

## Simple Drills and Game Patterns for Top Female Players

**Georges Goven**

*French Fed Cup Captain*

As everyone knows, the women's game today has become more physical, in addition to being fairly complete on the technically and tactically.

The aim in this presentation is to propose a few drills which coaches use on the WTA tour and that we also use at the FFT, which take into account the evolution of the game.

The drills are not very original ones, but while demonstrating them, we shall emphasise some critical factors with regard to the pedagogical, technical and tactical point of views. We will demonstrate that it is not the drill that is all important, but the intensity at which it is completed.

Below are some topics to be discussed in this presentation:

- Backline strokes: during crosscourt rallies, remember the following:
  - Either of the 2 players should accelerate down the line as soon as they have the opportunity
  - Players should even go to the net when the opportunity occurs
  - Also hit dropshots when possible
  - Recover to the middle of the court between each stroke
  - Stand as close to baseline as possible
  - Use topspin forehands and backhands with a reasonable distance above the net

These are very usual pieces of advice, but remember that if you let your players just hit without these goals, the game will not be intensive, and they won't be efficient during their matches.

- When to go for a topspin volley, and what drill to use?
  - At the basket, do not feed only moon balls, but also balls at hip level, so that the players really work hard with legs and wrists/hands
- Volley: in the drills from the basket; players should not hit more than 2 or 3 volleys in a row
- Smash: smash after a bounce is an interesting drill as it is less traumatising for shoulder, and it forces players to move well under the ball
- Service: it has become a real weapon. What sort of serves are the most efficient at the top level? We shall see the 6 to 8 zones players should use
- Technique:
  - Work of wrist and hand is essential: it can be done from the first minutes on court by playing in the service boxes.
  - Two hand backhand: strengthening of left hand is efficient. It improves the game on high balls and on return of serve.