TORIN CHEN

RISING tennis star Alex Bourgeois believes the only way he can become one of the world’s best is to become a clay-court specialist.

Alex, 15, of Turramurra, is moulding himself into a European-style baseline like Spanish clay-court superstar Rafael Nadal.

The Kooroora Club member is coached by his uncle, Luke Bourgeois, a former hitting partner of former world No.1 Roger Federer.

Despite being brought up on synthetic grass, Alex is striving to develop into a top level hard-court and clay-court player.

“When you’re on clay and hard courts, you are hitting more balls,” he said.

“With the better players coming from Spain, it’s better to learn on a clay court.”

At the clay court under-14 boys national titles in Queensland, Alex made it to the round of 16 in the singles.

He fared better at the Bathurst Junior Open, finishing runner-up in the under-14 singles.

“It was a good result considering it was raining the whole tournament, which made it hard to get any rhythm,” he said.

In the Margaret Court Cup in January, he reached the quarter-finals of the singles and the semi-finals of the doubles.

The Year 9 Knox Grammar School student is in the school’s open firsts team.

Alex’s long-term goal is to study in the US and play on the ITF college circuit.

He is ranked 14th in NSW in the under-14 division.

His father, Paul Bourgeois, said his son’s top-spin forehand is suited to slower surfaces.

“He’s a strong, grinding type of player,” he said.

“Alex is very confident playing from the back of the court and he works hard on his fitness.”

CONFIDENT: Alex Bourgeois is on the way up. Picture

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