Teaching of tennis: a curriculum guide for physical education teachers

Owen Vincent Kennedy

The University of Montana

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TEACHING OF TENNIS - A CURRICULUM GUIDE FOR

PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

By

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University of Sydney,
Sydney, Australia, 1956.

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TEACHING OF TENNIS - A CURRICULUM GUIDE FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

By

OWEN V. KENNEDY
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to take this opportunity to express his most sincere appreciation to his loving wife, Marlene, and his daughters, Stephanie Veronica and Jacinta Theresa, whose assistance and understanding helped make this paper a reality.

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O.V.K.
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PREFACE

As an experienced teacher of Physical Education in Australia and Canada, and as a capable exponent of the game of tennis, the writer feels that he can contribute much toward the advancement of tennis in physical education programs. This paper will provide the tennis teacher, experienced or inexperienced, with a guide that will enable him to provide a more purposeful tennis program. It is the culmination of the writer's experiences in teaching and playing tennis in Australia and, more recently, in Canada and the United States.

The author commenced his tennis career in 1950 when he received tennis lessons from one of Australia's leading tennis coaches, Mr. Albert Newman, who also coached Lewis Hoad, Ken Rosewall, and many others. While attending the University of Sydney, the writer won the Men's Singles, Men's Doubles, and Mixed Doubles titles. He also played in "A" Grade tennis competition in Sydney, Australia for five years. While teaching at Canterbury High School in Sydney, the writer taught tennis and coached Martin Mulligan. He later went on to win the French Championship and became a finalist at Wimbledon.

The author was a Physical Education and National Fitness Consultant with the N.S.W. Education Department from 1962-1968. In this position he was responsible for conducting seminars, workshops and in-service training programs for elementary and secondary teachers of physical education. As a physical education teacher in Canada for the past two years, the writer has successfully introduced tennis into the
physical education program using the command, reciprocal, task and individual program styles of teaching. This paper outlines how teaching styles, as described by Muska Mosston (9) in his book Teaching Physical Education - Command to Discovery, may be applied to the teaching of tennis.

In the summer of 1970 the writer and Dr. Brian Sharkey conducted a clinic in "Advanced Tennis Techniques" at the University of Montana. The clinic provided an opportunity to "field test" the concepts included in Chapter III of this paper. This paper will draw on the writer's experiences in teaching tennis, his knowledge of the game, and is primarily written to assist the physical education teacher in implementing the game of tennis in the physical education program, and to aid in the incorporation of a variety of teaching styles.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Tennis is enjoyed by many participants all over the world. The game knows no boundaries, no barriers of language or custom. Wherever you go, you will see people playing tennis. Tennis is one of the most popular sports in the modern world, and must be regarded as an important recreational and cultural pursuit worthy of inclusion in the school physical education program.

In the United States of America in 1970, $24,000,000 was spent on tennis equipment alone (10). What can be done to assist the tennis teacher and the tennis coach to help the player utilize this equipment more efficiently? This paper is designed primarily for the physical education teacher, to assist him in implementing a successful tennis program in the elementary and secondary physical education program.

The paper will deal with many important principles basic to implementing a sound program of instruction. Factors such as: equipment, methodology, skill practices, lead-up games and stroke analysis will be discussed in detail.

Using teaching styles outlined by Mosston (9), Mariani (8) studied the effectiveness of the command and the task styles in the teaching of the forehand and backhand strokes. Mariani reported the following conclusions:

1. The command method was equal to the task method in the teaching of the forehand tennis stroke.

2. The task method was superior to the command method in the teach-
ing of the backhand stroke.

3. The task method showed a statistically significant superiority in retention over the command method of forehand and backhand tennis achievement.

Retention was tested after 60 days. The Mariani study was limited to two groups of male college students. Very little literature is available regarding the efficacy of various teaching styles in the teaching of tennis.

It is not the purpose of this study to conduct research in this area, but to provide a compact guide that will supplement the physical education tennis curriculum. Most tennis books such as Barnaby (1), Laver (7), Murphy (11, 12), and Faulkner (6), provide instructional techniques based on a one-to-one relationship. These books are written by professional players who have generally had little experience teaching tennis in school situations where group instruction is the rule, not the exception.

Consequently it is the aim of this paper to provide a curriculum guide that will assist the physical education teacher to implement a purposeful tennis program. It is the writer's opinion that tennis is becoming one of the most popular lifetime sports in the U.S.A. and will continue to increase in popularity in the future.
Equipment

Choosing a racket that is not too heavy is important for any boy or girl whose hand and arm are not strong. In the case of young children, the racket should be scaled down in length as well as in weight and handle size. In general it is suggested that the following guidelines be used in selecting tennis rackets for school students.

**Grades 1 - 2.** A wooden paddle bat made with 5/16 inch plywood
is an excellent choice. The overall length, including the handle, should be 14 inches, while the width should be no more than 7½ inches. The handle should be no more than 3½ inches around (Figure 1).

**Grades 3 - 6.** A modified racket should be used. Rackets can be scaled down rather simply. Remove the grip, cut 1 - 2 inches from the handle. Sand down and replace the grip. As a guideline for this age group, the handle should be no more than 4 inches around and the racket should weigh approximately 12 - 12½ ounces (Figure 2).
Grades 6 and above. A racket with a handle 4½ inches around and weighing approximately 13 - 13½ ounces should be used. Most high school boys, however, will use a racket with a 4 5/8 inch handle, weighing 13½ - 14 ounces.

Few players, if any, use larger rackets today—and they are not recommended. Good quality gut strings are important; however, when cost is a factor, nylon strings are very satisfactory (Figure 3).
Balls. In implementing a tennis program in the elementary or high school, the teacher should have a good supply of tennis balls. The ideal is at least 12 balls per student. Used balls are acceptable, but they must have adequate spring and some nap covering.

