

ALL INDIA TENNIS ASSOCIATION

POLICY PAPER - ACE 2032

Talent Identification, Selection and Support Policy for Junior Tennis

Approved by AITA EC and AGM held on 30 Sep 2026

With effective date: 1 January 2027

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a transparent, merit-based and development-oriented framework for identifying talented junior tennis players and recommending them for financial, technical, training, competition and welfare support from the All India Tennis Association, government agencies, public-sector organisations, sponsors and other approved partners.

The policy is intended to ensure that public and association support is directed towards players who demonstrate a combination of:

- Current performance
- Long-term potential
- Commitment to training
- Physical and mental readiness
- Technical and tactical ability
- Professional conduct
- Need for structured support
- Capacity to represent India successfully

The policy shall apply primarily to players in the **U12, U14, U16 and U18 age groups**, while also providing a pathway for transition into senior tennis.

Guiding Principle

Identify Talent. Develop Potential. Support Merit. Protect the Player. Prepare for Excellence.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of ACE 2032 are to:

1. Establish a common national framework for identifying talented junior tennis players.
2. Create transparent criteria for recommending players for government and association support.
3. Ensure that selection is not based solely on ranking.
4. Recognise both present performance and future potential.
5. Provide appropriate support according to the player's age, development stage and needs.
6. Encourage participation in singles and doubles.
7. Promote equal opportunity across regions, genders and socio-economic backgrounds.
8. Prevent premature specialisation, overtraining, burnout and injury.
9. Improve the quality of coaching, fitness, sports science and player welfare.
10. Create a measurable pathway from junior tennis to senior and professional tennis.

3. SCOPE OF SUPPORT

Players selected under this policy may be recommended for one or more of the following forms of support, subject to the availability of funds and the rules of the relevant government or funding agency:

A. Financial Support

- Training grants
- Competition grants
- Travel and accommodation assistance
- Equipment assistance
- Medical and rehabilitation support
- Education-related assistance
- Need-based financial aid

B. Technical Support

- Access to AITA or Regional High-Performance Centres
- National and regional camps
- Coaching support
- Strength and conditioning
- Physiotherapy
- Sports science
- Mental conditioning
- Performance analysis
- Training partnerships

C. Competition Support

- Domestic tournament participation
- International junior tournaments
- ITF junior events
- Asian and European competition
- Training and competition exchanges
- National team programmes
- Davis Cup, Billie Jean King Cup and other senior pathway opportunities where applicable

D. Development Support

- Individual player development plans
- Fitness testing
- Injury prevention
- Workload monitoring
- Doubles development
- Education for players and parents
- Career and transition planning

Selection under this policy shall create eligibility for consideration for support. It shall not automatically guarantee a fixed financial benefit unless separately approved by the relevant authority.

4. PRINCIPLES OF SELECTION

All selections and recommendations under ACE 2032 shall be guided by the following principles:

4.1 Merit

Players shall be assessed on objective performance, potential and development indicators.

4.2 Transparency

Selection criteria, procedures, timelines and decisions shall be documented and communicated in advance.

4.3 Holistic Assessment

Ranking and results shall be considered together with technical, physical, mental, tactical, behavioural and developmental factors.

4.4 Long-Term Development

The policy shall prioritise sustainable player development over short-term ranking gains.

4.5 Equal Opportunity

Players shall be considered without discrimination based on region, state, club, academy, economic background, language, caste, religion or other non-performance factors.

4.6 Need and Access

Where players demonstrate comparable merit, financial need and lack of access to quality training may be considered in determining the level and type of support.

4.7 Accountability

Players, parents, coaches and support providers shall comply with applicable rules, codes of conduct, reporting requirements and funding conditions.

5. ELIGIBILITY

A player may be considered for selection under ACE 2032 if the player:

1. Is eligible to represent India under applicable international tennis regulations.
2. Falls within the relevant age category.
3. Is registered with AITA or otherwise eligible under AITA regulations.
4. Has participated in recognised tournaments or approved assessment programmes.
5. Has submitted the required application and supporting documents.
6. Is medically fit to participate in the proposed programme, subject to appropriate medical advice.
7. Agrees to comply with AITA rules, the player code of conduct and programme requirements.
8. Has not been suspended or found guilty of a serious disciplinary, integrity or anti-doping violation.

