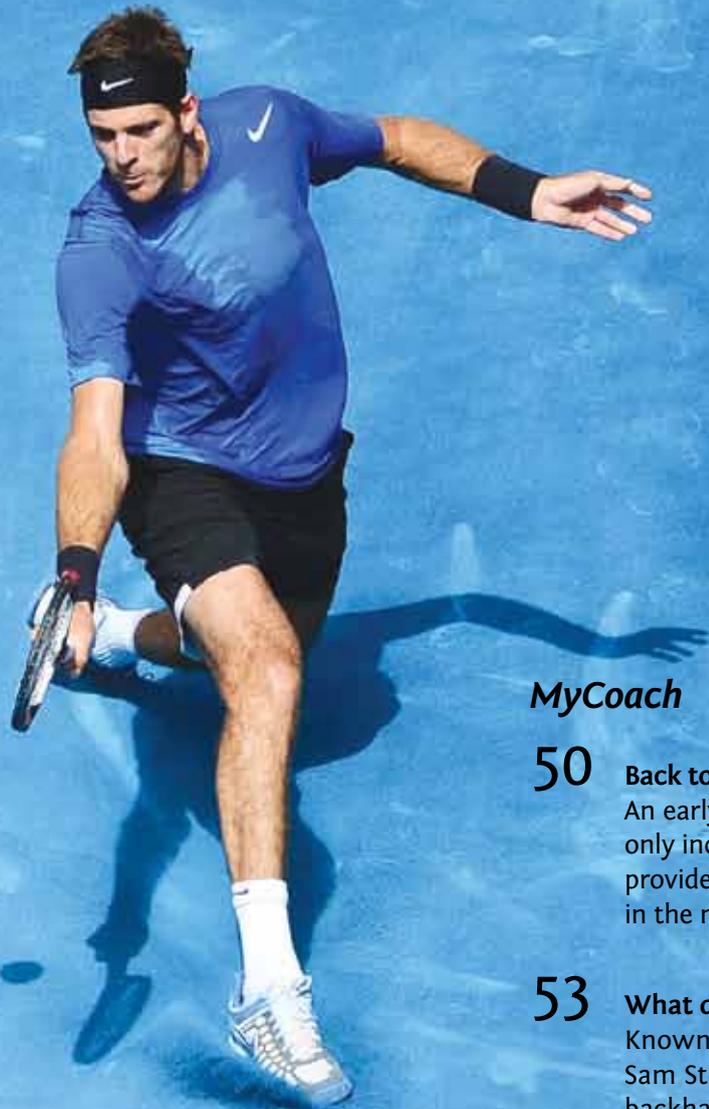


MY COACH

A SECTION DEDICATED TO TENNIS AUSTRALIA COACH MEMBERS



MyCoach

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Back to school

An early start can lead to a lifelong love of the game.



It's during the school-aged years that children begin to wonder about their futures – so experiencing an early taste of tennis could not only increase participation, but also be the setting for a champion in the making.

By DANIELA TOLESKI

No matter the sport, the most common way to begin participating is by going to the source, which in most cases is the sports club that is offering lessons or training.

But by shifting this and entering the school environment first, a coach can showcase the sport itself. This has the potential to attract players who may not have even been thinking of participating in tennis before being exposed to the sport first-hand.

This way, coaches are not waiting for the participants to come to them but are giving prospective participants an opportunity to experience enjoyment along with their school friends.

Improving the links between local tennis clubs and local schools also promotes a healthy sporting option for children and provides another avenue to become active from a young age.

Three-ball system

Tennis Australia's MLC Tennis Hot Shots in Schools program is perfectly tailored for primary school-aged children, making it easier for them to learn.

Tennis Australia has partnered with The Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER) to introduce a resource created specifically for teachers.

Rebecca McDonald, Tennis Australia's Hot Shots in Schools Coordinator, says the program allows tennis to take its place in schools alongside competitor sports such as cricket and Australian Rules football.

