



ITF JUNIOR UPDATE

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MISSION

To promote growth and high performance in junior tennis worldwide through the management of the ITF Junior Circuit, ITF Junior team Competitions, including the Junior Davis Cup and Junior Fed Cup, and to determine through the ITF junior world ranking the ITF junior world champions every year.

ITF JUNIOR CIRCUIT

The Circuit was created 28 years ago has grown from an initial 9 tournaments to its current size of 318 tournaments in 115 countries.

The ITF Junior Circuit has long been a training ground for the next generation of tennis professionals and in our opinion, it will no doubt remain the main avenue for elite competitive player development. In the last 6 years the ITF Junior Circuit has grown by more than 70%. We like to think that along with the increase in the number of tournaments the importance of the Junior Circuit to player development has also increased.

The ITF Junior Circuit provides competitive opportunities for talented junior players. Tournaments range from the Grade A events that attract thousands of spectators to the smallest Grade 5 events organised in developing nations. The ITF Junior Circuit, with its lower level tournaments, provides the opportunity for younger players to start competing at an international level in tournaments offering world ranking points, to develop their skills and potentials. Furthermore, it also caters for the most talented juniors players through the higher grades tournaments (A, 1 & 2) and identifies the ITF junior world champions every year.

ITF JUNIOR CIRCUIT DISTRIBUTION

The circuit is structured in regional circuits in a pyramid system and aims to have all member nations organise at least one circuit event, therefore reducing the need for travelling long distances. The world-wide geographical distribution is improving steadily due to the success of the Circuit in regions like North America (USA and Canada). It is very likely that regions such as Asia, Africa and North America will continue to establish more junior events to optimise the international competitive structure in those areas.

There are regions (Europe and South America) that now have a very good geographical distribution of tournaments and in the future we expect just a few minor adjustments in the calendar but no new tournaments. It is the responsibility of the ITF Junior



Competitions Committee to make sure that the ITF Junior Circuit maintains an optimal geographical distribution and a balanced grading of events.

ITF Junior Circuit Tournaments – Breakdown by Region, 2005

Africa: 28 Circuit events are organised in the region involving 14 nations

Asia: 71 Circuit events are organised in the region involving 28 nations

Europe: 124 Circuit events are organised in the region involving 40 nations

Oceania: 15 Circuit events are organised in the region involving 4 nations

North/Central America and Caribbean: 51 Circuit events are organised in the region involving 19 nations

South America: 29 Circuit events are organised in the region involving 10 nations

COMBINED SINGLES AND DOUBLES JUNIOR ITF RANKING

A Groundbreaking project was launched at the beginning of 2004 to encourage doubles at junior level and subsequently at the professional level. The ranking, which counts the singles and a percentage of doubles results together to produce one sole ranking, replaced the separate singles and doubles junior rankings. A player's ranking is calculated using the best six singles results plus one quarter (25%) of the best six doubles results.

The first year of the Combined Junior Ranking proved an overwhelming success with positive feedback received from Regional and National Associations, coaches, tournament organisers and players. The number of players participating in doubles has increased and the commitment shown by players in doubles events. This is proven by the following statistics:

Boys

2003 – 69% of the top 20 year-end ranked players competed in doubles in the events that they entered.

2004 – 91% of the top 20 year-end ranked players competed in doubles in the events that they entered.

Girls

2003 – 71% of the top 20 year-end ranked players competed in doubles in the events that they entered.

2004 – 91% of the top 20 year-end ranked players competed in doubles in the events that they entered.

Coaches appreciate the added incentive for players to develop all areas of their game by playing doubles and tournament organisers have witnessed a rise in the standard of players in doubles draws as well as a drop in the number of withdrawals from doubles events. The continued development of the Combined Junior Ranking will see more and



more Regional and National Associations using a similar system to combine their singles and doubles rankings, and thus emphasising the importance of doubles to players from an early age.

ITF JUNIOR TENNIS – A YEAR OF CELEBRATIONS (JUNE 2004 – MAY 2005)

This is a project that has celebrated the ITF achievement and success in junior tennis over the past 27 years by raising awareness of the ITF's work and success in all areas of junior tennis. The ITF is proud of the structure that it has established in junior tennis in different areas including: ITF Junior Circuit, ITF Junior World Champions, ITF Junior Team Competitions and various other projects.

A year of Celebration has also given the ITF the opportunity to thank its Regional Associations, member nations and sponsors for all the hard work, experience, knowledge and remarkable financial resources that have been put in junior tennis so far. Among the initiatives during the celebrations was a commemorative book that was produced in-house "*18 & Under: A celebration of ITF Junior tennis*". This book was published to capture the spirit of the Junior Competitions and reflect upon the 27 years of history during which the ITF, Regional Associations and the nations have built up, to what is today regarded as one of the most successful areas in international tennis.

