



Tennis Tykes serves up a treat for little ones

As tennis fever hits the country following Wimbledon the good news is that there are lots of opportunities to play tennis locally over the summer and beyond following the launch of Tennis Tykes in Harrogate.

Tennis Tykes, a unique tennis play and coaching programme for children aged 2 and over, is the innovation of Caroline Buncall who has seen the positive effects tennis has had on the physical and emotional development of young children through her sessions.

'We initially look to develop simple ball skills and introduce mini rackets with the children hitting sponge balls off cones over low mini nets,' says Caroline. 'The children find it great fun with nursery rhyme music for warm ups and we discuss colours and numbers to aid their educational development. The sessions develop children's basic co-ordination skills, gross and fine motor control, agility and balance not to mention the social advantages of interaction, confidence, language and listening skills. We reward the children's personal achievement each week with stickers and charts for everyone with suggestions for ball practise to try at home.'

But why play tennis and what are the benefits for your child?

'Tennis really is a great sport for all-round health,' says Caroline. 'The US Tennis Association recently engaged the services of a top scientist (Jack L. Groppel, PhD) who confirmed that tennis really is the healthiest activity that people can participate in and is "a sport for life." According to Groppel many sports can promote your well being but tennis is the best in ensuring great physical, emotional and mental well being. Tennis players scored higher in vigour, optimism and self esteem while scoring lower in depression, anger, anxiety and tension than other athletes.

'Studies also show that playing tennis requires alertness and tactical thinking and may generate new connections between nerves in the brain and so promote a lifetime of continuing development of the brain. All this, in addition to the obvious physical benefits (studies on calorific expenditure demonstrate that competitive tennis burns more calories than aerobics or cycling), show us tennis is a fantastic sport to get our children involved in.

'Andy Murray started playing tennis at the age of 3 with his mum, so there's no excuse not to get started at a young age. Your child may or may not be the next Murray but the science is clear: playing tennis can positively benefit your child in many ways.'

Caroline will be running different holiday camps and lessons for children from 2 – 8 years old over the summer period and will then continue with her term time weekly lessons at various indoor venues across Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon (2-6 year olds) from September. For further information on Tennis Tykes, please log onto www.tennistykes.co.uk or contact her on 07843 342 662 caroline.buncall@tennistykes.co.uk

England wins the 2018 World Cup

- with the help of Brazilian Soccer Skills

Brazilian Soccer School coach Brian MacNair takes a look at the benefits for children who attend these classes.

At the time of writing, England had just drawn with the United States in their first group match of the 2010 World Cup. They showed no imagination, very little skill or movement and the result and performance was very disappointing.

Perhaps 2018 will be different - with the help of Brazilian Soccer Schools in York and Ripon.

Brazilian Soccer Schools (BSS) was established in York and Ripon in 2008 and has already started to develop some fantastic young players aged 5 - 9 years old who enjoy running *with* the ball, not after it.

The central aim of BSS is to encourage children to spend longer working with the ball practising and developing their skills. Skills from basic to complex are broken down for children to master and are then repeated individually, against defenders and eventually used in matches to the delight of watching parents.

The BSS training programme works hand in hand with the BSS Skills Badge scheme. The Skills Badge will lead to the development of players who can play the game in a way that previously people would have only associated with the great Brazilians of the past.

The programme incorporates tactical and physical training too, but not until we have technically competent players. Younger players under 10 don't need to be coached how to win, they have an inner desire to win. Coaching children to be exciting players, good passers with good ball control will ultimately result in winners in the future - just look at Spain.

The BSS programme is designed for players aged 5 - 16 years old. However, many of the players joining BSS in York and Ripon have graduated from Socratots so it is the perfect environment for young players to thrive.



BSS in York and Ripon are starting a number of new sessions for children aged 5 - 7 and 8 - 11 years old. The sessions are perfect for inexperienced children or for children currently playing in teams who want to improve. The most talented children may also be invited to weekly Academy Sessions.

The new BSS term starts in September and spaces are available. For more information contact Brian MacNair on 01765 620374, b.macnair@icfds.com or visit www.icfds.com/yorkandripon