

England

Priority Year 3&4 Competition (3a.1)

This document aims to assist you in running a Year 3&4 Schools Tennis Competition, by providing information about the rules of Mini Tennis, guidance on formats and all other areas associated with the competition.

- This document is split into the following areas:
- Aim of the Competition
- Overall Competition Structure
- Roles & Responsibilities
- Team Composition
- Tournament Format, Length of Matches & Scoring
- Court Size
- Playing
- Resources
- Young Leaders & Officials
- Miscellaneous
- More Information & Support
- Event Checklist

Please note that much of the information in this document is for guidance only. Mini Tennis, especially in schools, has been designed to allow a deal of flexibility to encourage participation.



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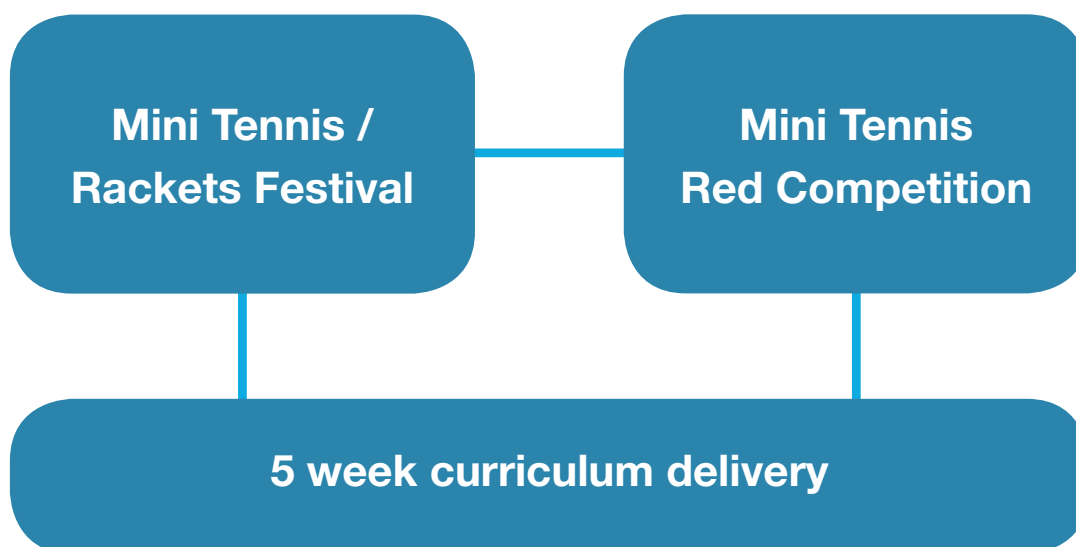
Aim of the Year 3&4 Mini Tennis Red Competition

The Year 3&4 Mini Tennis Red Schools Competition is an entry level event, aimed at beginners and players new to the game, rather than an opportunity for advanced players already competing regularly outside of school. Options on how to run competition for other age groups and abilities in schools can be found later in this guide.

Ideally, entry into the competition should have been preceded by a teacher attending a 3hr Primary School Teacher Training Course*, who then delivers 5 weeks of activity. This activity culminates in a festival and a team of children taking part in this competition. Alternatively, activity could be delivered by a qualified and licensed/registered tennis coach from a local tennis provider that the school has a link with.

*More information, including a 5 minute promotional video, on the 3hr Primary School Teacher Training Course is available at: www.schoolstennis.org

The Tennis Foundation / LTA welcome the inclusion of independent schools in this event, as long as the appropriate standard of players are entered, in accordance with the aim of the event (see above). However, as this is a joint event, managed locally with School Sport Partnerships and Competition Manager Teams, the relevant Partnership Development Manager / Senior Competition Manager need to agree with this policy from the outset.



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Overall Competition Structure

The structure has been created to engage with the Competition Manager network and School Sport Partnership infrastructure in England.

The Senior Competition Manager (or Competition Manager with a lead for tennis) working closely with the local Tennis Development Manager should take overall responsibility for co-ordinating the competition.

The structure has been designed so that no one person is over-burdened with running a large amount of events.

The competition works at 3 stages:

- **Cluster Events**
One of these events takes place at each Secondary School in the Partnership, which acts as a central venue for each cluster primary to compete against each other. These events can be co-ordinated by the relevant School Sport Co-ordinator.
- **Partnership Finals**
The winners of each Cluster Event within the Partnership, progress through to the Partnership Final to compete against each other. This event can be run at the Specialist Sports College (or another Secondary School if more appropriate) and can be co-ordinated by the Senior Competition Manager, Competition Manager or Partnership Development Manager.
- **County Final**
The winners of each Partnership Final within your County, progress through to the County Final to compete against each other. This event can be run at an Indoor Tennis Centre, centrally located within the County, or if more appropriate at a Secondary School / Specialist Sports College. This event is co-ordinated by the local Tennis Development Manager.

