



## Editorial

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Welcome to issue 85 of the ITF Coaching and Sport Science Review. Tennis activities all over the world are still being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In these challenging times, our thoughts are with everyone who has been directly affected by the pandemic. This is a special issue on 10 & Under tennis with an emphasis on early stages (4–6-year-old players), which includes contributions from all over the world.

The ITF Education pillar part of the 2021- 2024 ITF Development strategy is currently delivered through three main educational resources: the ITF Academy, the ITF eBooks, and the ITF Coaching and Sport Science Review. Through its education pillar the ITF is setting and raising professional standards for tennis education as a truly global sport.

The ITF Academy is the online educational platform from the ITF, and it was officially launched in March 2019. It is an essential tool for continued professional development that the ITF puts at the service of its member nations to elevate the quality of tennis education worldwide. The ITF Academy is directed towards coaches, players, parents, and all interested in increasing their tennis knowledge. The ITF Academy is an integral element of the “blended learning” methodology already implemented in all ITF certification courses, with the combination of online courses and face-to-face delivery of courses providing an improved experience.

Today the ITF Academy has over 210,000 users from 221 nations. During COVID-19 registration numbers increased significantly because users had more time to engage with the ITF Academy. Specifically new to the ITF Academy this year are the players and parents’ sections, the on-line tutor training courses, the blended delivery of all the courses, as well as the organisation of the ITF World Coaches Conference by BNP Paribas. Next year we will be launching a new section of the ITF Academy dedicated to tennis managers, as well as a self-evaluation tool for users. The ITF Regional Coaches Conferences will also be delivered through the ITF Academy. Currently there are more than 1300 content items and 165 online courses available in 8 languages. We have already delivered more than 160 blended education programmes in more than 30 countries. 46% of users are female and English is the most used language. Europe is the region which has more users, and the mobile is the device preferred by close to 55% of the users.

In addition to the courses and resources available on ITF Academy, the ITF eBooks app offers more than 150 publications in 13 languages. Many of these publications, such as the ITF Advanced Coaches Manual, are available for free in your mobile and tablet for both Android and IOS devices.



The ITF Coaching and Sport Science Review is the official coaching and sport science publication of the ITF. Since the first edition in 1993, around 800 articles have been published covering a range of topics such as biomechanics, tactics, psychology, physiology, strength and conditioning, business, and more. Articles contain the most up-to-date scientific knowledge, written by experts in the field. The journal, which is published quarterly, is also available in the ITF Academy.

The goal of the ITF’s Recognition of Coach Education Systems is to assist member nations in becoming self-sufficient in delivering their coach education, by achieving several criteria for quality standards set by the ITF Coaches Commission. Today, there are a total of 57 nations which have their coach education system recognised by the ITF. 16 at gold level, 9 at silver, 22 at bronze and 11 at white.

The ITF assists all member nations, those who are recognised receive assistance to keep their status and maintain their self-sufficiency. In the case of nations that do not have their coach education recognised yet, the ITF assists them in the implementation of the programme by sending tutors, training local tutors, providing resources, and delivering the courses at all levels with the goal of being gradually self-sufficient. This positive trend shows clear evidence on how ITF is helping nations to develop and be self-sufficient in coach education.

The ITF Education resources are research and evidence-based and are at the service of the tennis community. It's our mission to assist all those interested in tennis in producing more and better players, therefore we encourage you to share and communicate our resources with those you interact with.

The ITF World Coaches Conference by BNP Paribas enjoyed its most successful staging yet on 5-7 November, with over 1750 participants from 151 nations taking part in the first virtual edition of the event, which saw a 32% attendance of female coaches. The biennial conference, which has been held on 22 occasions since its inaugural staging in Florida in 1982, regularly attracts over 600 participants from across the globe. As a virtual event, the showpiece of the ITF's Education Programme was able to reach a far broader audience.

A high-profile and expert cast of speakers added the stardust to the 2021 edition, with the likes of Martina Hingis, Feliciano Lopez and Judy Murray all delivering presentations alongside other industry leaders in tennis coaching, coach education, player development, sport science and participation. Hingis, Lopez and Murray were just three of the 64 speakers across the three-day conference, providing a host of insightful contributions across a broad range of topics

The ITF continues to support 142 active National Associations that are involved in the ITF Junior Tennis Initiative (JTI). Brunei Darussalam, Ethiopia and Somalia have become active JTI nations during 2021, with Somalia joining for the first time. The ITF Development Officers continue to meet regularly with their National JTI Coordinators, organising virtual conference calls each quarter throughout the year. All National Coordinators were invited to virtually attend the ITF Participation Webinar, the 3rd ITF World Participation Conference and the 22nd ITF World Coaches Conference in order to ensure that they are up to date on ITF activities in participation and education, as well as importantly use these opportunities for their continuous professional development.

