

As a team, we believe in recognising and rewarding styles of play that support long-term player development. At the 10U level, players are not the complete player – and that's normal. We value competitiveness, but we also recognise players who are willing to explore new skills, take calculated risks, and challenge themselves to grow. Awards are progressive across the 9U and 10U year groups, and are relevant to each player's age and stage.



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# BENEFITS OF THE NATIONAL TOUR



## 9u North & South split

To minimise travel during the early stages, events are held in both the north and south of the country – creating greater opportunities for a wider pool of players. As the tour progresses, we consolidate to single-venue events, allowing players to come together and compete.



## Multiple venues

The Winter Regional Tour Linked (WRT) series offers a variety of one-day tournaments at locations across the UK. For combined boys' and girls' events, 15–17 tournaments are held. In the 10U age group, up to 34 events take place between September and March. Winner's progress into the National Tour.



## Fun but high challenge

While winning is a natural goal, we believe the real value of competition is in helping players learn and develop as both athletes and individuals. Our mission is to provide a positive experience that builds a genuine love for the sport. By encouraging players to compete the right way, we help them continually learn and develop through competitive play, both on and off court.



## Multiple surfaces

Throughout the tour, players will have the opportunity to compete on a range of surfaces. This variety supports broader development and enhances their match experience.



## Multiple Matches

Each tournament includes a multi-match format, giving players the chance to compete in several matches and face a variety of opponents. This helps accelerate their development through both challenge and repetition.