AITA may consider exceptional cases involving injury, illness, international competition, relocation or other circumstances that prevented a player from meeting a normal participation requirement.

6. PLAYER CATEGORIES

To ensure that support is appropriate to the player's stage of development, selected players may be placed in one of the following categories:

Category A: National Performance Group

Players demonstrating outstanding national or international performance and readiness for high-level competition.

Category B: National Development Group

Players demonstrating strong performance and clear potential for progression to national and international level.

Category C: Regional Development Group

Players demonstrating significant potential who require structured regional coaching, competition and physical development.

Category D: Emerging Talent Group

Players identified through tournaments, camps, assessments or coach recommendations as having exceptional potential but requiring further development and monitoring.

Category E: Doubles Development Group

Players identified as potential doubles specialists or as suitable partners for national and international doubles competition, regardless of singles ranking.

The categories may be reviewed during the annual assessment cycle.

7. SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection shall be based on a balanced assessment of the following factors:

7.1 Competitive Performance

- National ranking
- International ranking, where applicable
- Tournament results
- Quality of opponents defeated
- Performance in national and international events
- Consistency of performance
- Performance under pressure
- Progress over the assessment period

7.2 National Championships

Performance in the AITA National Championships shall be an important consideration.

Participation in the National Championships shall ordinarily be expected of players seeking national team or development support, except in cases of genuine injury, international commitments or other approved circumstances.

7.3 Technical and Tactical Ability

Assessment may include:

- Serve and return
- Groundstrokes

- Movement and court coverage
- Net play
- Defensive and attacking skills
- Match construction
- Tactical adaptability
- Decision-making
- Ability to compete against different playing styles

7.4 Physical Development

Assessment may include:

- Speed
- Agility
- Strength
- Endurance
- Mobility
- Coordination
- Recovery capacity
- Age-appropriate physical development
- Injury history and risk factors

Physical assessment shall be age-appropriate and shall not unfairly disadvantage players who are still developing physically.

7.5 Mental and Emotional Readiness

Assessment may include:

- Competitive attitude
- Resilience
- Concentration
- Ability to manage pressure
- Response to setbacks
- Coachability
- Self-discipline
- Emotional regulation
- Willingness to learn

7.6 Commitment and Training Behaviour

Assessment may include:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Training consistency
- Compliance with development plans
- Fitness and recovery habits
- Communication with coaches and officials
- Commitment to education and personal development

7.7 Doubles Potential

Doubles selection shall consider:

- Return quality
- Serve effectiveness
- Net skills
- Anticipation
- Communication
- Movement and positioning
- Tactical understanding
- Compatibility with a partner
- Performance in doubles competition

A player shall not be excluded from doubles support solely because of a lower singles ranking.

7.8 Long-Term Potential

Selectors may consider:

- Rate of improvement
- Technical foundation
- Learning capacity
- Physical projection
- Competitive character
- Quality of training environment
- Potential to progress to senior tennis

7.9 Financial and Developmental Need

Where appropriate, AITA may consider:

- Family financial circumstances
- Access to quality coaching
- Availability of training facilities
- Travel limitations
- Medical or rehabilitation needs
- Regional disadvantage
- Lack of suitable competition opportunities

Need shall not replace merit, but may influence the type, priority and level of support provided.

8. PROPOSED ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

AITA shall develop detailed age-specific assessment forms and weightages. As a general framework, the following factors may be considered:

For doubles selection, the weightages may be adjusted to give greater importance to doubles performance, net skills, return quality, communication, movement and partner compatibility.

The final weightages shall be approved by the AITA Executive Committee and published before the relevant selection cycle.

9. SELECTION PROCESS

9.1 Annual Selection Cycle

AITA shall conduct an annual selection cycle, ordinarily consisting of:

1. Publication of eligibility and selection criteria.
2. Submission of player applications and documents.
3. Review of rankings and tournament results.
4. Assessment of National Championship performance.
5. Technical, physical and mental assessments.
6. Coach and selector observations.

