



## Editorial

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Welcome to issue 86 of the ITF Coaching and Sport Science Review, which is the first issue of the year. Tennis activities are gradually returning to normality in many regions worldwide. However, there are regions and countries that are still being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our thoughts are with all of them as well as with those which are suffering from other disasters including the war in Ukraine.

Since the last edition of the ITF CSSR, the ITF Academy, the educational platform of the ITF has seen a considerable progress. The registered users have increased by 15% to over 47,000 while the anonymous users increased by 10% up to 178,000 users, to reach a total user base of over 226,000. Content is updated regularly to the Library (former iCoach), with more than 1,600 items currently available, currently content from the 2021 ITF World Coaches Conference is added on a weekly basis. A total of 179 online courses are currently published available in 9 languages with Chinese added in February 2022. Since October 2021, over 125 blended learning programmes were scheduled and delivered through the platform by more than 65 nations. The migration to the ITF Tennis ID (Single Sign On) project was completed in February 2022, all users have received instructions to update their accounts. Parent Education Workshops are live and being delivered across all regions for both levels, Player Education for ITF WTT Junior players is in place and available to all iPin users.

Furthermore, the ITF eBooks app continues to offer 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.

As per the ITF Recognition of Coach Education Systems programme, its goal 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. There are currently over 60 Nations recognised across the four different levels of White, Bronze, Silver, and Gold. The goal is to have at least 80 Nations recognised at the end of 2022.

The fourth [ITF World Participation Conference](#) will take place virtually from 19-21 July and, as with previous editions, the event will provide the platform for a global conversation about increasing participation in tennis and sport in general. The ITF World Participation Conference provides one of the only opportunities to come together to discuss ways to increase participation in sport globally. The fourth edition of the event



will once again feature a leading line-up of international speakers who will share their expertise and experiences around this year's conference theme: 'Maximising play and enjoyment to drive participation'. Hosted virtually for the second time, the 2022 edition will be open to anyone wishing to attend. Conference attendees will need to be a registered user of the ITF Academy to attend and registration will open in May via the ITF Academy. Once registered, attendees will be able to access content from the previous three ITF World Participation Conferences via the ITF Academy Library.

The Junior Tennis Initiative (JTI) is the ITF's global national junior development programme that introduces children aged 14-and-under to the sport. The JTI is the launch point for many aspiring competitive players across regions, as a platform to introduce talented players to the game. The programme is the foundation for a National Association's player development pathway which is supported by the ITF. It provides children across the world with the opportunity to pick up a racket for the first time and play regularly in competitions. Despite ongoing challenges with Covid-19, activities as part of the JTI continued to increase in 2021 across the 142 active JTI nations. Over 210,000 children were introduced through the programme within over 3,500 primary schools and tennis clubs, and these playing opportunities were provided by over 6,000 schoolteachers and tennis coaches.

The ITF World Tennis Number continues to be embedded around the world with 138 nations now participating, representing 86% of global players. To date, 43 nations have shared their national player and match data, which equates to 2 million player records and 17 million match records being loaded into the platform.

So far, ITF World Tennis Number is publicly available in Great Britain, Ireland, Lithuania and Singapore and on all ITF Junior and Senior player profiles via [itftennis.com](http://itftennis.com). Meanwhile, the United States Tennis Association has staged over 50 pilot events for ITF World Tennis Number in readiness to launch in the coming months.

The vision is to create a global digital tennis community for the ITF and its National Associations. Behind the scenes, data quality teams are enhancing automated procedures to match players across multiple databases around the world. This is key to ensuring a player has all their match records and an accurate ITF WTN. To facilitate this, the ITF has introduced a new global Tennis ID, as well as a number of Tennis Open Data Standards. Alongside this, a new Tournament Management System is being developed which will be made available for nations to use later this year. This will complement the integration the ITF has with existing tournament management systems enabling automated data collection and improved data quality. In recognition of this progress, the ITF, alongside Clubspark are delighted to have been nominated for a 2022 Sports Technology Award.

Looking ahead, this Summer National Associations will be able to offer their players the opportunity to register for ITF WTN via [worldtennisnumber.com](http://worldtennisnumber.com), giving more people direct access

to the tool and its benefits. To support this, the ITF is working closely with National Association's to amplify the promotion of ITF WTN to players.

From May, ITF WTN will be also used as the second acceptance criteria for ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors and ITF World Tennis Masters Tour events and tournaments. Subject to approval by ATP and WTA, future plans also include using ITF WTN as a method of acceptance in World Tennis Tour professional tournaments. ITF Academy offers four interactive educational courses on ITF WTN including information about how the Numbers are calculated.

In this editorial we would like also to mention ITFWorld, which is the official magazine of the ITF. Each edition of ITFWorld is packed with exclusive content, including interviews with the sport's top stars, and a range of other features and articles. The spring 2022 edition of ITFWorld has been published and can be [read here](#). Among other topics, the latest issue includes a tribute of Mark Woodforde to former world No. 1 Ashleigh Barty, after her retirement. Billie Jean King gives a team talk ahead of the Billie Jean King Cup Qualifiers which will determine the line-up for the 2022 Finals. Casper Ruud shares his ambitions for the remainder of 2022, and Angella Okutoyi from Kenya discusses her beginnings.

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 86th edition of the ITF Coaching and Sport Science Review.

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