"The program actively allows teachers to have 24 kids playing on one tennis/basketball court or indoor gym, which is basically one class size," she says.

"From the perspective of a teacher, you can fully engage all students in a lesson, rather than having four kids play on a full-size tennis court while the other 20 are standing off. And best of all, you do not need a tennis court for the schools environment, a hard flat surface is all that you require."

Converting non-tennis players

The use of low-compression balls, along with smaller racquets and courts, gives children the opportunity to obtain maximum enjoyment and an immediate sense of achievement.

“The three ball system – the MLC Tennis Hot Shots system – if any club coach is not providing this in all schools in their local area, they’re missing out and doing tennis a disservice,” Tennis Australia Club Professional coach Jamie Venerys says.

But the biggest advantage of forging a strong relationship with a local school is having the chance to convert non-tennis players and in turn provide them with a pathway into the club system.

“I think it’s a big factor with clubs and coaches. They compete for the same slice of the market which is already existing tennis players,” Venerys says. “Whereas how coaches can best help the game and their clubs is to go out and attract people to tennis that haven’t done it before.”

Venerys has been involved with tennis for more than 25 years and puts the interest of the sport ahead of his own personal gain.

“When I go to a school and visit say 100 kids in the school my aim is absolutely not to get clients for my business, it’s to find those that aren’t playing tennis anywhere and direct them to their local tennis club.

“As a spin off they may or may not decide to use any of our coaching services. But at least they’re in the club as members and then they have the opportunity to play three or four or even five times a week at their local community facility.”

Capturing early

Research has shown that capturing the primary and secondary school-aged segment of the market early and then taking them through the journey of tennis are the most important components.

Tennis Australia Club Professional coach Matt Bull says that modified tennis programs like MLC Tennis Hot Shots is the only way to introduce young children to tennis.

“No child should learn with a traditional yellow ball”, he says. “It [MLC Tennis Hot Shots] works because it’s a lot easier for kids to play and they progress a lot faster. We create more players, the standard of the players is a lot stronger and there is a bigger pool to choose from.

“If we can get players to a good standard before they go to university, they are more likely to return to the sport,” Bull adds.

With the provision of indoor gym spaces at schools, the modified program can still be conducted during wet weather. With sessions being held on a frequent basis, participants can continue to enjoy the benefits year-round.

“You see the smile on their faces straight away ... so then they want to come back [to the sport],” Tennis Australia’s Tennis in Schools Ambassador John Fitzgerald says.

“What Hot Shots does is bring kids into the sport. Once it gets into the schools – the Hot Shots department within Tennis Australia [is] having results already [introducing this] into schools – it will gain momentum, it’ll be like a J-curve. Over time, there will be hundreds of thousands [of kids] in the sport with Hot Shots where they [previously] wouldn’t have been.”

In the long-term, these efforts to better link tennis with schools at a grassroots level will hopefully mean that tennis will begin to be included more prominently within the school curriculum.

“As we know at the high end only one out of 101 people are going to be a future national or ranked champion, but the game is bigger than that. It’s a healthy fun activity for all Australians, to be played anywhere over the world, by all ages, boys and girls at all levels,” Venerys says.

The future growth and longevity of tennis in Australia rests on capturing the interest of primary school-aged children, and coaches, as well as teachers, can play an active role in achieving this objective.

Intro to MLC Tennis Hot Shots coaching course

The Intro to MLC Tennis Hot Shots coaching course is an introductory coaching course produced by Tennis Australia and supported by the Australian Sports Commission.

The course offers an introduction and orientation to the field of coaching and teaching tennis to beginners of any age group. The course content is directed at children’s sport and covers basic sport skills, group organisation, planning, child development, safety aspects and modified games and activities.

The Intro to MLC Tennis Hot Shots coaching course emphasises the practical aspects of teaching tennis in the school setting. You will learn about:

- ♦ the MLC Tennis Hot Shots program
- ♦ fun tennis games and activities
- ♦ understanding the fundamental skills for tennis
- ♦ how to provide a fun and enjoyable atmosphere for beginners in tennis.