ITF JUNIOR WORLD CHAMPIONS

If having the best possible world champion is one of the goals of the ITF Junior Circuit we are quite confident in saying that this has certainly been achieved. Several fine champions have benefited from the support and structure that has been evolving in junior tennis for more than a quarter of a century. Several of our Junior Singles World Champions went on to achieve a top ten professional ranking:

	ITF Junior World Champion	Professional Ranking
•Hana Mandlikova	1978	3
•Thierry Tulasne	1980	10
•Pat Cash	1981	4
•Zina Garrison	1981	4
•Guy Forget	1982	4
•Gabriela Sabatini	1984	3
•Natalia Zvereva	1987	5
•Karina Habsudova	1990	10
•Marcelo Rios	1993	1
•Anna Kournikova	1995	8
•Sebastian Grosjean	1996	4
•Amelie Mauresmo	1996	3
•Roger Federer	1998	1
•Jelena Dokic	1998	4



The ITF first honoured its World Junior Singles Champions in 1978. Since then 26 boys and 26 girls have been awarded this honour.

Eight former junior Singles World Champions have gone on to collect 27 Grand Slam titles between them at professional level, several have collected Olympic medals and many have played key roles in their countries' Davis and Fed Cup teams. *Andy Roddick and Roger Federer recently joined Ivan Lendl, Stefan Edberg and Martina Hingis* as the only players to be honoured as World Champion at both junior and professional level.

Players honoured as ITF Junior World Champion and ITF World Champion

	ITF Junior World Champion	ITF World Champion
• Ivan Lendl	1978	1985/86/87
• Stefan Edberg	1983	1991
• Martina Hingis	1994	1997/99/2000
• Andy Roddick	2000	2003
• Roger Federer	1998	2004

REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

The co-operation with the Regional Associations is always high on the ITF agenda. The ITF has delegated to the Regional Associations the co-ordination of the 16,14, and 12 & under age categories in their respective territories. However the ITF continues to assist them with the development of 14 & under and 16 & under regional circuits.

12 & UNDER COMPETITIONS

The 12 & U Age Eligibility Rule has been reviewed and a change was approved at the ITF AGM in 2004 bringing the number of international tournament opportunities available to players in this age group to a maximum of 10 in any calendar year, regardless of whether such tournaments are held abroad or nationally.

16 & UNDER TOURNAMENT FEED UP SYSTEM

The ITF is keen to initiate a feed-up system from the lower age category, 16 & under, through to 18 & under to nurture top players and ensure smooth progression into the 18 & under circuit. The 16 and under age category has definitely showed some sort of slowing down, as in the last five years the best players both boys and girls have focused more on tournaments on the ITF Junior Circuit to improve their world ranking. While the ITF is studying a feed-up system for the 16 and Under age category for all regions, with the ultimate goal being to provide players with an incentive to play in this age category, we need to remember the important role that the best international 16 & under tournaments have carried out for decades. They have allowed National Associations from all over the world to send their best players to compete and compare their standard, enabling them to gauge where they were in terms of player development.



We also believe that these tournaments continue to provide excellent opportunities for some of the best 14 and 15 years old players, especially the boys, to play at their age group and maintain an optimum win:loss ratio.

The ITF supports the regions in their quest for a revamp of the 16 & under age category, as we believe that players should continue to be given the opportunity to play in their age category internationally and only play up when there are physically mentally ready for it.

ITF JUNIOR AGE ELIGIBILITY RULE

As part of our efforts to protect young players from taking too much, too soon, the ITF stands by its junior AER, introduced in 2003. The ITF is actively seeking to protect young players from overplaying in ITF junior events and from travelling the world unnecessarily. Guarding against burnout is very high on the ITF's agenda. The ITF does not wish to encourage younger players to travel the world in search of points, especially when the standard is not appropriate. Among the restriction in place junior players are not allowed to enter any ITF Junior Circuit events until they have reached their 13th birthday. The ITF Junior Age Eligibility Rule tournament allowance is in addition to the professional Age Eligibility Rule.

ITF ROADMAP FROM JUNIORS TO PROFESSIONAL

Working with the ATP to introduce a feed up system for talented junior boys is high in the Juniors Department's agenda, as well as achieving an integration with the Pro Circuits and Grand Slam wild cards for ITF Junior World Champions.

JUNIOR EXEMPT PROJECT

A link between the ITF Junior Circuit and the Women's professional tennis body was introduced in 1997 to benefit the top ten year end ranked girls singles players. It has been a huge success over the years, offering many players a stepping stone to the professional ITF Women's Circuit.

GRAND SLAM WILD CARDS

A new initiative aimed at rewarding junior grand slams winners and aiding the transition from the juniors to the professional game for the top juniors was launched by the ITF and the Grand Slam Committee in January 2003.

Winners of each of the Junior Grand Slams are offered with a wild card, if needed, into the qualifying competition of the professional draw the following year at the relevant Grand slam.



ITF PRO-CIRCUITS & JUNIOR CIRCUIT

Both Circuits have been very successful each in their own area now the attention is for the first time on balancing juniors/pro-circuits tournaments in each country/region.