7. Review of player development and welfare information.
8. Preparation of a provisional selection list.
9. Opportunity to identify factual errors or submit relevant information.
10. Approval and publication of the final selection list.

9.2 Mid-Year Review

AITA may conduct a mid-year review to:

- Add emerging players
- Remove players who no longer meet programme requirements
- Adjust support according to performance or need
- Respond to injury, illness or exceptional circumstances
- Review age-group transitions

9.3 Exceptional Selection

A player may be considered outside the normal cycle where the player:

- Achieves a significant international result
- Demonstrates exceptional improvement
- Returns from a documented injury
- Is identified through an approved talent identification programme
- Has been unable to compete due to circumstances beyond the player's control

All exceptional selections shall be documented and approved by the competent authority.

10. SELECTION COMMITTEE

AITA shall constitute a Selection and Player Support Committee comprising appropriate representatives, which may include:

- Chairperson nominated by AITA
- Members of the Junior Selection Committee
- Experienced coaches
- Technical experts
- Fitness or sports science representatives
- Medical or physiotherapy representatives
- AITA administration representative
- A finance or programme representative, where required

The Committee shall:

1. Apply the approved selection criteria.
2. Review player information and assessments.
3. Recommend players for support.
4. Recommend the type and level of support.
5. Monitor player progress.
6. Review continued eligibility.
7. Maintain confidentiality of sensitive information.
8. Declare and manage conflicts of interest.

No selector shall participate in the assessment or decision concerning a player where the selector has a direct personal, professional or financial conflict of interest.

11. PLAYER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Every selected player shall, where appropriate, receive an individual or group development plan covering:

- Technical priorities
- Tactical priorities
- Fitness objectives
- Competition schedule
- Training requirements
- Recovery and injury prevention
- Mental conditioning
- Doubles development
- Education and personal development
- Review dates and performance indicators

The plan shall be prepared in consultation with the player, parent or guardian, personal coach and AITA-appointed coach, where applicable.

12. REGIONAL HIGH-PERFORMANCE CENTRES

AITA shall progressively establish or recognise Regional High-Performance Centres to provide continuous development support.

Each centre should provide access to:

- Qualified coaching
- Strength and conditioning
- Physiotherapy and injury management
- Mental conditioning
- Sports science
- Performance analysis
- Quality training partners
- Player education
- Safe and appropriate facilities

Regional centres shall complement national camps and shall not replace national selection or assessment procedures.

Players may be assigned to a centre based on:

- Development needs
- Geographic access
- Training quality
- Age and maturity
- Competition schedule
- Medical or rehabilitation requirements

13. SUPPORT CONDITIONS

Players receiving support shall:

1. Follow the approved development plan.
2. Participate in designated camps, assessments and competitions, subject to health and education requirements.
3. Maintain appropriate training and recovery standards.
4. Inform AITA of injury, illness or other circumstances affecting participation.
5. Participate in the National Championships unless exempted.
6. Comply with anti-doping, safeguarding, integrity and conduct rules.
7. Submit required reports, receipts or documentation.
8. Represent India and AITA professionally.

9. Obtain approval before accepting conflicting support or entering incompatible programmes.
10. Continue to meet the applicable eligibility and performance requirements.

Parents or guardians of minor players shall also be required to comply with applicable safeguarding, travel, conduct and documentation requirements.

14. REVIEW, SUSPENSION AND WITHDRAWAL OF SUPPORT

Support may be reviewed, reduced, suspended or withdrawn where a player:

- Fails to meet programme requirements
- Repeatedly fails to attend approved activities without valid reason
- Provides false or misleading information
- Breaches the code of conduct
- Commits an anti-doping or integrity violation
- Refuses reasonable assessment or monitoring
- Demonstrates prolonged lack of commitment
- Becomes medically unable to participate
- Reaches the end of the applicable age or development category

Before support is withdrawn for conduct or non-performance, the player shall ordinarily be given notice and an opportunity to respond, except where immediate action is necessary for safety, integrity or legal reasons.

Injury, illness, temporary loss of form or other genuine circumstances shall not automatically result in withdrawal of support.

15. TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLICATION

AITA shall publish:

1. The approved selection criteria.
2. The selection calendar.
3. The application process.
4. The categories of support available.
5. The names of selected players, subject to applicable privacy requirements.
6. The process for review and appeal.
7. Annual reports on the implementation of the policy.