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# 10U NATIONAL PATHWAY TEAM

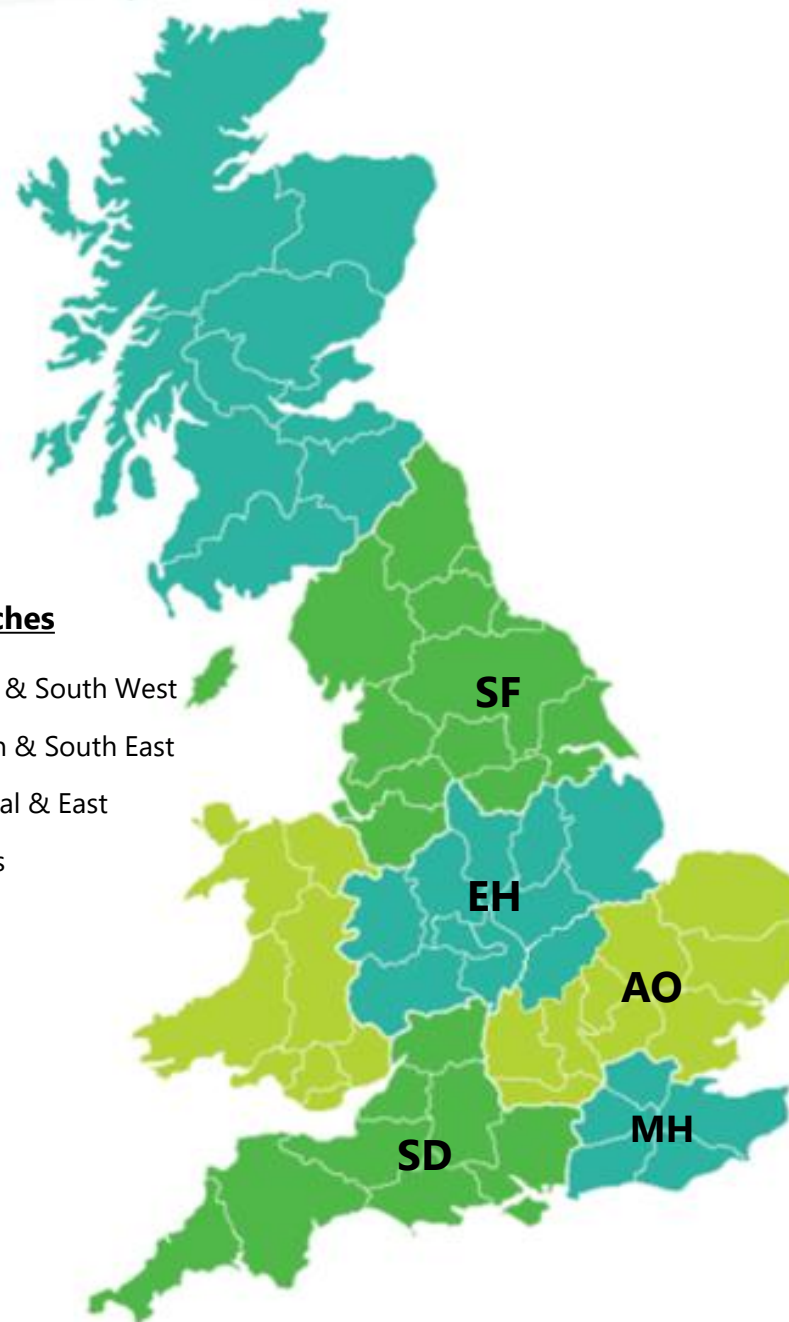


**DAVID KIRBY**

10U National Pathway  
Manager

## National Pathway Coaches

- Shane Deacon – South & South West
- Mark Hayden – London & South East
- Anthony Orton – Central & East
- Eve Hughes – Midlands
- Steven Fathers - North



**SHANE DEACON**



**MARK HAYDEN**



**ANTHONY  
ORTON**



**EVE HUGHES**



**STEVEN  
FATHERS**



# 10U NATIONAL PATHWAY TEAM

## OUR MISSION:

**To become one of the most respected nations in the world for player development**

Our role in the 10&U Team is to identify those players with the potential to transition into the next stage of the player pathway and where necessary, provide support to the parents and coaching team to accelerate the players development.

- **Delivering Regional, Inter-Regional, Nation and International 10&U Pathway activity**
- **Attending key competition**
- **Providing support to parents and coaches**



# 10U NATIONAL PATHWAY TEAM

## OUR ROLE AT COMPETITION

One or more National Coaches will be present at all National Tour events. Our primary purpose is to observe players as they compete and perform, while supporting the creation of a healthy, positive, and safe environment where all players can thrive.

As a team of national coaches, we love to see players playing tennis freely, building skills and developing tactical patterns that will support them through the next stages of the pathway and beyond.

## OUR LENS: Players developing for the future and playing the right way

- **Future focused** – Making decisions and playing in ways that support long-term development and success
- **Head** – Match IQ, attitude, mindset, concentration, and focus
- **Heart** – Robust competitors, determination, competitiveness, emotional resilience, and a strong will to win
- **Athlete** – Fast, durable, dynamic, and physically adaptableflexible
- **Technical/Tactical** – Development of the skills required for an all-court game
- **Readiness** – Emotionally committed, aware of expectations, and prepared to engage
- **Performance** – Delivering meaningful results through effort, execution, and decision-making

**These events are naturally competitive, and we kindly ask for the support of all parents in ensuring that both players and parents conduct themselves in respectful and appropriate manner at all times.**

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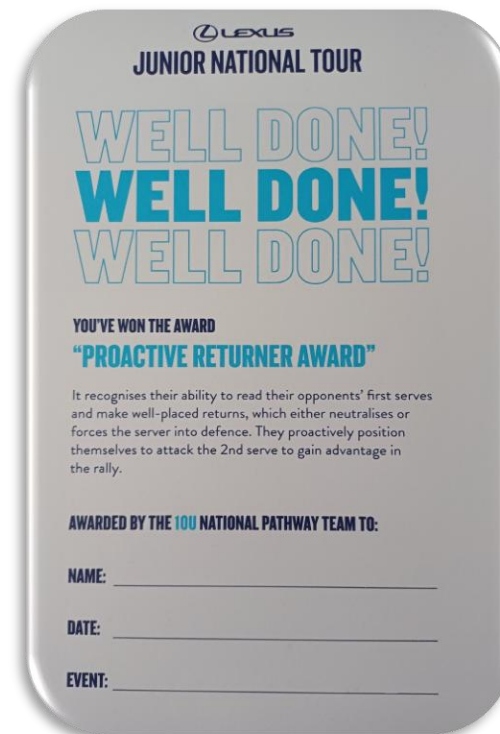
# PERFORMANCE AWARDS

In 2023, we introduced performance awards to the National Tour to recognise key elements of a player's performance beyond just the outcome. This approach supports growth, learning, and long-term development. Focusing solely on winning at this stage can create unnecessary pressure, discourage adventurous game styles, and contribute to burnout or a fixed mindset.

There are nine different awards, designed to be progressive from 9U through to 10U, and aligned with each player's age and stage of development. These awards highlight performance behaviours we believe are critical to the growth and long-term success of young performance tennis players. 10U National Coaches present the awards during the closing presentation of each event.

Below is an example of the 9u & 10u awards along with a certificate.