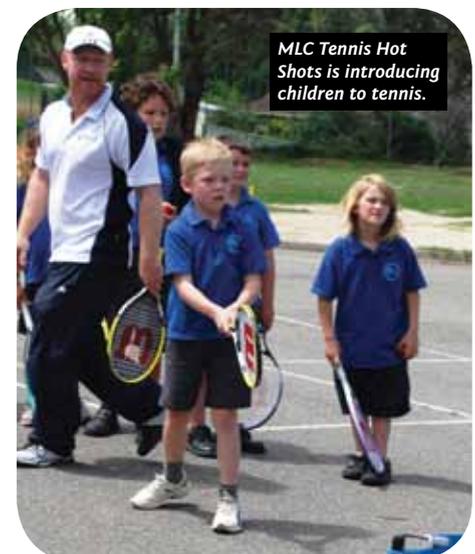
Who is the Intro to MLC Tennis Hot Shots coaching course for?

An Intro to MLC Tennis Hot Shots coaching course is particularly relevant for people working with children; however, it is also relevant to beginner coaches of any age group.

Go to tennis.com.au/coaches/education/courses-qualifications/intro-to-coaching for more details.



Converting non-tennis players in schools can provide a pathway into the club system.



MLC Tennis Hot Shots is introducing children to tennis.

The journey brings rewards



Name: Craig Miller
Clubs: Centenary Park Tennis Club, Glenhuntly Tennis Club, Head Coach of Tennis at Wesley College, Victoria
Qualifications: Tennis Australia High Performance coach
Other: Certificate 4 in Workplace Training and Assessment, licensed Real Estate Agent and Auctioneer

After a three-year stint as a Real Estate Agent, former professional tennis player Craig Miller went back to his roots and continues to pass on his valuable knowledge today.

On the manicured grass courts of Kooyong in Melbourne Craig Miller ensured he entered the Last Eight Club during Australian Open 1985.

Players who reach the singles quarter-finals or the doubles semi-finals at the Australian Open receive the lifetime pass to attend the event each year and Miller with partner, and “great friend”, Laurie Warder reached the semi-finals on that eventful day.

Miller has played all over the world, including the main draws of the four Grand Slams during his 10 years on the professional tennis tour.

“Beating John Lloyd at Wimbledon (in 1983) and reaching the semi-finals of the Australian Open doubles are two of my most prized moments of my career,” Miller says.

After his playing days on the tour, Miller worked as a Real Estate Agent for LJ Hooker in Neutral Bay for three years before accepting the role as State Coach in New South Wales.

“I was passionate about junior development and felt I had the knowledge

and skill to make a positive difference,” Miller says of his return to the sport he started participating in as an eight-year-old.

He held this position for eight years and then became the National Men’s Coach for Tennis Australia for the following eight years.

During this period he worked with a number of juniors, including former world No. 4 Jelena Dokic, who was part of the NSW Junior Squad from 12 years of age.

“I thought I really had something, I guess, is the fairest thing I could say. She certainly had the right mentality, the grit and determination that all coaches really search for,” he told the ABC’s 7:30 Report in 1999 when asked about his first impressions on the young Dokic.

For the past six years Miller has made a name for himself with his own business ventures, which include being the Director of IQ Tennis, along with the Head Coach at the three Wesley College campuses as part of its tennis program.

IQ Tennis is based at two centres – Centenary Park Tennis Club in Bentleigh East and Glenhuntly Tennis Club in Glenhuntly, both in Victoria.

“The ‘IQ’ in IQ Tennis stands for intensity and quality and it is these two philosophies, which permeate throughout all of our programs. We all get good at whatever we repeat. The best way to achieve a great outcome is to train with intensity and quality day in and day out,” he says.