Individual medical, financial and personal information shall remain confidential and shall be shared only with authorised persons.

16. APPEALS AND GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL

A player or parent/guardian may request a review where there is an allegation of:

- Procedural error
- Incorrect ranking or result information
- Failure to consider submitted evidence
- Conflict of interest
- Inconsistent application of the criteria
- Breach of the published selection process

An appeal shall not ordinarily challenge the professional judgment of selectors unless there is evidence that the judgment was affected by an error, bias, conflict of interest or failure to apply the approved criteria.

AITA shall establish an independent or separately constituted review mechanism and publish the applicable timelines and procedure.

17. SAFEGUARDING, INTEGRITY AND ETHICS

All programmes under ACE 2032 shall comply with applicable:

- Child safeguarding requirements
- Anti-doping rules
- Anti-corruption and integrity rules
- Sexual harassment prevention requirements
- Medical and privacy standards
- Travel and accommodation safety procedures
- AITA and international tennis regulations

AITA shall establish or strengthen a code of conduct for players, parents, coaches, selectors, officials and support staff.

18. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

AITA shall monitor the effectiveness of the policy through measurable indicators, including:

- Number of players identified and supported
- Regional representation
- Gender representation
- Player progression by age group
- National and international results
- Transition from junior to senior tennis
- Injury and workload trends
- Participation in doubles
- Utilisation of support
- Player and parent feedback
- Retention within the pathway
- Financial and programme accountability

An annual ACE 2032 report shall be submitted to the AITA Executive Committee.

19. IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

➤ OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2026 | POLICY DESIGN AND APPROVAL

- Approve the ACE 2032 policy.
- Finalise eligibility and selection criteria.
- Obtain legal and administrative review.
- Establish the Selection and Player Support Committee.
- Publish the application and selection calendar.
- Identify available government, association and partner funding.
- Map regional coaching and performance resources.
- Finalise assessment forms and reporting procedures.

➤ JANUARY-MARCH 2027 | INITIAL SELECTION AND LAUNCH

- Open applications for the first selection cycle.
- Review rankings, results and National Championship performance.
- Conduct technical, physical and player development assessments.
- Publish the first list of supported players.
- Prepare individual development plans.
- Begin regional and national support programmes.

➤ **APRIL-JUNE 2027 | DEVELOPMENT AND MONITORING**

- Implement training and competition plans.
- Begin pilot Regional High-Performance Centre programmes.
- Provide coaching, fitness, medical and sports science support.
- Monitor player attendance, workload and progress.
- Identify emerging players and players requiring additional support.

➤ **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2027 | MID-YEAR REVIEW**

- Review player performance and development.
- Assess use of financial and technical support.
- Conduct mid-year additions or revisions where necessary.
- Review doubles development and selection.
- Initiate approved international training and competition programmes.

➤ **OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2027 | ANNUAL REVIEW**

- Conduct the annual selection review.
- Assess player progression, injuries, workload and conduct.
- Review the effectiveness of support provided.
- Publish the annual supported-player list.
- Submit the ACE 2032 implementation report to the Executive Committee.
- Approve improvements for the 2028 cycle.

2028-2032 | CONSOLIDATION AND EXPANSION

AITA shall progressively expand the support network, strengthen regional centres, improve sports science and coaching services, increase international exposure, develop doubles and establish a measurable pathway from junior tennis to senior and professional tennis.

20. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

The Executive Committee is requested to approve ACE 2032 as the All India Tennis Association's national policy framework for the identification, selection and support of talented junior tennis players from 1 January 2027.

The Secretary General, Junior Selection Committee and other authorised AITA committees shall be empowered to prepare and implement detailed regulations, assessment forms, budgets, support categories, application procedures and annual selection criteria consistent with this policy.

Government support shall be sought and administered in accordance with the applicable schemes, guidelines and eligibility requirements of the relevant government authority. Association support shall be subject to AITA's approved budget and financial regulations.

ACE 2032

Identify Talent.

Develop Potential.

Support Merit.

Protect the Player.

Prepare for Excellence.