


AUSTRALIAN RANKING TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE 2017 AND BEYOND



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IMPROVEMENTS FROM THE PAST (2006 TO 2016)

Improvements to the Australian Ranking tournament structure are always made with the goal to make the tournament structure **more simple** to follow and overall to **make our customers happy**. Some of the changes have been:

- Combined Australian Rankings system (2006)
 - Launch of partnership with Tournament Planner software system (2009)
 - Increase of the quantity of tournaments on the Australian Ranking tournament calendar (2009 to 2011)
 - Rebranding of tournament levels from numbers to colours (2010)
 - Introduction of qualifying events at tournaments (2012)
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FOCUS GROUP RESEARCH (2015)

Tennis Australia conducted **focus group sessions in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide** asking for feedback about the tournament structure. Some statements that generated discussion were:

- The tournament system took a while to figure out
 - The 12/u age group required the most improvement, more education and support needs to happen here
 - Both coaches and parents need more education about tournaments and its many processes
 - Don't spread out the tournament too long
 - Organisers need to plan their tournaments better
 - Create ways to quicken up tournaments
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WHY DO TOURNAMENTS EXIST?

Tennis Australia and all Member Association tournament staff gathered during 2016 to finalise a plan moving into the future.

One of the discussion topics was to finalise an overall objective to define why the Australian Ranking tournament system exists.

The reason the group agreed on was the structure existed to build a base of players that could one day become a **Grand Slam Champion**. This aligns the tournament structure with one of the key Tennis Australia objectives.



TOURNAMENT AND COMPETITION BLOCKS

Discussion and feedback also revolved around the tournament and local competition calendar each year. Local club competition has a strong history in many parts of Australia and a format of the sport that needs to be continued and introduced in new areas of the country.

To help local club/association competitions to be introduced and survive in the future, the majority of Australian Ranking tournaments will be played within a “**tournament block**” that does not disrupt local competition dates.

**The Platinum and Gold Australian Money Tournaments will be exempt from this rule, as the primary purpose of these tournaments is to base them around the Australian Pro Tour tournaments.

JUNIOR TOURNAMENTS TO AVOID SCHOOL CLASHES

All Australian Ranking Junior Tournaments will from 2017 avoid any clashes with a school day within the state that the tournament is being held.

The majority of junior tournaments will be held in the relevant state/territory school holidays.

**Australian National Junior Championship, ITF Junior tournaments and School Sport Australia events will be exempt and may need to be played during school term due to a number of logistical and operational reasons.

REMOVING “WHITE” LEVEL TOURNAMENTS

In the review of the tournament structure, Tennis Australia concluded that only four levels were required and not five. Therefore the tournament levels from 2017 will be:

- Platinum
- Gold
- Silver
- Bronze

The number of tournaments at each level will be partially increased to cater for the removal of the white level in 2017.



DIFFERENTIATION OF AUSTRALIAN MONEY TOURNAMENTS

				
Singles Scoring	Best of 3	Best of 3	Best of 3	Fast4 or Best of 2
Min. Prizemoney	\$10,000 to \$15,000+	Minimum of \$7,500	Minimum of \$3,000	Minimum of \$2,000
Length (Days)	4 or 5 Days	4 Days	4 or 5 Days	2 or 3 Days
Maximum Draw Size	MD 16 Q 32/48/64	MD 32 Q 32/48/64	MD 32/64 Q 128	MD 32/64/128 Q 64
When	Pro Tour swings	Pro Tour swings / Tournament Blocks	Tournament Blocks	Tournament Blocks
Where	Pro Tour friendly locations	Metro & Regional	Metro & Regional	Metro & Regional

THE MAJOR CHANGES TO AUSTRALIAN MONEY TOURNAMENTS

Scoring Format

- As stated earlier, feedback from customers asked us to develop ways to quicken up tournaments.
- As the Bronze level of Australian Money Tournaments are mainly an early exposure to higher competition for junior players and offering lower amounts of ranking points and prizemoney, the **Fast4** or **Best of 2** scoring format will be used.

Draw Sizes / Tournament length

- Platinum and Gold AMTs will be restricted and targeted to the elite player market across 4 days. **16 player main draw and a maximum 64 qualifying draw** size for Platinum AMTs. Pre-Qualifying events may be held in some instances.

THE MAJOR CHANGES TO JUNIOR TOURNAMENTS

Junior Tournaments	platinum	gold series	silver series	bronze series
Singles Scoring	Best of 3	Best of 3	Best of 2	Fast4 or Best of 2
Event Type	Performance	Performance	Performance / Development	Performance / Development
Length (Days)	6 or 7 Days	4 Days	4 or 5 Days	2 or 3 Days
Maximum Draw Size	MD 32 MD 64 (December Showdown)	MD 32 Q 32/48/64	MD 64 Q 64/128	MD128 No Q
When	Tournament Blocks	Tournament Blocks	Tournament Blocks	Tournament Blocks
Where	Metro & Regional	Metro & Regional	Metro & Regional	Metro & Regional

THE MAJOR CHANGES TO JUNIOR TOURNAMENTS

Name change


- No longer referred to as the Junior Tour. The structure will now be referred to as **Junior Tournaments**.
- Less promotion of the requirement to travel around Australia to accumulate ranking points. There are more than enough opportunities in each state/territory to earn a ranking suitable to a player's level.

Scoring Format

- All Bronze level Junior Tournaments are mainly targeted at the introductory player market and shouldn't be discouraging new players and families from experiencing junior tournaments by making them commit to 4-5 days and long traditional scoring formats. The strong recommendation will be for the **Fast4** scoring format to be used.

MORE OFFICIALS AND EDUCATION AT JUNIOR TOURNAMENTS

12/u and 14/u age groups (Bronze & Silver levels)

- Tennis Australia understands the difficulties that new players and parents have with learning the tournament system.
 - More officials will be present at these age group events, but with an **education focus**.
 - Tennis Australia funding grants may be available in some instances for these events to satisfy the increase in officiating requirements.
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PUTTING ON BETTER TOURNAMENTS

Tournament Match Plans

- To ensure all Australian Ranking tournaments are planned correctly, a **tournament match plan** detailing number of events, days and courts must be submitted with each 2017 tournament application.
- Tennis Australia and/or Member Association tournament staff will check these plans to ensure tournaments are able to **schedule matches correctly**, minimising the likelihood of days running too far behind schedule.

Incentivise organisers to conduct a great tournament

- Rewards for Newcombe Medal "**AR Tournament of the Year**" winner and finalists.
- **Funding grants** available for tournaments to implement new ideas that improve the quality of their tournament and overall customer experience.

PLAYER RESTRICTION CHANGES

Australian Money Tournaments ranking points for juniors

- From 2017, players will only be able to receive ranking points from Australian Ranking tournaments during their 15th birth year.
- This will ensure any player under the age of 14 will only accumulate ranking points from 12/u, 14/u, 16/u or 18/u age group events.

Elite players being restricted from lower-level tournaments

- Tennis Victoria will undertake a pilot in 2017 where the Top 10 junior players in Australia and Victoria from each age group (at the time of the entry deadline) will be restricted from playing in bronze level junior tournaments.
- Based on feedback received, this will ensure introductory players are not competing against higher-level players at the start of their tournament experience.

QUESTIONS / COMMENTS

We welcome questions and comments about the proposed tournament changes for 2017. You can contact the **Tennis Australia Tournaments Department** via the following details:

Phone: (03) 9914 4000

Email: tournaments@tennis.com.au



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