



Long Arnold

TENNIS

Tennis is my Sport

OVER 30 YEARS OF TENNIS EXPERIENCE

Tennis has always been more than just a sport—it's a passion, a discipline, and a lifelong journey of growth. Over the past 30 years, I've had the privilege of experiencing tennis from two crucial perspectives: as a coach and as a business professional. From teaching young beginners to mentoring competitive players, from managing tennis programs to witnessing the industry's transformation, I've seen firsthand how the game has evolved—and how the business around it has changed with it.

**CERTIFIED TENNIS TEACHER
COMPETITION COACH B**

PHONE 079 325 41 21
LONG.ARNOLD@BLUEWIN.CH

WWW.LONGARNOLD.CH

For players, parents, fellow
coaches or anyone else who
is passionate about the tennis
business.



table

Contents

PREFACE

INSIGHTS

30 years in tennis. Witnessed the development first hand.

LESS COMMUNITY

1 Social change	9
2 Solutions	11

CHOOSING THE RIGHT COACH

3 Change of profession tennis coach	12
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A CHILD'S TENNIS JOURNEY

4 Tennis is a long-term journey	14
5 Outstanding coach	17
6 Lifelong Love	19

THE FUTURE OF TENNIS CLUBS

7 4 key points	22
7 Adapt to the New Era	24

COMPETITIVE TENNIS

8 Invest time and money	26
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Insights

30 Years in Tennis: A Front-Row Seat to the Game's Evolution

Technology, coaching philosophies, player development, and even the way clubs operate have all shifted dramatically. Today, tennis is more accessible, more data-driven, and more connected than ever before. But with these changes come challenges—for players, coaches, and those who build their careers around the sport.

In this magazine, I'll share insights on how tennis has transformed, what these changes mean for the future, and how we can continue to grow the game while staying true to its essence. Whether you're a player, a parent, a fellow coach, or someone passionate about the business of tennis, I invite you to explore this journey with me.

Let's dive into how tennis—and the business behind it—is shaping the next generation of the game.



LONG ARNOLD

**TEXT**

Long Arnold

DESIGNER

Long Arnold

Preface

MOBILE NUMBER +41 (0)79 325 41 21

EMAIL long.arnold@bluewin.ch

COURTS WINTER Tennis & Squash, Bösch 55, 6331 Hünenberg

COURTS SUMMER Tennisclub Risch-Rotkreuz, 6343 Rotkreuz

Lifelong Passion

The first time I stepped onto a tennis court as a child, I had no idea that this sport would shape my entire life. What started as a passion for the game quickly turned into a lifelong commitment—not just to teaching, but understanding the deeper impact of tennis on individuals, communities, and even the business world.

Over the past 30 years, I've had

the privilege of working with players of all ages, from children taking their first swings to adults rediscovering their love for the sport. I've seen firsthand how a great coach can shape a player's confidence, how a well-run tennis program can build a thriving community, and how the business side of tennis has evolved into something far bigger than just lessons and tournaments.

Tennis today is not the same sport it was decades ago. What used to be a simple, technique-focused approach has transformed into a world of sports science, mental conditioning, and business strategy—making coaching both more exciting and more complex.

A full-page photograph of a tennis match at night. A player in white is in the foreground, captured mid-serve on a grass court. The background shows a large stadium filled with spectators, and the retractable roof of the arena is visible above. The text "Tennis is my Sport." is overlaid in large white font.

Tennis is my Sport.



Society has shifted toward greater individualism, more demanding workplaces, increased educational pressure on children, and a shift in priorities where academics often take precedence over sports and hobbies.

A few decades ago, sports, music, and creative activities were seen as an essential part of a child's development. Today, many parents and schools prioritize academic success over extracurricular activities.

Less community more pressure



While society has made significant advancements in education, technology, and professional opportunities, this hyper-individualistic, high-pressure approach comes at a cost. Burn-out, mental health struggles, and a lack of community engagement are growing concerns.

