

**St. John's Tennis Association
JUNIOR DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS**

**INFORMATION GUIDE
September 2020 – June 2021**



For additional information, visit

www.sjta.ca

Overview

SJTA is committed to providing a wide variety of tennis skill development programs to junior players between the ages of 18 months to 18 years.

Tennis is a game for life. The key to finding and maintaining a love for the game is developing the skills that make - and keep - the game fun. Without even realizing it, players also develop other skills, such as hand-eye coordination, foot work, strategy and teamwork, which cross over to many other sports and activities. Junior developmental lessons are a great way to build the foundation to make tennis part of a lifelong active lifestyle.

SJTA delivers some of the highest quality junior developmental programs in Canada. Our programs are based on Tennis Canada's skill progression model which adheres to *Quality Standards for Kids Tennis* (QSKT).

QSKT's goal is to "raise the quality and consistency of children's tennis programs in an effort to provide safe environments and positive experiences that promote life-long participation." It brings together the latest research and best practices in children's tennis programming and is a joint initiative between Tennis Canada and the provincial tennis associations and is supported by the Tennis Professionals Association (TPA).

This year SJTA is pleased to offer two streams within the Junior Developmental Program - Recreational for all levels and Competitive for Red Ball and Orange Ball. Both streams are designed to start the player at their current skill level and use progressive tennis teaching strategies, beginning with reduced court size, reduced racket size and less pressurized (slower) balls to encourage fun and skill development.

Children progress at different rates, so our coaches constantly monitor each child's development. If we feel a child is ready to progress to the next level, we consult with the parents to discuss a possible transition.

Most players will register for programs in the recreational stream. Based on a player's previous participation and performance in lessons and programs, including the past summer's outdoor program, some players are invited to register for the competitive stream. Please note that **players who are new to SJTA, regardless of experience, must first register for the age/skill-level appropriate recreational program** as participation in the competitive stream requires consultation with and evaluation by SJTA's Head Coach Mike Meaney.

Program Policies and Information

- For each child's enjoyment and optimal skill development, SJTA reserves the right to place players in the program most suitable to the child's age and skill level.
- Participants must wear appropriate athletic attire, including non-marking court shoes.
- Programs will not take place on club-posted holidays. Club holidays will be announced at the beginning of each term and prices will reflect the reduced number of lessons. Every effort will be made to reschedule sessions missed due to unexpected closures (eg. snow days, unsafe court conditions).

- Due to the nature of our programs, we are unable to offer make-up sessions for children who miss sessions.
- Payment is due in full at registration. Players are not permitted to attend classes until registration is complete and payment is received in full. Payments can be made by credit card (Visa, Master Card or American Express), personal cheque, debit card or cash. NSF or other refused forms of payment will incur a charge of \$20.00 plus HST per item.
- Single class (drop-in) registration is not permitted. Children must be registered for the full program.
- Programs may be cancelled due to insufficient registration. An alternate program or a full refund will be offered if a program is cancelled due to insufficient registration.
- Program refunds will be issued only up to seven (7) days prior to the program start date. An administrative fee of 10% of the program cost, to a maximum of \$50.00, will be charged on all refunds.
- Club credit may be provided to participants who are unable to continue in a program for medical reasons. Credit requests must be accompanied by a doctor's note confirming the participant's inability to continue in the program. Requests must be submitted to and reviewed by the General Manager and final approval is at the discretion of the General Manager.

Head Professional



Mike Meaney is SJTA Head Coach and Tennis Director, as well as Technical Director for Tennis NL. He has worked in the tennis industry for over 25 years, including a stint with Tennis Saskatchewan. He is a certified Tennis Canada Coach 3, has coached at four previous Canada Games and is currently head coach for the provincial 2022 Canada Games tennis team.

At Green Belt, Mike directs a strong team of certified tennis instructors and is responsible for junior and adult programming. At the provincial level, he oversees Tennis NL's school programs across the province.

A former provincial, Atlantic and national level junior player and 1989 Canada Games athlete, Mike started playing tennis by accident, but instantly fell in love with the game and hasn't looked back since, turning his passion into a career.

Mike can be reached at Green Belt by phone at 722-3840 (Ext 203) or by email at tennistd@sportnl.ca.

Programs

Parent and Tot 18 Months – 3 Years

An introductory program for parents with young children, this program helps build coordination and body and spatial awareness. The use of obstacle courses, throwing and props keep the little one's interest piqued with curiosity as they acquire new skills.

Les Petits 3 – 4 Years

This program is for children who have already been a part of our Parent and Tot program or are old enough to be independent and work with other players of a similar age. Les Petits focuses on enhancing and developing beginning tennis and coordination skills, including centering skills, balance, basic setup and hitting actions

Red Ball Programs 4 – 7 Years

The Red Ball half-court tennis program is the first step in our progressive tennis programming and is focused on skill development. Coordination and cooperative activities will lead to the development of the basic strokes and fundamentals in an active and FUN environment.



Equipment modifications to ensure success:

- Bigger and slower ball - 75% slower than the traditional yellow tennis ball
- Smaller court
- Lower net
- Smaller racquet (19 – 23 inches)
- Shorter games (tie-breaks and short sets)

Red Ball – Competitive

Players interested in our Red Ball – Competitive stream should show an interest in competing, in playing tennis more often or have been identified by the Head Coach as showing aptitude for the game. Ideally, the player would have already acquired basic rally skills through our Red Ball program. Participation in Red Ball - Competitive will be by invitation only. Any parent of a player who has not been identified/invited but is interested in the program for their child should contact the Head Coach for an evaluation.

Orange Ball Programs 10 Years & Under

The Orange Ball three-quarter court curriculum allows young players to play on an 18m court with the same rules as those allowed on a regulation court. Playing the “real game” will promote the development of fundamentals required in game situations. Low-compression balls facilitate development of the tactical areas, along with ensuring the development of good technical FUNDamentals.



Equipment modifications to ensure success:

- Bigger and slower ball - 50% slower than traditional yellow tennis ball
- Smaller court
- Lower net
- Smaller racquet (21 – 25 inches)
- Shorter games (tie-breaks and short sets)

Orange Ball - Competitive

Generally, players in Orange Ball – Competitive have been playing tennis for a while, have progressed through our Red Ball programs, have achieved an appropriate skill level and are keen to continue their development toward competitive tennis. The Head Coach will be responsible for inviting and approving players into this program.

Any parent of a player who has not been identified/invited but is interested in the program for their child should contact the Head Coach for an evaluation.

Green Ball Program 9 – 12 Years

Green Ball is played on the full court using lower compression balls. This program continues with skill development in all areas of tennis – technical, tactical, physical and psychological. The program will successfully develop solid FUNDamentals around serve, rally and score.



Equipment modifications to ensure success:

- Bigger and slower ball - 25% slower than traditional yellow tennis ball
- Smaller racquet (23 – 26 inch)
- Shorter games and shorter sets

Competitive programs at this level can be found in our High Performance Program information guide.

Yellow Ball Program

11 – 18 Years

The Yellow Ball program is focused on further developing the five ball controls – height, speed, spin, distance and direction. These fundamental skills start with lower compression balls and progress to traditional yellow balls, depending on the overall skill level of players.

Older junior players, who are new to the game, will find this level a comfortable starting point. These players typically progress quickly from the low compression balls into yellow ball drills due to more developed coordination and physical strength.

Competitive programs at this level can be found in our High Performance Program description.