



## 8U Competency Test

Every year Kent Tennis hold an 8U Open Day, designed for coaches around the county to send their best 8U players to be assessed for Kent County Training. The day acts as a pre-selection, where the successful players will be short-listed to attend the first county training session, where subsequently the Kent 8U County Training squad will be selected.

It can be difficult for all coaches to know what level of play may be required for such a day and to fully understand the competencies that will be evaluated. To support the coaches, Kent Tennis have produced the following competency test to arm the coaches with a guide that will assist them in determining whether their player is of the right level to attend.

The Kent Tennis 8U Open Day is an inclusive day, where we would love to see many children from the various clubs in the county. We hope that this information will help you to decide if it is the right time for your player to be seen by the county coaching team.

Below are a number of competencies for you to go through with the players that you feel may have the ability to attend the Open Day. Please note that this isn't designed to be a lesson plan and that the drills are not pass or fail, but more of a guideline for you to judge if it would be appropriate to send the player to this day.

### 1. Touch - feel

Player to be competent at playing touch and with a grip close to a chopper grip.  
(Court size is one half of the mini red court and 1m back from the net)

### 2. Both Back - rally tempo (time limit)

Coach and player to have a rally of 20 shots within a time limit of 30 seconds.  
Whenever your player reaches 20, let them continue and record their best score  
(coach to ensure a mix of Forehand and Backhand)

### 3. Both Back – depth

Cones or lines to be placed two adult racket lengths inside the mini red baseline at the coaches end of the court.

Coach and player to have a rally of 20 (in a row), of the 10 shots the player will hit, 5+ need to pass the marked area.  
(coach to ensure a mix of Forehand and Backhand)



#### 4. Both Back - direction

Coach and player to rally cross court for 12 shots in a row (6 each) off the forehand and then repeat from the backhand side (backhand only no inside out forehands)

#### 5. Overarm Serve – over and in

Alternating sides, the player hits 10 overarm serves and is aiming to get 5+ into play on the correct side of the centre line.

#### 6. Physical Test – speed

The coach sets up a fan drill with the following instructions, you will need 4 cones, 4 balls, a timer and an adult sized racket.

1. Place a racket down with 4 balls on the strings in the middle of the baseline, this is your start point.
2. From your start point, imagine you are standing in the middle of a clock and place each cone five racket lengths from the baseline as if on the following numbers, 9, 11, 1 and 3 (see picture)  
\*Please note that the measurements are universal so the drill can be set up anywhere
3. The player only taking one ball at a time, places each ball on the cones. The timer ends when the player returns to the start point having successfully placed all balls on the cones.



When placing the ball onto a cone, it must stay on as this is part of the test, the player cannot move onto the next ball until it is on the cone. To encourage dexterity the player needs to use their left hand for cones 9 and 11 and their right for cones 1 and 3.



Please click here to watch a video of a player completing this exercise

[County Training | Kent Lawn Tennis Association | Greater London \(kenttennis.org.uk\)](#)

**A good time gauge for this test is under 15 seconds**

### **A message to the coach....**

As a county we are very keen to engage with as many coaches as possible and would like to see your players at this 8U Open Day. When performing the test with your players, you can use your own discretion when determining their success, based on the explanation of the exercise and what is expected. Here are some guide notes for you to consider when doing so...

1. If the player completed all or most of the competencies within a couple of attempts, we would love to see them at the Open Day.
2. If the player generally did well, but struggled in one or two of the competencies, use your discretion however, we would be happy to see them at the Open Day
3. If the player struggled through each competency and required multiple attempts to complete successfully or not, please use your discretion, but it may be too soon to send them this year.
4. Please encourage as many of your girls as possible to try this test and hopefully we will see them at the Open Day.