This societal shift has significant implications for tennis coaches, tennis clubs and tennis players:

- Parents are more selective about investing in tennis lessons and often prioritise academic education over sport.
- Clubs have to compete more with other activities and are faced with an aging population, ever-decreasing numbers of participants in club activities and constantly changing coaches
- Increased academic pressure means players have less time for consistent training. As a result, more and more players are choosing not to pursue competitive sport.

As societal pressures increase, individualism grows and priorities change, the sport of tennis must adapt to remain relevant and exciting.



Solutions

02

Essential solutions for tennis coaches, clubs and parents to help young players balance their personal development, their passion for tennis and the challenges of modern life.

As a tennis coach, teach your children not only technique and strategy, but also mental toughness, self-discipline and problem-solving skills. Help players see tennis as a means of personal development rather than just a competition.

As a tennis coach, explain to parents that tennis teaches life skills: resilience, patience, concentration and emotion regulation. As a parent, remember that a multi-talented child will perform better both in school and in sport.

As a tennis club, invest in the best qualified coach and commit to him for the long term. Integrate padel and reach a new target group. Adapt to the realities.

Tennis remains one of the best sports for physical, mental and emotional development - but the approach to training, club management and education must adapt to modern challenges. By adapting training methods, prioritizing well-being and promoting long-term growth, tennis can continue to be a powerful tool for developing resilient, confident individuals.



Finding the Right Tennis Coach

Over the past three decades, the tennis coaching profession has undergone a significant transformation. In the past, there was a clear distinction between certified tennis coaches—those who had completed rigorous training and education—and the so-called “black sheep”, individuals who bypassed formal coaching education yet still offered lessons.

Today, however, the lines have blurred even further. With the rise of social media, self-promotion, and easy access to minimal certification programs, almost anyone who can hit a few good shots or has completed a basic course can call themselves a “tennis coach”. This has led to confusion for parents and players seeking quality coaching.

With so many self-proclaimed coaches flooding the market, how can you be sure that you’re choosing the right one?

When choosing a coach for your child, ask yourself these questions:

- Who will inspire my child?
- Who will recognize his unique strengths?
- Who will help him grow not only as a player but also as a person?



Investing in quality coaching is an investment in:

- Your child's confidence
- Your child's joy
- Your child's healthy development
- Your child's love of the game and tennis

Choose a tennis coach who will not only teach your child tennis - but also shape your child's personality.

Tennis isn't just about learning how to hit a ball over the net. It's about building confidence, resilience and a lifelong love of the game. And the quality of the coach you choose plays a big role in shaping that experience.

As a parent, it's natural to consider cost when making decisions for your child. We all want to be economical with our resources. But when it comes to choosing the right tennis coach for your child, after over 30 years of coaching, I've learned one thing: the cheapest option is rarely the best investment.

Lower prices often reflect less experience, fewer qualifications or a lack of deeper understanding of technical and emotional guidance of children. Without an experienced coach, children can develop bad habits, incorrect technique, or lose motivation.

An experienced and dedicated coach will recognize each child's unique personality, strengths, and emotional needs. A cheap coach may not provide this level of personalized attention and customization.

Children are greatly influenced by the quality of instruction they receive. In an uninspiring or substandard coaching environment, they may feel overlooked, frustrated, or even believe they are "not good enough."

My advice: invest in your child's well-being. My experience shows that if your child is not properly nurtured as a player and as a person, they will quit tennis sooner rather than later.

Children don't just quit tennis because they don't like the sport—they quit because they don't feel capable, supported, or motivated. A great coach ensures that doesn't happen by developing both skills and personality, making tennis an experience they will love for life.





A child's tennis journey

With over 30 years of coaching experience, I understand the reality of player development in tennis, which is based on psychology, coaching experience and long-term player retention.