EDUCATIONAL PLAYER PROGRAMME

A pilot educational programme for junior players has been launched recently by the ITF. Educational Forums will be held during the Junior Team Competition finals as a means of providing practical assistance and guidance to young players. It is the intention of the programme to raise awareness in the following areas: Structure of the game, Education, Health and Welfare, Sponsorship, Player and public relations with media, Agents and ITF Team Competitions (Davis Cup, Fed Cup, Olympics).

ITF/WTA/ATP WIMBLEDON FORUM

In conjunction with WTA and ATP a Forum ("Introduction to Professional Tennis) is organised to provide junior players with educational resources and information to raise awareness about where they are headed (the "Pros").

GRAND SLAM JUNIOR MEDIA SERVICE

This programme launched in co-operation with the Grand Slams ensures that an ITF representative is present at each Junior Grand Slam event to distribute important information on the event to the world's media and provide a vital link between the players and the media.

ITF JUNIOR TEAM COMPETITIONS

The ITF has gained tremendous success from the junior team competitions. The sport's biggest stars have all represented their countries in our competitions: 25 Grand Slam Champions and more than 100 Davis Cup and Fed Cup players have participated in the ITF Junior Team Competitions.

Our best players continue to enjoy representing their country and the links between junior and professional team events are stronger than ever. The ITF Junior Team Competitions are valuable training grounds for players who have and will go on to represent their country in Davis Cup, Fed Cup and the Olympics. The social dimension is also very important for the junior players. Many players forge friendships and rivalries in their teens, when playing team competitions all over the world, which last into their pro careers.

The concept of regional qualifying events played in each continent that lead to a world final event were introduced in juniors by the ITF in 1985 with the inception of the 16 and under competitions, the World Youth Cup. It is no doubt that the success of the ITF junior team competitions has led to greater participation in the ITF's flagship events, Davis Cup by BNP Paribas and Fed Cup.



JUNIOR DAVIS CUP BY BNP PARIBAS AND JUNIOR FED CUP TENNIS COMPETITIONS

The international team competition for players aged 16 & under, was launched by the ITF in 1985 in Kobe Japan, as the "World Youth Cup" with NEC as the title sponsor between 1988-2001. In 2002 the ITF re-branded the boys competition as part of a new partnership with BNP Paribas to "Junior Davis Cup by BNP Paribas". The girl's competition was also changed to "Junior Fed Cup".

The future looks very bright indeed for our flagship team competition supported by BNP Paribas, the title sponsor and Wilson the official ball. The 2004-2006 Finals have been awarded to the Real Polo Club de Barcelona, Spain.

WORLD JUNIOR TENNIS COMPETITION

The WJT competition, the international team competition for players aged 14 & under, was played from 1991-1998 in Japan with NTT Corporation, the largest telecommunications company in Japan as the title sponsor. The event then moved to the Czech Republic where it is still held at present. It has also been confirmed that the 2006-2007 Finals will take place in Prostějov, Czech Republic.

REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF PLACES AT ITF JUNIOR TEAM FINALS

The ITF will introduce a permanent rule starting from 2006 as a follow up to a successful trial performance based system that was introduced in 2003 to encourage and reward growth and improvement in each region and allow for the regional rotation of qualifying places on the basis of the Region occupying 16th position being relegated during the following year.

The performance-based elimination system has been very well received by the participating nations as a fair and objective way of allocating places to Regions for the Junior Team Competition Finals with added incentive to the level of competitiveness in the consolation stages.

16 & UNDER TEAM COMPETITION FEED UP SYSTEM

Recently a link between the Junior Davis Cup by BNP Paribas & Junior Fed Cup and the Junior Circuit has been established by introducing a 16 & under Feed-Up Team Competition System. Under this system junior players whom are part of the finishing top three teams will receive main-draw special exempts into high-graded Junior Circuit events in their home region.

TEAM IDENTIFICATION

This rule introduced in 2003 has been well supported by our member nations and foster the team identification concept at junior team level. Team uniforms will continue to be



mandatory at the Finals of the World Junior Tennis, Junior Davis Cup by BNP Paribas and Junior Fed Cup and optional at the qualifying and pre-qualifying rounds.

ITF COMMUNICATIONS

The promotion of junior tennis has always been high in the ITF agenda. In 1998, the ITF launched "Tennis Stuff" a magazine dedicated to junior tennis and two years later in 2000, ITFJuniors.com a dedicated website providing information on tournaments, rankings and all areas of junior tennis was introduced.

In 2004 the junior website got a new address and a redesign in an effort to continue offering the most up to date information on junior tennis in a modernised option and it now includes: printable versions of News, info, rankings, draw-sheets, players activities, head to head & biographies are now available.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES IN JUNIORS

The ITF has recently appointed an ITF Sponsorship Administrator for Non-Professional events. Income generating opportunities through sponsorship and specific areas of opportunities include the Junior Fed Cup, World Junior Tennis and the ITF Junior Circuit.