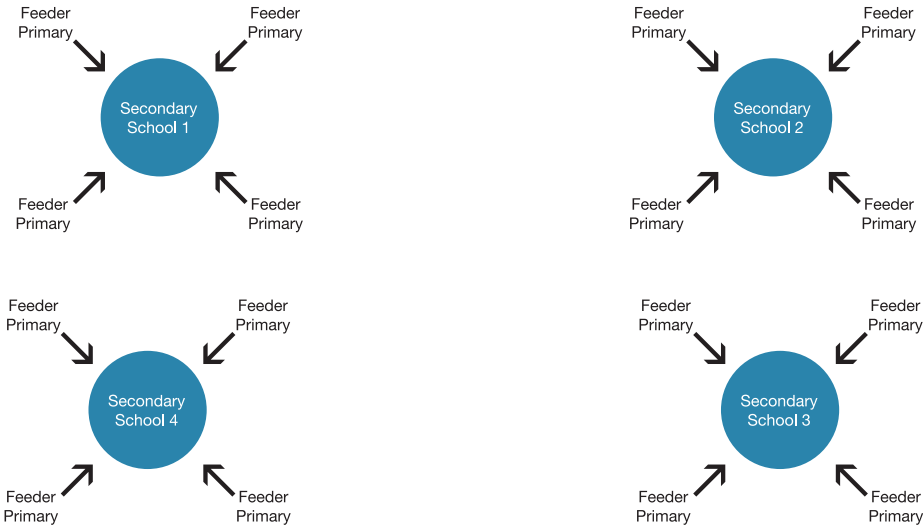
(continued overleaf)



England Overall Competition Structure (3a.1)

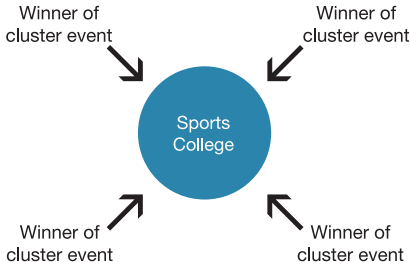
Stage 1: Cluster Events

(Organised by Competition Manager Team/School Sport Partnership)



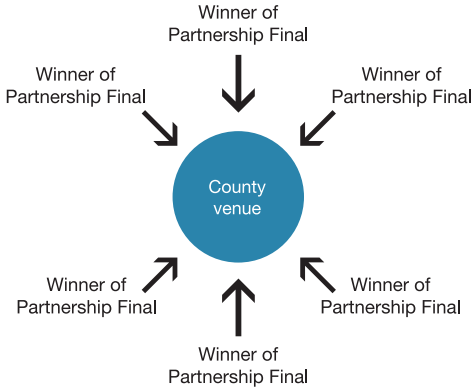
Stage 2: Partnership Final

(Organised by Competition Manager Team/School Sport Partnership)



Stage 3: County Final

(Organised by the County LTA, in partnership with Competition Manager Team)



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Roles & Responsibilities

The table below outlines the key, headline responsibilities for the co-ordination of this competition:

Responsibility	Role
Tennis Development Manager & Senior Competition Manager	Overall co-ordination & management of priority local competitions across the County.
Tennis Development Manager	Responsibility for tennis specific issues; ensuring exit route information is promoted accordingly and arranging involvement of local tennis providers where appropriate.
Senior Competition Manager & Competition Managers	Responsibility for encouraging schools to enter and dealing with entry related administration.
School Sport Co-ordinator / Competition Manager	Co-ordination/delivery of Cluster Events
Partnership Development Manager / Competition Manager	Co-ordination/delivery of Partnership Finals
Tennis Development Manager	Co-ordination/delivery of County Finals

In addition, local tennis providers (coaches, clubs, park operators etc) can play a vital role in the success of the competition programme.

Options should be considered to involve local tennis providers to assist in running some events and to ensure that local places to play are promoted, so that children can continue playing in a community environment after taking part in the competition.

Team Composition

- The suggested team composition is 4 players, 2 boys and 2 girls and schools are welcome to enter more than 1 team, capacity permitting.
- Alternatively, should it be jointly agreed locally, a larger team approach can be taken – with teams of 6 or 8.
- Players should be from Year 3 and/or Year 4 – i.e. a mixture of the two Year Groups can be used, or teams can be from just one Year Group. This should be agreed in advance across the County by the Senior Competition Manager and Tennis Development Manager.
- This competition is an entry level event, aimed at beginners and players new to the game, rather than an opportunity for advanced players already competing regularly outside of school.