04

Tennis is a long-term journey

1. Lack of Proper Guidance Leads to Frustration

If a child doesn't receive the right technical, tactical, and emotional support, they will struggle to improve. Frustration builds up when they don't see progress, making it more likely that they lose motivation and quit.

2. Building Confidence is as Important as Skills

Tennis is a mentally demanding sport. A coach who only focuses on technique but ignores personal growth, motivation, and resilience fails to develop a player who can handle setbacks. Without confidence, most young players will eventually walk away.

3. The Right Environment Makes the Difference

A coach isn't just teaching tennis; they are mentors who shape a player's passion for the sport. Children thrive when they feel: Encouraged in a positive and structured way, challenged at the right pace (not too fast, not too slow), valued not just as

players but as individuals.

4. The Risk of Poor Coaching Choices

Many parents choose a coach based on price, convenience, or quick progress, without realizing that bad coaching leads to bad habits, injuries, and mental burnout. A child who experiences poor coaching early on is far more likely to quit.

5. Long-Term Development Over Short-Term Wins

Coaches who truly invest in a player don't just aim for quick results—they create a pathway for long-term success. Tennis is a marathon, not a sprint. A child who feels supported both technically and emotionally will stay in the game much longer.

6. Creating the Right Environment

The most successful tennis players aren't just those with the best technical skills; they're often the ones who have had the right coaching environment. When the environment is supportive, young players are far more likely to stick with tennis and continue to grow.

Tennis is a long-term journey, and the best coaches know this. So, if you want your child to truly thrive in tennis, make sure they're receiving more than just coaching—make sure they're receiving the support and care that will allow them to stay in the game for the long haul.



More than just tennis lessons



TRAINING QUALITIES

In tennis, it is important to create an environment in which tennis is more than just a sport – it is a path to personal development.

What makes a coach outstanding?

Over the years, I have observed a remarkable difference between outstanding coaches and those who are simply average. Unfortunately, many coaches fall into the category of mediocrity, and the consequences of this can be significant for young players..

1. Outstanding Coaches See the Player as a Whole Person

A great coach understands that tennis is more than just technique, strategy, and winning matches. Tennis is a mental, emotional, and personal journey. A coach who only focuses on drills and tactics misses the bigger picture—helping players build confidence, resilience, and passion for the sport.

A mediocre coach only teaches skills, while an outstanding coach nurtures the person behind the player.

2. Outstanding Coaches Adapt to Each Player's Needs

No two players are the same. A coach who applies a one-size-fits-all approach is failing their students. Children have different learning styles, personalities, and motivations.

Some need encouragement, others need a challenge. Some respond well to structure, others thrive in a more flexible approach.

A great coach recognizes these differences and adapts accordingly. A mediocre coach teaches the same way to everyone, regardless of who is in front of them.

3. Outstanding Coaches Continue to Learn and Improve

Tennis is constantly evolving—both the sport itself and the methods used to teach it. An outstanding coach stays curious, updates their knowledge, and continually refines their approach.

Many coaches, however, stop learning once they receive a certification. They rely on outdated teaching methods, resist change, and assume that what worked years ago will always work. A stagnant coach cannot inspire growth in their students.

4. Outstanding Coaches Know How to Communicate

Tennis coaching is not just

about what you teach but how you teach it. A great coach is an excellent communicator who knows how to explain complex techniques in simple, relatable ways. They also know when to listen, when to encourage, and when to push a player outside their comfort zone.

Mediocre coaches lack this ability—they either talk too much without real impact or fail to connect with their students in a meaningful way.

5. Outstanding Coaches Focus on Long-Term Development, Not Just Quick Wins

Some coaches prioritize short-term success—winning a junior tournament, fixing a single flaw in a player's stroke, or making a player look good in front of parents. While these moments matter, a truly outstanding coach has a bigger vision. They develop players for the long run, ensuring that they build strong foundations, love the sport, and continue to improve over time.

A mediocre coach may cause your child to feel discouraged, stagnant, or disengaged, leading them to give up on the sport too soon.