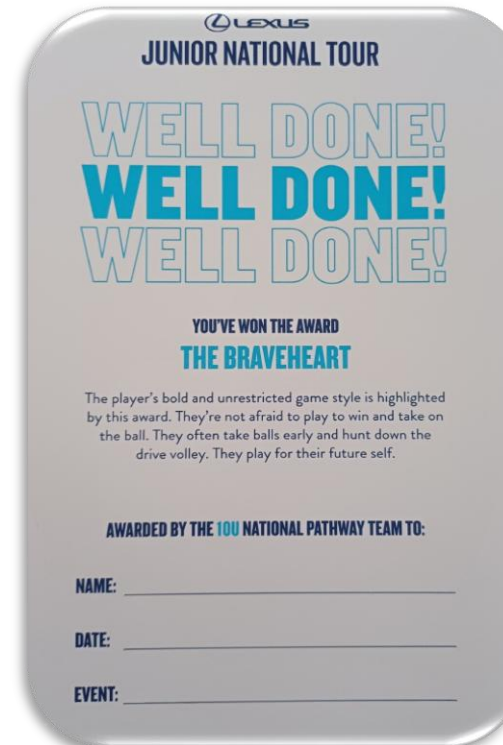
## 9u Certificate



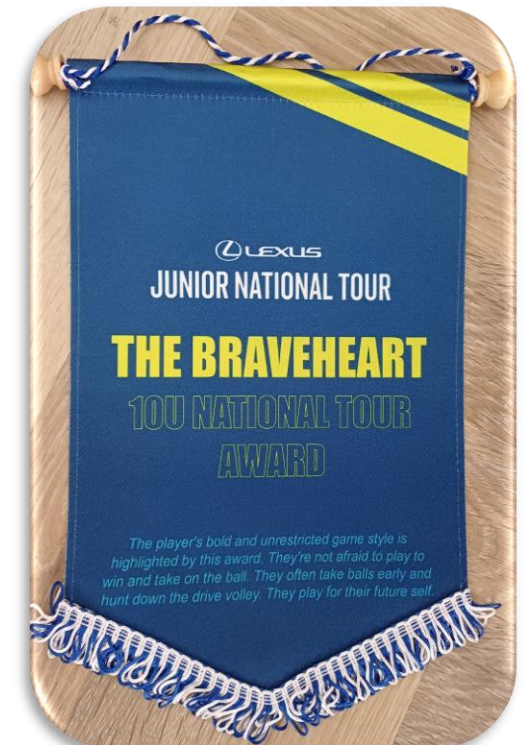
## 9u Pin Badge



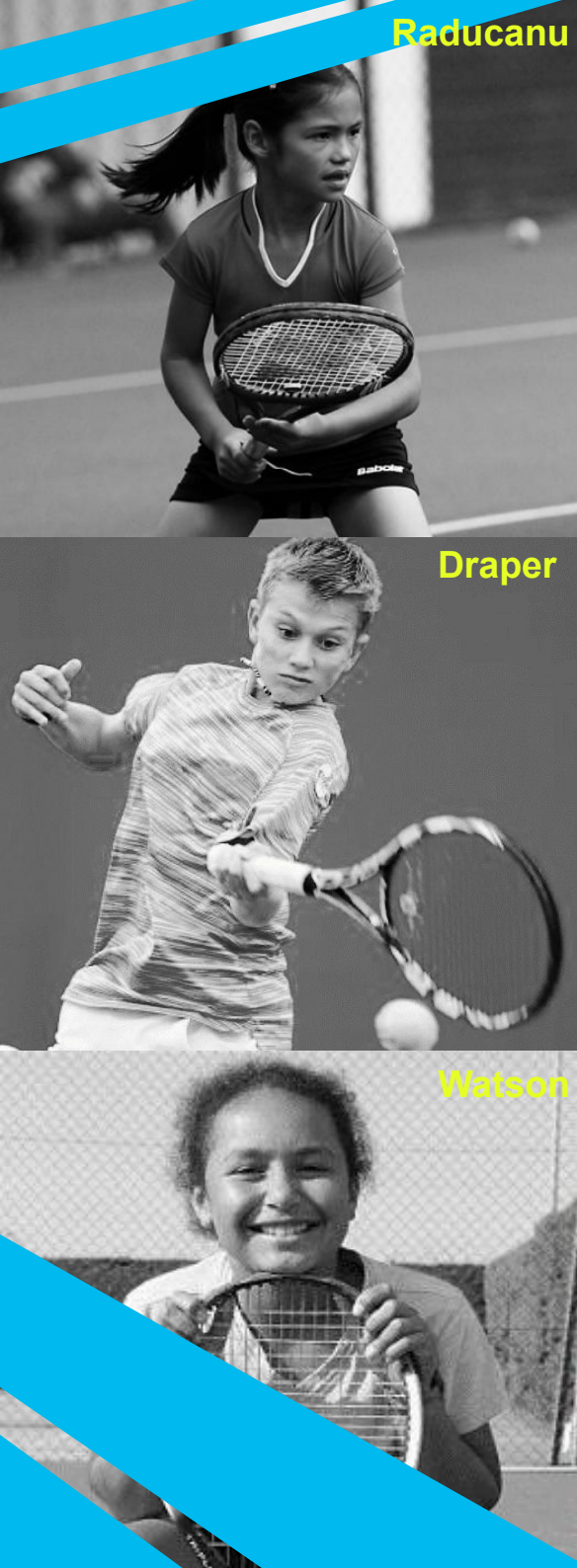
## 10u Certificate



## 10u Pennant







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# PERFORMANCE AWARDS

9U AWARD	MEANING	10U AWARD	MEANING
Laser Beam Focus	This award acknowledges the player's unwavering focus and determination during play, they have tunnel vision on the task in hand and show an inner strength of character, a tough opponent to break down.	The FlowRider	This award celebrates the player's ability to read the game's momentum and flow. They are mentally present and can strategically deploy good choices in the given moment of the match.
Resilient Competitor	This award recognizes the player's ability to persevere through tough matches or situations. It highlights their resilience and determination to never give up and keep fighting, whether they are ahead or behind. It highlights the player's ability to show mental toughness.	The Fighter	This award recognizes a player's unwavering competitive spirit; regardless of the circumstance, they will always be a tough opponent to beat and possess the inner fortitude to keep going whether they are up, level, or behind. They show signs of good emotional control.
Super Mover Award	This award recognizes the player's speed and agility on the court. It highlights their ability to efficiently move around the court to make impressive shots in any game situation.	The Shifter	The players' quick and effective movement around the court is acknowledged with this award. Their agility and quickness provide as a distinct advantage in their play.



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# PERFORMANCE AWARDS

9U AWARD	MEANING	10U AWARD	MEANING
<b>Proactive Returner</b>	It recognizes their ability to read their opponents' first serves and make well-placed returns, which either neutralises or forces the server into defence. They proactively position themselves to attack the 2 <sup>nd</sup> serve to gain advantage in the rally.	<b>The Returner</b>	The recipient of this award is a player whose aggressive return game can disrupt the serve. When to strike or neutralize, they exhibit outstanding tactical awareness. The 2 <sup>nd</sup> serve of opponent is always under pressure.