Miller’s tennis experience has helped him develop his IQ Tennis coaching system, which rapidly accelerates the learning process.

“I really want my players to be technically sound and to have an excellent understanding of the geometry of the court,” he says.

The company’s motto is based on its ‘learn twice as fast’ coaching method and Miller is keen to share what he has learnt with other coaches. He believes the use of mobile technology, including smartphones and tablets is the way of the future and coaches are keen to know more.

“I currently mentor a number of coaches in Melbourne as well as interstate and really enjoy passing on my knowledge and specific coaching techniques, which includes the use of special apparatus that I have developed. These nifty gadgets really expedite the learning process.”

And with 45 tennis teams and more than 3000 students at Wesley College, Miller is exposing tennis outside of the IQ Tennis centres while setting some records along the way.

“The Wesley College First Girls Team has won the APS AGSV Premiership for the last four years. By winning again this year, they have set an APS and Wesley Tennis Record for most consecutive victories.

“But I love the teaching aspect of it. I get a buzz out of seeing the look on my player’s faces when the game they love becomes easier as a result of my instruction,” he says.

After more than 40 years of playing and coaching Miller is acutely aware that tennis is a game that has the ability to transcend from sport to general life.

“I really enjoy the mentoring aspect of helping young individuals to excel in not only tennis, but life itself. Tennis presents



Craig Miller with one of his up and coming athlete's Samyuktha Rajagopalan.

a fantastic opportunity for players of all ages and abilities to enjoy healthy fun in a positive environment.

“Young players who pursue tennis as a career are taking on a huge challenge, but it is important for all to understand that even if their dreams are not realised, it is the journey itself that ultimately brings reward. Skills learned such as discipline, problem solving, professionalism and health and fitness are transferable to all vocations in life.”

What do you see?

By the Stroke Master

Sam Stosur's forehand has been labelled a stroke of beauty by many tennis enthusiasts and steady improvements have also seen her backhand become a weapon. An analysis of her slice backhand shows the technical aspects that allow Stosur to use that weapon so effectively.



Shoulders are aligned to the oncoming ball.

Both arms will work in unison, with the right arm swinging forwards and the left arm extending backwards.

Posture is maintained throughout the swing due to core strength (note the abdominals and lower back muscles).

The swing is high to low to impart backspin for control.

Stosur slides into the shot (compared to sliding after contact) which allows her to recover quicker.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Demanding matches require nutritional fuel.

Success in tennis relies not only on physical fitness, but also a series of mental skills including anticipation, reaction time and the ability to focus for an unspecified period of time. A player who is struggling to maintain focus may be moving well during points and showing little sign of physical fatigue, but may be falling down in their shot selection, ball placement and skill execution. While some matches may be completed quickly, others turn into marathon efforts with mental acuity required over many hours. Several factors contribute to the onset of fatigue and a loss of concentration, but there are a number of nutritional factors that play an important part in maintaining focus throughout a training session or match.

EVER WONDER ...

Why breakfast is so important?

As well as fuelling working muscles, glucose is the energy source for the brain, meaning that the amount of available carbohydrate is important for a player's physical and mental performance. Hypoglycaemia, the term given to clinically low blood glucose levels, results in a variety of symptoms including

dizziness, nausea and disorientation. While these symptoms are severe, skipping a meal such as breakfast can decrease the availability of glucose to the brain, impairing brain function in the short-term. On the tennis court, this can result in compromised skill execution and concentration. Likewise, athletes restricting their food intake to lose weight have demonstrated a higher rate of perceived exertion during performance tests, meaning that training and competition can feel more difficult for players who are dieting or skipping meals. Poor nutrition prior to, or during a training session or match can also affect an athlete's mood state and may result in increased tension, frustration and anger.

Recommendation:

Encourage your players to eat before training and matches. Some players may not have much of an appetite early in the morning so suggest alternatives such as homemade smoothies or liquid meal replacements (e.g. Sustagen, Up & Go or similar). Players should not skip meals or be too restrictive in their food intake or they will potentially compromise the quality of their performance.