05

Outstanding Coach



As a parent, you want the best for your child – not only in school, but also in terms of their hobbies, passions and personal development.

Why Does This Matter for Your Child?

The coach you choose for your child will have a direct impact on whether they stay in the sport or quit out of frustration. A great coach will inspire, support, and challenge them, helping them become both a better tennis player and a stronger individual.

A mediocre coach may cause your child to feel discouraged, stagnant, or disengaged, leading them to give up on the sport too soon.

Unfortunately, many coaches today offer only basic instruction without truly supporting the player's growth.

When a child is not properly guided or encouraged, frustration sets in. Many young players lose motivation and quit before they ever reach their full potential. But with

the right support and coaching, your child will develop not only strong tennis skills but also the mindset to succeed—on and off the court.

Lifelong Love of Tennis



LET'S BUILD MORE THAN JUST TENNIS SKILLS – LET'S BUILD CONFIDENCE, RESILIENCE AND A LIFELONG LOVE OF THE GAME!

LONG ARNOLD

With over 30 years of experience, I have dedicated my career to helping young players thrive, not just as athletes, but as confident individuals. My approach ensures that children stay engaged, improve steadily, and develop a lifelong love for tennis. If you want your child to have the best foundation in tennis—one that keeps them motivated, challenged, and supported every step of the way—I would love to be part of their journey.

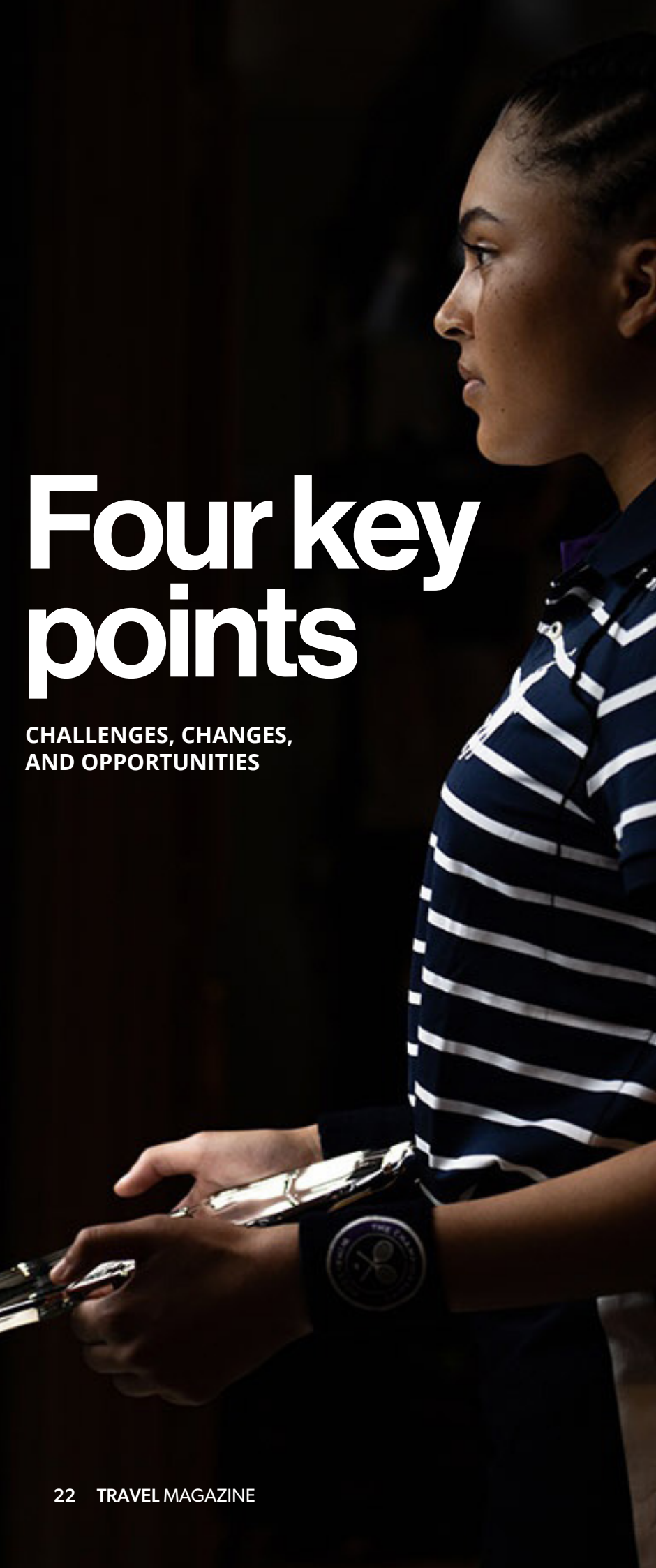
Tennis is evolving, and so is the way clubs and centers operate in Switzerland. While the sport remains loved by many, clubs are facing new challenges that will define their long-term success—or failure. As a tennis coach with over 30 years of experience, I've seen the shifts firsthand, and I believe there are four key developments shaping the future of Swiss tennis.