<b>Super Strength</b>	This award recognizes the player's ability and courage to use their shots as deadly weapons on the court, as if they have a killer instinct. It highlights their power and accuracy in hitting winners and forcing errors from their opponents.	<b>The Front Runner</b>	The recipient of this award is a player who looks for the first chance to attack and take balls early. Opponents are forced into defence when they attack. In their game, they have obvious weapons that are frequently employed.
<b>Active Aggressor</b>	This award symbolizes the player's ability to recognise the appropriate moments to move forwards and transition to the net. They have the courage to come forwards using their net play skills to finish the point.	<b>The Braveheart</b>	The player's bold and unrestricted game style is highlighted by this award. They're not afraid to play to win and take on the ball. They often take balls early and hunt down the drive volley. They play for their future self.





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# PERFORMANCE AWARDS

9U AWARD	MEANING	10U AWARD	MEANING
<b>Variation King/Queen</b>	This award recognizes the player's ability to vary their shots. It highlights their creativity and versatility in hitting with different speeds, spins, and heights to keep their opponents guessing and forcing them off balance.	<b>The Creator</b>	This award honours a player who can create multiple opportunities during a rally by using a variety of shots. They can attack, defend, or remain neutral when using this skill.
<b>Sideline Breaker</b>	This award acknowledges the player's ability to hit shots that break the sidelines. It highlights their skill in hitting shots that force their opponents to move and stretch to the limit. They use power and accuracy to open the court on a consistent basis, often resulting in errors or weak returns from their opponent.	<b>The Strategist</b>	This award recognizes players that have a clear plan and consistently demonstrate successful patterns of play. They exhibit intelligent shot selections and follow a well-defined strategy throughout the game.
<b>Big Server</b>	This award acknowledges the player's impressive serve. This player shows a consistent routine and thinks about the placement of the serve. It recognizes their ability to consistently hit serves with either great speed and/or great accuracy.	<b>The Dispatcher</b>	The player's ability to consistently use prepared patterns with serve and ball three, in addition to producing big serves is highlighted by this award.



