

# NATION

TENNIS INNOVATORS ACADEMY NATION. ALWAYS ON.



## The Mental Game, Greater than Ability?

### A Tennis Parent's Perspective

By Erika Vujnovich

It's interesting.... I grew up a competitive junior tennis player, devoting all of my time to the sport. I eventually played Division I tennis and had the incredible opportunity to experience competition at such a high level. Yet, I can't seem to adjust to being a parent of a tennis player.

The number of times I have heard "You've been there... you totally understand what your son is going through." Right... I've been there as a player, but not as a parent of a player. There is a huge difference.

Watching your child pursue something they want so badly. Watching them play and having to face the competition; which can sometimes be brutal in regards to watching them be taken advantage of by bad calls, poor behavior and worst of all, overzealous parents. As a parent, you want so badly to run out onto that court and stick up for your child and tell them everything is going to be ok. But especially with a sport like tennis, our children, more often than not, are on their own. In baseball, football, soccer, you name it... in any other sport parents can stand up scream, yell, encourage and support their kids during the times they feel defeated on the field or on the court. Tennis is a lonely sport and one in which young kids must grow up in very fast.

As a parent of a tennis player and as a sport lover in general, I thought there must be a way to help children go beyond their physical skill in tennis and become stronger

and more confident to be able to handle the isolation and pressure of the sport. One thing I know from experience is that it takes more than pure athletic ability to make it in a sport. It takes a strong mindset and a positive attitude. But, how do you teach kids what that means?

Several months ago, I was driving and listening to my favorite station, WFAN Sports Radio. At the time, Rick Wolff was on the air and he is known for devoting his show to sports parenting issues. Everything he was saying and every caller who called in were speaking my language. The more research I did on him showed that he actually has a background in sports psychology. At that moment, I put two and two together and decided that I want to pursue the study of the mental aspect of sports. Closely watch junior athletes as well as professional athletes and it is amazing to try to figure out what is going on in their minds. All levels and all sports, psychology plays such a big role. From the Baltimore Orioles' first baseman, Chris Davis, who set the MLB record this year for the most consecutive bats without a hit, going 0-54, to the basketball player who finds himself in a shooting slump, and finally to Rafael Nadal who is now addressing why he is struggling to win matches on a surface he once dominated, clay.

My son is not Rafael Nadal, but my son, just like so many of our children, is an athlete trying to find that winning combination of physical and mental strength. As parents, we need to understand that there is so much more going on in our children's heads than we realize when they are out there competing.

I've been doing my fair share of reading on the topic of sports psychology and of course I try to instill it in my kids, but more often than not I hear "OK, mom... I get it." Whether they are really getting it or not just yet, I'm not sure. However, I do feel that as they mature, what I am saying to them will begin to stick and they will begin to realize what makes up that winning formula of mental and physical abilities.

With that said, let me just leave you with a quote from the great Yogi Berra... "Baseball is ninety percent mental and other half is physical." I truly believe those words can be applied to any sport.

*"OK, mom...I get it."*

## IMPORTANT DATES

<b>June 14 - July 26</b>	<a href="#">TIA USTA Junior Tournaments</a>
<b>June 23</b>	Last day of Junior Academy session
<b>June 24</b>	<a href="#">Summer Camp Begins!</a>
<b>September 3 - 15</b>	<b>TIA Closed</b>
<b>September 16</b>	Indoor Season Begins

# INDOOR 2019 - 2020 SEASON

## JUNIOR ACADEMY PROGRAMS 2019 - 2020

**REGI  
STER**

10U & JUNIOR ACADEMY

September 16 - June 21  
35 weeks

**REGI  
STER**

HIGH PERFORMANCE ACADEMY

September 16 - June 21  
35 weeks

**REGI  
STER**

PRIVATE COACHING

September 16 - June 21  
35 weeks

## ADULT ACADEMY PROGRAMS 2019 - 2020

**REGI  
STER**

ADULT ACADEMY & PVT GROUPS

September 16 - May 24  
32 weeks

**REGI  
STER**

PRIVATE COACHING

September 16 - May 24  
32 weeks

### 2019 JUNIOR GRADUATES

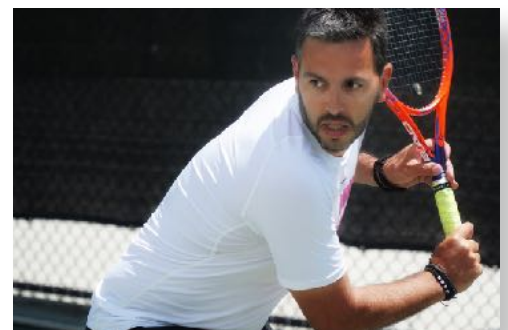
Congratulations to the 2019 Juniors that graduated to the next program level!

[Click here to view full graduation list.](#)

Please register for your new class by clicking

## ADULT USTA SEASON '19 A Message from Coach Vlad

1. Support each other through the good, the bad and the ugly! The only way to experience true team camaraderie is for you to support each other during the high and low moments.
2. Be resilient. Recover quickly from difficult points and stay tough mentally.
3. High effort. Provide vigorous attempt to prepare for every shot.
4. Be eager to win vs. scared to lose. Walk away from the match knowing you played fearless.





[Register](#)



TIA USTA Junior Tournament  
Schedule. Click USTA icon  
above to view.



**TIA Instagram : Follow The Fun!**

**DISCOUNTED!**

WEEKEND PRIVATE LESSONS

**\$100/HR Private**

**\$65/HR Semi Private** (per person)

[Click Here For Details](#)





**ATTENTION: ADVANCED ADULT BEGINNERS!**

Are you looking to advance your game?  
Play USTA matches?

Kwame Griffith, Director, and his team will teach Tuesdays @ 9:30-11AM starting the week of September 16 to those that are interested in becoming USTA match players. Spots are limited so secure your schedule!

[Click here to register](#)



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