The Future

If clubs, parents, and decision-makers don't adapt, the landscape of tennis in Switzerland will look very different in the coming years. The question is: Who is ready to evolve?



Four key points

CHALLENGES, CHANGES,
AND OPPORTUNITIES

1. Long-Term Investment in Professional Coaches Is Essential

Tennis clubs are not just places where people play tennis—they are communities built around the passion for the sport. However, many clubs struggle with high coach turnover, which ultimately harms player development.

Why? Because too often, clubs prioritize cost over quality when hiring coaches. They look for the cheapest solution rather than investing in a highly qualified, professional coach who can build long-term relationships with players and families.

A great coach doesn't just teach technique:

- Inspire young players to stay in tennis for years
- Provide structured, long-term development programs
- Create an emotional connection with the sport

A club that invests in a highly qualified and professional coach—one who builds lasting relationships with players—creates a culture of commitment where children stay in the sport for years.

If a club doesn't invest in a consistent, passionate, and experienced coach, it risks losing young players. Without retention, a club cannot grow—and in the long run, it cannot survive.

2. The Rise of Padel: A Threat or an Opportunity?

Padel is one of the fastest-growing sports in Europe, and Switzerland is experiencing a Padel boom. Many tennis clubs see this as a competitor, but in reality, it's an opportunity—if clubs position themselves correctly.

- Padel attracts new members who might not have initially considered a tennis club
- It's easier to learn, making it great for beginners and families
- Social engagement increases, bringing more energy into clubs

Instead of resisting this trend, forward-thinking clubs are embracing Padel, adding courts, and offering hybrid memberships that include both sports. The clubs that adapt to this change will thrive, while those that ignore it risk losing potential members to Padel-only facilities.

3. The Decline of Indoor Tennis Facilities Is a Growing Problem

One of the biggest challenges for Swiss tennis is the decreasing number of indoor courts. Many clubs only offer outdoor facilities, which leads to:

- Disrupted player development—Long winter breaks slow down progress
- Membership declines—Players leave for clubs that offer year-round training



- Competitive disadvantages—Countries with strong indoor infrastructures develop better players

Clubs must find solutions, such as:

- Partnering with other clubs to share indoor spaces
- Investing in covered courts or inflatable domes
- Advocating for local government and private investments

Without year-round training, Swiss tennis will struggle to develop top players, and clubs will find it harder to retain members during the winter months.

4. Fewer Children Choose Competitive Tennis Due to Academic Pressure

A troubling trend is emerging: Fewer young players are choosing tennis as a competitive sport. More and more, parents are prioritizing academic success over athletic development, leading to:

- Decreased commitment to sports—Children quit when schoolwork increases
- Less competitive talent—Fewer juniors are willing to train seriously
- Weaker future generations of Swiss tennis players

Adapt to the new era of tennis

This shift is not unique to Switzerland, but it is particularly concerning for a sport that requires long-term development. Unlike team sports that allow for a casual approach, tennis demands consistent training over many years.