Please take the above into account when inviting schools to enter the event. To assist in ensuring the appropriate standard of players are participating, you may wish to decide with your local Tennis Development Manager to implement a Countywide entry restriction using 'Mini Tennis Ratings' as a guide. Tennis Development Managers can provide more advice on this.



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Tournament Format, Length of Matches & Scoring:

A 'Round Robin Box' format is the most appropriate and popular way of organising a Mini Tennis Schools Competition.

For example if you have 8 teams competing, you could separate the teams as follows:

Red Group	A	B	C	D
TEAM A				
TEAM B				
TEAM C				
TEAM D				
Matches:				
	A v B	A v C	A v D	
	C v D	D v B	B v C	

Blue Group	A	B	C	D
TEAM A				
TEAM B				
TEAM C				
TEAM D				
Matches:				
	A v B	A v C	A v D	
	C v D	D v B	B v C	

As teams are made up of 4 players, each match between two schools consists of 4 separate rubbers:

- Boy 1 v Boy 1 Singles
- Boy 2 v Boy 2 Singles
- Girl 1 v Girl 1 Singles
- Girl 2 v Girl 2 Singles

Each 'match' is set off to play and the final score entered onto the 'Mini Tennis Match Card' and then the 'Round Robin Box Sheet' would either be; 4-0, 3-1, or 2-2 – taking into account the individual results from each of the 4 rubbers.

Some Counties may wish to run doubles as well as singles matches, as described above.

'Round Robin Box Sheets', 'Order of Play Guidance', 'Mini Tennis Match Cards' and 'Example Timings and Format for Mini Tennis Competition' can be found in the 'Resources' section of this guide. See below for more guidance in terms of timings/format for your event.

It also helps to provide each player with a 'Player Label' – stating which Group they are in (i.e. Red or Blue) and which player they are (i.e. Boy 1) – a template for player labels can be found in the 'Resources' section of this guide.

Mini Tennis scoring does not use traditional tennis scoring (15, 30, 40 etc). Instead, simple numbered scoring is used, i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4 etc.

Several scoring options can be adopted for competitions:

1. 'Timed'

- Players play for a set period of time, until the whistle blows. The length of matches depends on time available and amount of entries.
- Obviously it depends on your team entry, the amount of matches and the format used, but it is recommended that you allow 2-3hrs for each event.

Timed matches are strongly recommended for schools competition. You can plan exactly how long matches will last and therefore, the overall time your competition will take.

There are a range of example timings and formats for Mini Tennis Competition in the 'Resources' section of this guide. They are set up for events lasting 2 or 3 hours and for between 4 and 8 teams entering, although you can adapt them to suit your specific needs.

An alternative scoring option is below – the disadvantage of this is that matches start and finish at different times and it is difficult to plan the overall time needed.

2. 'First to 10'

- This is called a Match Tie Break. A benefit of this option is that it is most realistic to a real match situation.
- On average, a Match Tie Break (with 1 or 2 point clear gap) takes 10 minutes to play.



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Court Size

- Mini Tennis Red is played on badminton-sized courts.
- The easiest option is to use badminton courts; however, you can also set up Mini Tennis courts on standard tennis courts, both inside and out.

More information and guidance on the options for setting up Mini Tennis Red courts can be found in the 'Resources' section of this guide.

Playing

- The serve is decided by a 'toss' at the start of the match.
- The nominated person serves for the first point, it then alternates every 2 points.
- When serving, players should stand behind the baseline.
- When serving, the ball must not be bounced before being hit.
- The serve can be hit over or under arm.
- Serves should be hit diagonally, landing in the diagonally opposite service box.
- Each court should have a helper/scorer, who calls out the scores and helps out with decisions (this is a great opportunity to use Tennis Leaders).
- Sponge balls should be used if playing indoors, felt Mini Tennis Red Balls should if playing outdoors.
- Rackets no longer than 23" in length should be used.

Young Leaders & Officials

Due to the age group of players, it is vital that each court has someone to assist the players score matches.

In the Invite Letters, schools are advised that they must nominate one adult to assist with scoring matches on the day.

In addition, these events are great opportunities to involve Young Leaders to assist. British Tennis offers 2 training opportunities for Young Leaders:

Tennis Leaders

Tennis Leaders is targeted at 14 – 16 year olds with an interest in tennis.

Tennis Leaders was updated in September 2009 and the course content has been expanded to include other aspects of tennis volunteering – to encourage more young people to get involved and encourage volunteering in off court tennis activities.

