HUNDREDS of young local tennis stars are gearing up for their final slam of 2009.

Hosted for the first time by Griffith University Tennis Centre, the junior tournament will run from tomorrow to Saturday and has already attracted more than 250 nominations from eager competitors.

Griffith University’s world-class tennis centre opened at Mt Gravatt in January and provides court hire, coaching, social tennis, and fixture competitions, in addition to hosting tournaments.

Head coach Anthony Richardson said the centre was excited to host its first junior tournament, which would involve more than 1000 tennis matches.

“We were really surprised by the number of entries, given it’s our first year,” Richardson said.

“We’ve had entries from across the state and regional New South Wales, and even some international entrants.”

He said the huge number of entries reflected the results of the recent Sweeny Sports Report, which again found tennis was the sport of most interest.

The survey on Australia’s sporting preferences ranked tennis as the No.1 sport people were interested in for 2009.

“Tennis is a great school holiday activity, especially with the motivation of the Brisbane International and the Australian Open tournaments in January,” Richardson said.

“We will be running school holiday camps in December and January so that more kids can get involved in this fantastic sport.”