# PARENTS HINTS & TIPS

It is critical that all players have a positive and encouraging experience throughout competition. This positive experience is essential to ensure their desire for the sport remains strong. Here are a few helpful hints and tips to ensure a positive experience is had by all:

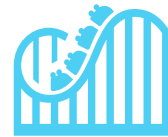
Thoughts to consider **BEFORE** the tournament



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Tennis is a journey, a long road that can present both opportunities and challenges along the way. Enjoyment is the key to longevity. These events are at the very beginning of the performance competition pathway – trust the ups and downs as part of your child's growth and development. Keep perspective and ensure the players enjoy the experience.



It is important to remember that a player's performance may fluctuate throughout a match, or even from one match to the next. Allow for mistakes, recognise they are part of the journey to improvement and remain positive.



Successful tennis parents can recognise the stress and anxiety that the players may feel throughout the competition and are able to maintain a supportive and understanding nature, regardless of performance. Reactions from players at this age and stage is normal and a part of the learning journey.



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# PARENTS HINTS & TIPS

Thoughts to consider **DURING** the tournament:



**Promote fair play** – Respect for opponents and officials is always essential. At times, encourage the players to be sociable and supportive towards others - they are still young, and building friendships and mutual respect is an important part of their development and the overall tournament atmosphere.

**Please note that on court behaviour will be closely monitored. Your role in endorsing and reinforcing positive conduct is vital, and we appreciate your help in setting a strong example of good sportsmanship at this age and stage.**



**Promote problem solving** – Ask your child questions. How can you get to your opponent's weakness? How can you move the opponent around the court? What worked well for you in that match?



**Promote the importance of enjoying the challenge of competition** – Resilience is a force that separates those who grow from challenges and those who are defeated by them. Every point and every match is a fresh opportunity with 50/50 chance of winning. Endorse the ethos of never giving up, no matter what the score. Professional players lose matches every week, its all about the response.



**Promote independence** – Players showing a willingness to take responsibility for having their drinks ready, have re fuelled at the correct times, watching their match court to be ready to play and calling the score out clearly.



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# PARENTS HINTS & TIPS

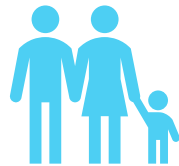
Thoughts to consider **AFTER** the tournament:



The car journey home – a recent study suggested that the main reason players stopped playing tennis was based on their negative experience of the car journey home from competition. Be mindful of this interaction and seek the positives.



Players will receive a certificate at the end of the tournament; there will be some reflective questions to encourage them to think about their game and how they have used the matches to improve. We appreciate winning is important, but game development is a priority.



The most important relationship is being a parent & child – no matter what has happened at the event the player will want approval from their parent. Remind them you are proud of them.



If your individual coach was not present, encourage the player to give them their feedback. Ask open-ended questions to encourage them to talk about their performance, but at a time that is appropriate to them. This will give direction for training and will focus in on present or future goals. Tournaments are opportunities to grow as a player and person.

**Parents can also download the Mental and Emotional Skills guide which provides more expert advice around how you can help the development of your child's mental and emotional skills. Download the guide [here](#).**





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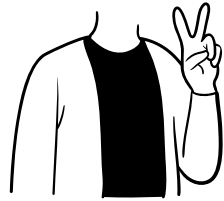


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# PARENT & PLAYER BEHAVIOUR

## Expectations of competing in the National Tour



There is strictly no coaching at any event. Parents must not communicate whilst the players are on court, this could lead to official warnings which would penalise the player.



We understand that children may become emotional, as they are still learning to regulate their feelings. However, it is important that emotions do not interfere with play. A key part of their development is learning to follow rules, stay respectful and build resilience when facing challenges. Parents play an important role in supporting this growth both on and off the court.



Players are expected to play the whole event; matches are all opportunities to grow and learn from no matter at what stage in the tournament.