There are 4 modules in the Tennis Leaders Award:

- Planning, Organisation & Communication
- Club Media & Communications
- Playing Partner & Buddy Hitting
- Competition Assistant

Find out more about Tennis Leaders at: www.schoolstennis.org

Young Competition Organisers Workshop; 3 1/2hr for 16-25yr olds

A 3 ½ hour workshop, designed specifically for 16-25yr olds, can be delivered locally by our Tennis Development Managers, to provide the skills to run a range of competitions. At the training, attendees will be given a Competition Organisers Toolkit giving you all the tools and resources you need to run competitions.

Find out more about Tennis Leaders at: www.schoolstennis.org



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Resources

This guide contains all the resources and templates you require to run your events. You should photocopy the required amount of signs, forms and templates for your event in advance and bring with you on the day.

In addition, you are likely to require the following items to run your event:

- Sponge, or outdoor Mini Tennis Red Tennis Balls (minimum 4 per court)
- Spare rackets
- Notice Board
- Pens / Pencils
- Clip Boards
- Marker Pens
- Blue Tac
- First Aid Kit

Miscellaneous

It is recommended that you set up a Registration Desk, where teams should register and all scores are recorded at.

It is also a good idea to display the Round Robin Box Sheets on a notice board by the desk, to reduce the amount of people asking for the scores at regular intervals!

It often works well to give out 'On-The-Spot' points for 'Good Sportsmanship', 'Best Shot', or 'Fantastic Rallies'. These would be added onto the overall score sheet, not the individual matches - this enables all players to contribute to the overall score. Special Achievement Award Certificates are also provided in the 'Resources' section of this guide.

More Information & Support

In the first instance, if you require more advice or support, you should contact the person co-ordinating the Schools Tennis Competitions within your School Sport Partnership – likely to be your Senior Competition Manager, Competition Manager or Partnership Development Manager.

Alternatively, you should contact your local LTA Tennis Development Manager, who your School Sport Partnership staff will hold contact details for.

All resources can be found in the Schools Tennis Competition Guide and more info can be found online at: www.schoolstennis.org



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Event Checklist:

Please note that the planning section below is based upon the events running to the following timescales

- April – May Cluster Events take place*
- May – June Partnership Finals take place *
- June – July County Final takes place*

*If agreed at County level, there is flexibility for these headline dates to change slightly.

The suggested timescales below are specifically for the competitions and don't state options for wider tennis activity, such as curriculum-time coaching, teacher training and lead-in programmes in general – although these should always be built in to the overall programme.

Planning:		
April – June (Previous year)	Tennis Development Manager meets with Senior Competition Manager to begin planning the priority competition(s) for the next academic year	
June/July (Previous year)	Dates for events confirmed and venues booked	
January	*Send out School Invite Letters for Cluster Events	
January – March	*Schools enter Cluster Events by returning School Reply Forms	
January – March	Arrange assistants / leaders to help with events	
March	Chase late entries for Cluster Events	
March	*Send out Confirmation Letters to schools for Cluster Events	

1 week before the event:	
*Place teams/players into Round Robin Boxes accordingly	
*Prepare the Order of Play; use the Order of Play Guidance and Round Robin Boxes	
*Photocopy Mini Tennis Red Scorecards	
*Print out Court Number Signs, Registration Desk Sign and Directional Arrows	
*Print out and prepare 'Welcome Notice'	
*Print out Player Labels	
Arrange equipment (balls & spare rackets)	
Double check and confirm venue booking	
Double check and confirm assistants / young leaders	
Prepare a useful event pack – pens, blu-tac, paper, clip boards, first aid kit etc	
*Print out certificates	



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At the event:	
*Set up Registration Desk & Noticeboard	
*Put up Court Number Signs	
*Put up Directional Arrows guiding teams to the venue	
Set up courts and nets	
Set out equipment (balls & spare rackets)	
*Complete Risk Assessment	
Brief assistants / leaders	
*Welcome arriving teams and ask to complete sign-in sheets	
Conduct a simple introduction to the staff and leaders involved, provide an overview of the format / rules etc.	
Conduct a simple warm-up activity – a range of ideas for warm ups can be found via Activity Cards, available from: www.schoolstennis.org	
*Commence matches as per your order of play, including any necessary play-offs.	
*Conduct a short presentation, congratulating all teams involved, thank teachers, leaders, parents etc and distribute certificates and any other prizes.	
*Distribute information on local places to play tennis	
*Where relevant, invite the team to the Partnership/County Final	

After the event:	
Send results / relevant paperwork to the relevant co-ordinator	
*Where appropriate, invite winning team(s) through to the next round of the event	
*Consider sending a press release to the local media	

*Guidance or templates are available in the 'Resources' section of this guide.