To reverse this trend, clubs and coaches must:

- Educate parents on the benefits of balancing school and sports
- Offer flexible training schedules that accommodate academics
- Highlight the life skills tennis teaches—discipline, resilience, and focus

If this trend continues, Switzerland will produce fewer competitive players, and the talent pipeline will weaken. Clubs must act now to retain young players before they are pulled entirely into academics.

Final Thoughts: Adaptation Is the Key to Survival

The clubs that will thrive in the coming years are those that:

- Invest in long-term coaching relationships
- Embrace Padel as an opportunity, not a threat



- Find creative solutions for indoor training
- Convince parents that tennis is an essential part of a child's development

Tennis is evolving, and clubs must evolve with it. Those that recognize these changes and take action today will secure their future—while those that don't risk fading away.

So the real question is: Will your club be one that adapts or one that disappears?





As a tennis coach with over 30 years of experience, I've witnessed a major shift in how children and parents approach competitive tennis. More and more, I see parents who want their child to compete but are not willing to invest the necessary training hours.

I understand the concerns—academics are a priority, time is limited, and private lessons cost more than group training. However, the reality is this: If your child wants to compete in tennis, one hour a week in a group lesson is simply not enough. Unlike in team sports tennis is organized very individually. In tennis parents need to invest time and money themselves and get no financial support.

Competitive Tennis

07

THE TRUTH ABOUT COMPETITIVE TENNIS: WHY ONE HOUR A WEEK ISN'T ENOUGH

1. Competitive Tennis Requires a Serious Training Commitment

Tennis is not a sport where you can just show up once a week and expect to compete successfully. Unlike team sports where a child plays with a group and can rely on teammates, tennis is an individual sport—meaning your child has to develop their skills, endurance, and mental toughness on their own.

- To play at a basic competitive level, a child should train at least 2-4 hours per week.
- To compete seriously and improve rankings, the training commitment increases to 8-12 hours per week.
- To play at a high national or international level, players train 15-20+ hours per week.

This includes:

- Tennis practice (technical & tactical development)
- Match play & tournaments (competition experience)
- Fitness & conditioning (strength, agility, endurance)
- Mental training (focus, resilience, strategy)

Would you expect a child to learn a new language or play

a musical instrument professionally by practicing only one hour a week? Of course not. Tennis is no different.

2. Group Lessons Alone Will Not Make Your Child a Competitor

Many parents choose group training over private lessons because it is cheaper and more time-efficient. While group training has its benefits—social interaction, learning through observation, and fun—it does not provide the individualized coaching necessary for competitive success.

Competitive players need:

- One-on-one coaching to refine their technique
- Tactical training specific to their game style
- Targeted drills that focus on their weaknesses

Group training alone is not enough if your child wants to compete at a serious level.

3. Academics vs. Tennis: Finding the Right Balance

Many parents are hesitant to increase their child's training hours because they fear it will

interfere with academics.

The key is finding balance. Many successful junior players train 10-15 hours per week while excelling in school. With proper planning, tennis and academics can go hand in hand.

4. The Cost Perspective: Investing in Your Child's Growth

Yes, private lessons and additional training hours come with a cost. But instead of viewing this as just an expense, think of it as an investment in your child's development.

If your child truly wants to compete, they need the right training. Cutting corners on training will only lead to frustration, lack of improvement, and eventually quitting.

If you want your child to simply have fun with tennis, a weekly group lesson is great! Competitive tennis is not for everyone—but for those who commit, the rewards go far beyond the court.

March 2025

TENNIS IS MY SPORT

In my blog I share what I have learned from decades of working with players of all ages and levels. You will find posts about technique, mental toughness, personal growth and the deeper values that tennis teaches us.

Tennis Knowledge

www.longarnold.ch/blog