FROM THE STANDS ...

When a player like Maria Sharapova eats a banana or a carbohydrate gel during a changeover, it's more than just about replenishing fuel stores. Carbohydrate intakes during sports such as tennis have been shown to improve mental and physical capacity by reducing the impact of fatigue. These performance benefits have been demonstrated before muscle glycogen levels have been depleted, suggesting that there is a positive effect on the brain and central nervous system that enhances performance.

A FOCUS ON FLUID

The physiological effects of dehydration are often seen in tennis, with several high profile players suffering in the heat of the Australian summer every year. The evaporation of sweat is the primary mechanism for heat loss when exercising in hot climates, and while sweat rates are individual, cramp-prone male tennis players have recorded sweat rates in excess of three litres per hour during summer.

While the psychological impact of dehydration is not as visible, studies have shown that a change in body mass of



Fluid replacement is critical to peak performance.

greater than two percent due to dehydration impacts mental performance including concentration, skilled tasks and tactics.

Most athletes fail to replace their fluid losses during training or competition, so it is essential for players to focus on their fluid intake after one session in preparation for the next, to prevent cumulative dehydration. This is important all year round as players often pay less attention to hydration during the cooler months.

RESEARCH CORNER ...

Caffeine is used widely by a variety of athletes and has been shown to have several ergogenic effects including improvements in endurance and sprint activities. In addition, caffeine has been found to have positive effects on mood and brain function, specifically decreased tiredness, increased mental alertness, improved concentration and reaction times.

The performance-enhancing effects of caffeine are individual but benefits have been seen from doses as low as 1-3 mg/kg of body mass with plasma concentration peaking at approximately 45-60 minutes after administration. The results of

studies examining caffeine use in tennis are not conclusive and caffeine use can have a number of side effects including gastrointestinal discomfort, headaches and insomnia.

A high dose of caffeine may also result in over-arousal of an athlete. A number of sports foods contain caffeine including

carbohydrate gels, energy bars and sports drinks. It is recommended that children and adolescent athletes do not use caffeine, including in the form of energy drinks.

A number of 'brain foods' are being investigated in relation to their effects on brain health and mental performance. Nutrients such as omega-3 fatty acids, a type of polyunsaturated fat (PUFA) found predominantly in fish and seafoods, antioxidants including flavonols found in several fruits and beans, and folate, found in green leafy vegetables are all being studied to determine how they might enhance brain function. Although not yet investigated in relation to mental function in athletic populations, these foods have other performance benefits that make them a worthwhile inclusion in a player's diet.

Bethanie Allanson,
Performance Nutrition Coordinator.

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Carbohydrate gel is more than just about replenishing fuel stores.

COACHES' CORNER

The spirit of Davis Cup

Very few tournaments in Australian tennis generate the passion and patriotism associated with playing in a team environment, such as Davis Cup. For aspiring young tennis players Davis Cup and the heroes that are born from this event, are the epitome of tennis today.

The Tennis Australia Talent Development and Project Talent Teams conduct 'Davis Cup Camps' in conjunction with home ties. In 2012 Australia hosted two ties, one in Geelong (to coincide with the tie against China) and the second in Brisbane (to coincide with the tie against Korea).

The Davis Cup Camp engages the top 12 and under male athletes in the host state, with a focus on the importance of working as a team, understanding the commitment and effort involved in preparing for competition and to build resilience, toughness and discipline. The camps also enable the athletes to implement these principles into their own training environments and assist in achieving their long-term developmental goals.

In February, Geelong Lawn Tennis Club hosted 10 of Victoria's best 12 and under athletes in a Davis Cup Camp. This camp included the following athletes:

- John Amato
- Ken Cavrak
- Mathew Dellavadova
- Connor Di Marco
- Stefan Milenkovic
- Mason Naumovski
- Greg Polmans
- David Qariaqus



Davis Cup Camp athletes with Steve Ayles, Commercial Director for Tennis Australia (centre, left) and Bernard Tomic during the Davis Cup tie held in Geelong in February 2012.

