FAQ on the New Changes coming to 10 and 12 & Under Tennis in 2012

1. My daughter is 9 ½ and is relatively new to playing tournaments. She wants to start playing more and build a ranking. Where should she start?
   Your daughter will automatically be assigned to start in 10 & under Orange ball events. All tournaments, including local super-sets and other level 6 formats, will only offer 10 & under divisions as Orange ball events. This change should provide many tournament opportunities in which your daughter can compete. You should also check the rules and regulations on progression to 12 & under Green ball events at www.southwest.usta.com.

2. My son is 10 and has been playing 12 & under tournaments with the yellow ball. Will he be forced to play 10 & under Orange ball?
   Question number 9 below answers this question in full. As an existing player, if your son is under 10 ½ years old then he will be placed in 10 & under Orange ball. If your son is 10 ½ to 11 years old then he will be placed in 12 & under green ball unless you choose to play 10 & under Orange ball events. Whichever division your son plays in he will have to fulfill the rules and regulations on progression which can be seen in full on www.southwest.usta.com.

3. Isn’t moving down to the Green ball or Orange ball taking a step back from the yellow ball?
   Absolutely NOT. The Orange and Green balls help players improve technique and learn to build strategy more quickly and at an earlier age. The ball plays slower and bounces lower catering to a young child’s size and athleticism. The younger player is able to hit the ball at the correct contact point with the same relative reaction time as the pros. As the young player gets physically bigger and stronger, and athletic skills progress, the Orange and Green ball sequence helps their tennis skills progress simultaneously.

4. Why is 10 & under Orange ball played on a 60 foot court?
   The 60 foot court enables a player to play like Roger Federer! The young player is better able to construct a point and is provided opportunities to move forward to the net. The player is able to have long rallies and problem solve which is exactly what you see at the professional level on TV. It does not make sense that a 9 year old has to cover the same size court as Rafael Nadal!
5. **My daughter is 11 ½ and has only just started the game. She wants to start competing in tournaments. Where should she start?**
   Your daughter will start in the 12 & under Green ball division. This will help her develop her skills in competition and will also increase her chances of success. Once she has fulfilled the criteria of 12 & under Green ball she will be eligible to move up to the yellow ball. You can find the criteria at [www.southwest.usta.com](http://www.southwest.usta.com).

6. **My son has just turned 10 and is ranked pretty high in the 12 & under Southwest Rankings. What event will he have to play in?**
   Players may be eligible to move up to an appropriate division if they have exceptional and notable results. You may petition to the USTA Southwest Section and request a waiver from Orange and/or Green ball requirements. The Junior Competition Committee will decide based on results whether a player is able to move up a division.

7. **My daughter is 10 ½ and plays a lot of local tournaments. Why can’t we just enter her into the 14 & under event so she can play with the yellow ball?**
   Your daughter will not be allowed to enter the 14 & under event until she has completed the 12 & under Green ball progression criteria which is located at [www.southwest.usta.com](http://www.southwest.usta.com). After she has progressed through the 12 & under Green ball requirements, she can elect to play in any age division yellow ball event of her choice. However, we strongly recommend that your daughter follow the natural progression of 12 & under yellow ball until she ages up to the 14 & under division. This is so that she can correctly improve her skills with appropriate competition until she is ready to move up a division.

8. **My family is at a club where the Orange and Green balls are not used in teaching. I have an 8 year old that is about to start playing in 10 & under Orange ball events and I have a 11 year old that plays in the 12 & under Green ball events. How are they supposed to get used to playing on a small court and/or get used to playing with low compression balls when they are practicing with the yellow ball on a full sized court?**
   The USTA Southwest section is encouraging all clubs and facilities to teach junior players with the correct ball and court size appropriate for the child’s age. The USTA has mandated all 10 & under tennis is Orange ball/60 foot court throughout the country. Please discuss the new policy with your head pro. Practice and competition **should remain consistent**.

9. **What are the specific ages and options we have when entering a tournament January 2012?**
   1. **New and existing** players younger than 10 1/2 years of age will be placed in orange ball.
   2. **New and existing** players between 10 1/2 and 11 years of age may elect to play in either orange or green ball.
   3. **Existing** players 11 years and older may elect to play in green ball or any yellow ball division.
   4. **New** players between 11 and 12 years of age will be placed in green ball.
   5. **New** players 12 years and older may elect to play in green ball or any yellow ball division.
Note: The placement regulations listed above for existing players applies to placement of these players on January 1, 2012. Once the player is placed in a division, he or she must complete the criteria for that division in order to move to the next division.

Note: Player age eligibility with respect to tournament play is mandated by Friend at Court (Part 3 - USTA Regulations, 1.G. Table 4) and will be followed when placing players in orange, green and yellow ball divisions.

10. How do I appeal to move my daughter up a division?

Visit www.southwest.usta.com and fill out the appeal form under the 10 and Under tab. You will then need to email the appeal form to juniorcomp@southwest.usta.com

If you have any more questions regarding the new changes, please contact the Southwest office at juniorcomp@southwest.usta.com or call 480-289-2351 x106