In November, the 2nd National JTI Coordinator Global Workshop was held virtually, across two sessions with 163 attendees from 106 nations in attendance. All National Coordinators must now complete the 'Understanding the JTI' and 'Safeguarding in Tennis' courses on the ITF Academy prior to any subsidy being processed by the ITF to their National Associations.

The ITF has created an online digital Toolkit for National Associations to generate pre-defined print and digital promotional assets. These assets can be used to promote JTI activities and Tennis Festivals, with some nations using the Toolkit to creating assets for promoting education courses. All active JTI nations have access to the ITF Toolkit and their specific national JTI logo, with all users required to be nominated by their National Association through an online nomination form.



The ITF Development Officers continue to monitor the level of activity across the JTI, both at the grassroots level and within junior performance tennis. National recreational tennis activity is being tracked regularly to monitor the various restrictions imposed by governments due to the pandemic. The delivery of tennis activity (including competition) within Primary Schools continues to be affected in many countries.

The JTI reporting is critical to monitoring and measuring the impact and the return on investment. A purpose-built online web-application is being tested, with further developments being integrated to ensure that all active JTI nations are able to use the platform for the 2022 JTI reporting process. The platform will become a hub for all JTI nations to supply their programme insight direct from their coaches and schoolteachers and will become an important development assessment tool for the ITF Development Officers when meeting with the nations.

As for the ITF World Tennis Number (WTN), in 2021 the focus has been on sharing good quality data with 60 priority nations, while allowing any other nation to fast track their data integration. The aim is to enable us to reach a critical mass of player data ready for our first ITF WTT Juniors pilots. The player data & match results data for 43 nations is currently being validated, loaded, and initialised.

At the same time work continues to support ITF nations in successfully activating the ITF World Tennis Number using an extensive promotional and branding toolkit of launch resources. As each nation launches, the project team are developing a customised plan that can be applied to different profiles of nations to encourage successful adoption by tennis players and providers. Additionally, Regional Launch plans have been implemented in the Pacific, Central America and South America with nations working closely with ITF and Regional Associations for a smooth and effective implementation. The development of an automatic translation mechanism for different languages and alphabets has been implemented in our first nations with good results. ITF are also using advanced processes to ensure a player provided by many nations has one unique account with combining all of their match records.

Project milestones include the following: 135 Nations have signed to participate in the project, representing 86% of global players. 10 Nations are Live or Testing ITF World Tennis Numbers. 43 Nations have shared their national player and match data, a total of 1.8 million Player Records and 15 million match records have been validated and loaded. ITF Academy offers three educational courses on ITF WTN including on how the Numbers are calculated by the ITF algorithm. ITF World Tennis Numbers are public In Great Britain, Ireland and Singapore. 4300 ITF Junior Player Profiles have ITF World Tennis Numbers on itftennis.com. ITF World Tennis Number is used as a supportive entry criterion to 2021 ITF World Junior Tennis Finals (14U) and JDC & BJJC Junior (16U) Finals as well as a supportive entry criterion to 2021 ITF Seniors World Championships

In 2022 National Associations will be able to offer exclusive ITF World Tennis Number website sign ups directly to their player customers. Registrations will be open and WTN applications can be made straight to the website for all National Associations that wish to benefit from this service. ITF WTNS will be used at ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors Events in Q2 2022. Subject to approval by ATP and WTA, it is planned that the WTN will then be used as a method of acceptance in World Tennis Tour professional tournaments.

The ITF Digitalisation Grant Programme is designed to help our member Nations introduce digital resources. These resources will enable Nations to find more cost effective and efficient ways to manage their operations and provide more people with the opportunity to play tennis. Eligible nations may apply for funding to support predefined IT projects that are outlined in the programme's guidelines. The programme opens for applications on a yearly basis and priority is given to projects that assist National Association integration with the ITF World Tennis Number. Since the programme launched in 2018 the ITF has awarded \$395,000 to 47 nations including \$108,000 for the 16 successful nations in 2021.

We would like to encourage new submissions to the ITF CSSR. Full guidelines for acceptance and publication of articles can be found in the most recent issue page on the ITF Academy. Finally, we would like to thank all the authors for their contributions, as well as all of those who sent in proposals. We hope that you enjoy reading the 85th edition of the ITF Coaching and Sport Science Review.

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