- Marcus Stathos
- Sam Whitehead

More recently, in April, the Queensland Tennis Centre hosted eight of Queensland's best 12 and under athletes in another Davis Cup Camp. This camp included the following athletes:

- Alexander Crnokrak
- Dane Sweeny
- Tommy Hamilton
- Milan Bennett
- Christopher Lane
- Santokh Bains
- Patrick Harper
- Brendan Schultz

Under the watchful eye of Ashley Naumann (Coach and Talent Development

Manager, Qld) and Derek Burden (Coach Education Coordinator), the team of eight were treated to a fantastic experience and given the opportunity to train in a Davis Cup styled camp.

A range of training sessions and initiatives were conducted throughout the five day camp, including training on clay (lead up to the 12s National Claycourt Championships), an impromptu Q and A session with Australian Davis Cup captain Pat Rafter, access to private team practice sessions and reserved seating to the tie itself.

"Overall the boys did exceptionally well and really enjoyed the experience; being able to see the tie up close, and meet the players and coaches. It was also a great opportunity for them leading into the 12 nationals," Ashley Naumann said.

Tennis Australia's Talent Development and Project Talent departments are committed to providing unique training opportunities for the next generation of Davis Cup athletes. Parents, coaches and athletes alike are recognising the success of such programs. Michelle Sweeney, mother of Dane Sweeny (Qld) said, "Dane loved the camp and is even more motivated and excited for the upcoming nationals ... Thanks again for the invite and having Dane involved."

Want to experience the Davis Cup first hand? Dreaming of going to Wimbledon? For just \$50 Tennis Australia Coach Members can receive the ticketing upgrade. Simply visit www.tennis.com.au/coaches/membership for more information.



Queensland camp athletes were treated to an impromptu Q and A session with Australian Davis Cup captain Pat Rafter.

COACH TALK

INVESTIGATING INSURANCE



Who needs insurance?

As our society becomes increasingly litigious, the need to have appropriate insurance protection is essential.

Coaches can be held liable for claims arising from negligence, errors and omissions committed in the course of conducting their business. Whether the coach is qualified, a trainee, volunteer, employee or contractor, it is imperative that they have their own insurance.

As a tennis coach you are in a position of influence and authority while performing coaching activities. During these activities you provide professional advice to pupils that a reasonable person may expect to rely upon in their capacity as a tennis student.

Professional indemnity insurance protects you from any claims brought against you as a result of this professional advice. As a tennis coach you also have a responsibility and duty of care to your pupils and the public to provide a safe coaching environment. Public liability insurance protects you from a claim that may result from you not providing an adequate level of care and safety for pupils or the public while conducting your coaching related activities.

Clubs and centres need to ensure they have the correct liability coverage including public and products liability which covers the club for negligence should a member of the general public injure themselves using the tennis courts. Directors and officers cover protects your committee for any claims against the decisions made on behalf of the club and professional indemnity, which covers the club and any other insured

for claims made against the club for actual or alleged breach of professional duty.

Players either competing in tournaments or having tennis coaching need to ensure they have personal accident insurance in case they sustain an injury while playing in sanctioned and/or officially organised tennis events. This should include training, competitions, tournaments, attending social functions, performing voluntary work for the club and travelling to and from such events, anywhere in Australia.

How can I obtain insurance?

