

TENNIS NEUTRAL

Nick Kyrgios Foundation's "Tennis Neutral": User Story

Renee and Simon Alame

Renee Alame has had a racquet in her hand since well before her fourth birthday. She's been smacking balls ever since, and to very good effect:

- 3x Australian Junior Champion (U14 and U12 Clay Court, U14 Hard Court)
- World Junior Teams – Australian U14 team member for 2023 Finals in Czech Republic
- Wimbledon Junior Championships – U14 wildcard
- 1x ITF Junior Tournament Singles Champion
- 3x ITF Junior Tournament Doubles Champion (with older sister Rianna)
- In her age group:
 - o Highest UTR in Australia
 - o No. 20 globally

This young tennis player from Sydney Australia is on her way and fully committed.

Her father **Simon** is just as committed, putting aside his day job to concentrate on the tennis ambitions of two talented daughters. (He still works nights at the F45 fitness centre the family owns.)



Renee and sister Rianna have both pulled out of school to focus on tennis. Simon oversees their remote education.

And when regular coach Steve Thompson (father of world no. 71 Jordan Thompson) is away on the tour, Simon steps into that role as well.

Simon is a committed fan of **Tennis Neutral** too.

"It's a great little app," he said. "When I first got it I was using it all the time. Especially at tournaments I'm using it for every match, before and after."

"It's easy to use and just does exactly what it says – lets me see before a match what we should be aiming for and afterwards to check how we've gone in UTR."

“With Renee, I don’t normally tell her unless she asks or there’s something I want to show her. She doesn’t need it. It’s more for me as a parent or coach that it’s most useful. I’ve shared it with a bunch of other parents and coaches as well.”

“I’m definitely looking forward to the coaching add-ons the Tennis Neutral crew are working on.”

The “Tennis Neutral” app

- *download from Google’s PlayStore and Apple’s AppStore*
- *for competitive players, parents and coaches engaging with UTR*
- *set ‘UTR positive’ target scores for matches*
- *lower stress levels*
- *nuance knowledge of player performance under different circumstances*

The NKF’s Tennis Neutral (TN) app takes the UTRs of any two players and returns the ratio of games that UTR’s algorithm predicts the players will win in a match, together with example results. It can also take a match result and determine for which player the result is UTR positive.

“Inspiration for the app came from the stress many younger players were under because they didn’t know what score they needed to get a UTR positive result,” said TN producer Ric Curnow. “Knowing where the neutral point lies removes most of that stress, regardless of the actual match outcome.”

The app was developed around an algorithm derived by a team of volunteers from the Australian National University, building on earlier work by PhD students from Columbia University in the US.



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Estimate where the UTR neutral point lies between players with different UTRs.

NKF foundation

The advertisement features a green background with a large white tennis ball graphic on the left. A smartphone screen displays the app's interface, showing a "Predictor" section with the text "Estimate where the UTR neutral point lies between players with different UTRs" and a "Go to the Predictor" button, and a "Calculator" section with the text "Is a match result positive or negative with respect to your current UTR? What is the game ratio you need to be sure of a 'UTR positive' outcome in a forthcoming match?" and a "Go to the Calculator" button. The NKF foundation logo is in the bottom right corner.