**It is the collective responsibility for all adults present to ensure the players are able to perform in a safe and supportive environment. The National Tour represents the highest level of challenge within the 10u performance calendar. While we recognise the importance of high-level competition, our top priority remains the safeguarding and well-being of these young people.**



# JUNIOR NATIONAL TOUR

9U

PROGRESSIVE COMPETITION

GRADE 1

10U Grade 2

Orange ball

10U Grade 2

Green ball

GRADE 2

Orange Ball  
NORTH

Orange Ball  
NORTH

Orange Ball  
NORTH

Orange ball

Orange Ball  
NORTH

Orange Ball  
SOUTH

Orange Ball  
SOUTH

Orange Ball  
SOUTH

Orange Ball  
SOUTH

GRADE 3

Winter Regional  
Tour Linked

Winter Regional  
Tour Linked

Winter Regional  
Tour Linked

1  
OCTOBER

2  
DECEMBER

3  
FEBRUARY

4  
APRIL

5  
MAY

6  
JULY

7  
AUGUST

ROTATION

EARN PROGRESSION





# JUNIOR NATIONAL TOUR

10U

PROGRESSIVE COMPETITION

GRADE 1

Green ball

11U Grade 2

Yellow ball

11U Grade 2

Yellow ball

GRADE 2

Green ball

Green ball

Green ball

Green ball

Green ball

GRADE 3

Winter Regional  
Tour Linked

Winter Regional  
Tour Linked

Winter Regional  
Tour Linked

1

OCTOBER

2

DECEMBER

3

FEBRUARY

4

APRIL

5

MAY

6

JUNE/JULY

7

JULY

8

AUGUST

ROTATION

EARN T PROGRESSION

# 9U NATIONAL TOUR 2025-26

DATE	WRT LINKED EVENT	NORTH VENUE	SOUTH VENUE
<b><u>Rotation 1 G2</u></b> <b>N&amp;S Boys 1<sup>st</sup> November</b> <b>N&amp;S Girls 2<sup>nd</sup> November</b>	4/5 October – various venues <a href="#">View Girls events</a> <a href="#">View Boys events</a>	<a href="#">John Charles Leeds,</a> <a href="#">WAR-25-0029</a>	<a href="#">University of Bath,</a> <a href="#">AVO-25-0026</a>
<b><u>Rotation 2 G2</u></b> <b>N&amp;S Boys 13<sup>th</sup> December</b> <b>N&amp;S Girls 14<sup>th</sup> December</b>	8/9 November – various venues <a href="#">View Girls events</a> <a href="#">View Boys events</a>	<a href="#">Nottingham Tennis Centre,</a> <a href="#">NOT-25-0017</a>	<a href="#">Sutton Tennis Academy,</a> <a href="#">SUR-25-0075</a>
<b><u>Rotation 3 G2</u></b> <b>N&amp;S Boys 19<sup>th</sup> February</b> <b>N&amp;S Girls 20<sup>th</sup> February</b>	17/18 January – various venues <a href="#">View Girls events</a> <a href="#">View Boys events</a>	John Charles Leeds	West Hants Club
<b><u>Rotation 4,5,6,7</u></b> <b>To be confirmed on LTA website</b>			



# 10U NATIONAL TOUR 2025-26

DATE	WRT LINKED EVENT	VENUE
<b><u>Rotation 1 G2</u></b> <b>Boys 29-30<sup>th</sup> October</b> <b>Girls 27-28<sup>th</sup> October</b>	27 / 28 September – various venues <a href="#">View Boys events</a> <a href="#">View Girls events</a>	<u>Sunderland Tennis Centre,</u> <u>DUR-25-0021</u>
<b><u>Rotation 2 G2</u></b> <b>Boys 6-7<sup>th</sup> December</b> <b>Girls 13-14<sup>th</sup> December</b>	15 / 16 November – various venues <a href="#">View Boys events</a> <a href="#">View Girls events</a>	Corby <u>Boys: NTP-25-0022</u> <u>Girls: NTP-25-0023</u>
<b><u>Rotation 3 G1</u></b> <b>Girls 14-15<sup>th</sup> February</b> <b>Boys 21-22<sup>nd</sup> February</b>	Not linked - Grade 1	Corby
<b><u>Rotation 4,5,6,7,8</u></b> <b>To be confirmed on LTA website</b>	7 / 8 March – various venues <a href="#">View Boys events</a> <a href="#">View Girls events</a>	Bolton

**FOR MORE INFO,  
PLEASE CONTACT:**

**Eve Hughes**  
10u National Pathway Coach -  
Midlands

eve.hughes@LTA.org.uk

