

Quality in Technical Skills and Tactical Values

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My goal for this presentation: to have participants re-think their drills and exercises and be more aware of the value of different contents in training.

This presentation deals with the contents of training. However, it is not about the drill itself or organising the drill, but it deals with the purpose of the drill and the philosophy behind it.

Traditionally, technical practice was movement oriented. In modern thinking, technique is all about skills, functions and mostly about handling and mastering the ball as a part of the interaction between two players. Technique has been redefined and is, within the Action Method, seen as a result of perception and a decision of a player. A technique is an intentional movement and is meant to send a 'message' within the ball and to the opponent.

When we talk about tactics we have to understand the difference between patterns and tactical decisions. Players are deciding all the time while playing rallies. The difference between a technical decision and a tactical decision is not so obvious. The technical decision is a choice, which is based upon timing and racquet face control in a given situation. The player has to realise the emergency of the situation and decide about his possibilities of not hitting an error. On the other side a tactical decision is based upon the possibilities of winning the point. It is important to differentiate between these decisions and also to understand the link between them.

The number of mistakes has a direct link to confidence on one side and moving borders on the other side. The tactical value depends on the technical qualities, but a good technique does not automatically guarantee a tactical usefulness.

In technique a mixture of ball speed, ball spin, precision and consistency are decisive and especially under pressure. This has to be practised and improved up to the highest possible level, without affecting the self-confidence of the player. In some situations one of those isolated factors can be the decisive factor for the tactical means. Therefore it is important to think about the tactical value of those factors in different situations.

Many coaches prefer to work with tactical patterns and give more or less compulsory patterns to players to be used in a match. For some players this is ideal, but others will need a freedom of choice instead of a tactical harness.

In this presentation I will show drills/exercises covering the above mentioned principles, using target areas and a higher net (windows) with the following goals/topics:



- Examples of Serve training: from consistency to precision and then to variety;
- Examples of Forehand: consistency in one window and then variety;
- Targets for the bounce in comparison to targets related to the opponent;
- The value/importance of precision in height and width with passing shots;
- Isolating of a certain factor/value, for example ballspeed.