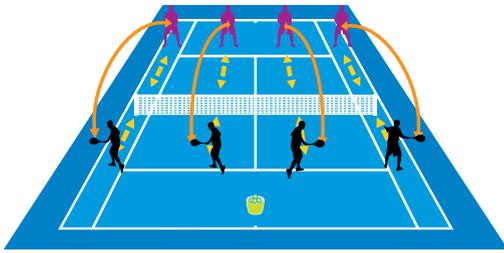
Each individual can source their own insurance by obtaining quotes from

different providers. Tennis Australia is partnered with Marsh, the world's number one risk and insurance specialist, and has a tailored insurance product specifically for tennis coaches, clubs and centres and players. To obtain club or player insurance, as well as other benefits, simply contact your state Member Association to become an affiliate or a member. To obtain coach insurance, register for Tennis Australia Coach Membership. You will receive a certificate of currency to be able to provide to anyone who needs to see proof of your insurance. If you need to make a claim, simply call your membership team for more information.



The social network – WARM-UP/COOL DOWN ACTIVITY 11

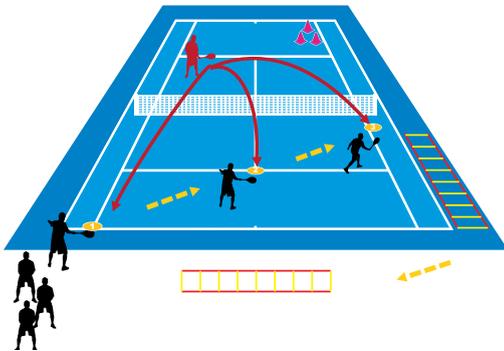
– An extract from the Cardio Tennis Activity Cards



- The purple player throws the ball underarm to their partner.
- Their partner returns the ball with a forehand or backhand.
- The purple player catches the ball
- Both players meet at the net to exchange racquet and ball.
- Move back to the service line and repeat.

Progression: To increase intensity, players can carry out the activity within a three quarter court.

Three across diagonal – DRILL-BASED ACTIVITY 2

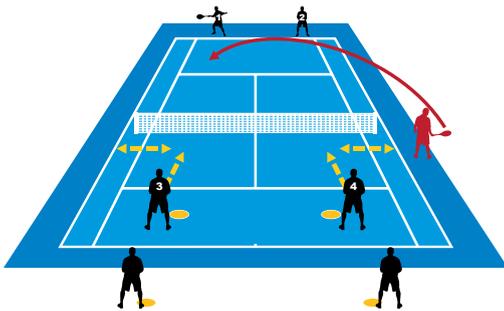


- Participants start in a line behind spot marker number one.
- Participants play a forehand at spot marker one, spot marker two and spot marker three.
- Participants then go through the ladder and back to the start.
- Coach feeding sequence is 1, 2, 1, 3, 2, 1, 3, 2, and 1, repeat.

Progression 1: Start from the other side of the court for backhands.

Progression 2: To increase intensity, just feed shots two and three.

Recover doubles – PLAY-BASED ACTIVITY 15

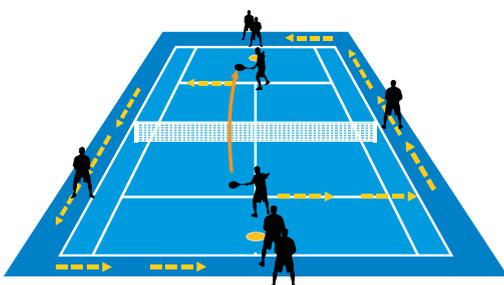


- The coach feeds to players 1 and 2 while players 3 and 4 move to the net and the point is played out.
- Once the point ends, the net team must touch the doubles sideline while the coach feeds the second point.
- After three points are played, both pairs swap ends and the new pairs begin.

Variation: The net team must touch the service line after every point.

Progression: If your group is competitive, use a champions and challengers scoring system.

Mini tennis around the world – WARM-UP/COOL DOWN ACTIVITY 14



- Participants begin in two lines behind spot markers.
- Once a player plays a shot, they immediately move to the opposite line by following the arrows in an anti-clockwise direction.
- The next person in the line continues the rally.

Tip: This activity is intended as a warm-up/cool down but could easily be used as a play-based activity if moved to full court.

Regression: Throwing and catching only.