Facilities

Tennis courts with a laykold bitumen surface are ideal for school tennis courts. They require little maintenance and, providing
there is good drainage, are ready for play quickly after wet weather (Figure 4).

However, a tennis court is not absolutely necessary to implement a program. The gymnasium or playground can be modified in order to test all the basic strokes.

Some guidelines for planning a tennis court facility follow.

Dimensions

The following dimensions are suggested for the courts illustrated in Figures 5 and 6, pages 8 and 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Court Type</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tennis Courts:</td>
<td>Standard size, 78' X 36'</td>
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<tr>
<td>Half Tennis Courts:</td>
<td>Standard size, 39' X 36'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddle Courts:</td>
<td>20' X 9'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Wall:</td>
<td>A minimum height of 10'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball Machine Area</td>
<td>80' X 40'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Net Area</td>
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All courts should be located at least 12 feet from boundary fences and adjacent courts. Twenty-one feet of clearance is recommended behind each tennis court.
FIGURE 5

SUGGESTED LAYOUT FOR THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
FIGURE 6

SUGGESTED LAYOUT FOR A HIGH SCHOOL TENNIS INSTRUCTION AREA
Coaching an individual privately in stroke production is obviously far more effective than coaching a large number of individuals in a class. Since private coaching, although desirable, is hardly feasible in the school situation, the attention of the tennis teacher necessarily will be directed toward the most effective method of obtaining progress with large groups. One should strive for optimum conditions where individual attention can be given, but in elementary and secondary school situations today, it is inevitable that a class or group approach will be used at various stages of the tennis program.

Method I. Teaching Tennis by Command Style

I. Command Teaching

A. Definition.—Mosston (9) states that in this style of teaching, the teacher makes all the decisions and provides the student with the stimuli; the student provides the teacher with the responses. The lesson is highly controlled by the teacher. The teacher decides what activity should be performed and how long it should last. The student is expected to adhere to the physical limitations as set, determined and controlled by the teacher.

II. Preparation

A. Have each member of the class correctly attired and equipped with a racket. If some members of the class are
without rackets and improvisation is necessary, paddle tennis bats may be employed.

B. Choose the best possible area. A tennis court is ideal and, if the number in the class is small enough, the most realistic atmosphere is created by having the class on the end of the court facing the net. Any reasonable spacious area, however, is satisfactory whether it be in the playground, gymnasium, park, or even an unused parking lot.

C. Place the class in lines, allowing ample space for the swing of the racket. Because some practices involve the use of a partner, four lines are preferable to three since they facilitate class organization. When the abilities of the class vary considerably it is also advisable to have the better stroke makers standing in the front rank to assist the weaker ones, first by example and then by moving among the weaker players to help with grips and strokes.

III. Suggested Teaching Progression

A. Have the class facing the net. Players should stand with their knees slightly bent and with the weight forward over the toes, the heels should be in light contact with the ground. The shoulders should be slightly forward; muscles and joints should be relaxed.

B. On the count "one," most of the weight is transferred to
the right foot and the left leg is straightened as the right leg bends a little more.

C. On the count "two," the weight is transferred to the left foot, the right knee is turned inward and the hips and shoulders are turned slightly to the left.

D. Repeat B and C.

E. On the count of "one," commence with the weight on the left foot. On count "two," the weight is transferred to the right foot.

F. Practice transferring the weight back and forth to the count of "one" and "two," until the movement is relaxed and fluent and simulates the transference of weight as used in the forehand and backhand strokes.

1. Emphasize that for both backhand and forehand strokes the weight at the commencement of the stroke is on the back foot, and that it is transferred to the foot closer to the net as the ball is hit.

IV. Grips - Forehand and Backhand

A. The teacher demonstrates the Eastern Forehand grip, emphasizing the important points.

B. The first and third lines about-face and shake hands with their opposites in lines two and four, noting the position of the hands, the knuckles and the backs of the hands being almost vertical. Now pupils in lines two
and four pick up the rackets and pass them to their opposites who "shake hands" with the racket handles. The pupils with even numbers check the grips of the odd numbers, observing the position of the "V" formed by the thumb and forefinger and check the spread of the fingers. In all grip practices a check should be made to ensure that the head of the racket is held in the correct position.

C. The teacher demonstrates the backhand grip, explaining why the hand is turned one-sixth of a turn to the left and why the thumb is placed diagonally across the back of the handle. The amount of turn depends to a large extent on the wrist strength of the pupils in the class.

D. The same procedure is adopted for the backhand grip as for teaching the forehand grip.

E. The group should practice changing the grip from forehand to backhand without swinging the racket, then the group should practice the change of grip while swinging the racket without moving the feet except for the corresponding transfer of weight. Emphasis should be placed upon the tightening of the grip at the time when impact with the ball would be made.

V. Forehand Drill

A. The class should be organized as for the above practice
with the racket held ready for a forehand drive (Figure 7)

B. The teacher demonstrates the forehand drive, first as a fluent, coordinated stroke and then in parts, naming the stages and numbering each one. The number system recommended for beginners is as follows:

1. Count "one" - **Prepare** - turn side to the direction of the stroke (to the net) by pivoting on the right foot and taking the left foot forward. See Figure 8.
2. Count "two" - **The Backswing** - release the left hand from the throat of the racket and take the racket back to the end of the backswing, ensuring that the head of the racket is well up and that it is not swung down on the way back to this position. The weight should now be taken fully on the right foot. Both knees should be slightly bent, the shoulders should be turned further to the right, while the left
arm assists in the maintenance of balance, as illustrated in Figure 9.

3. Count "three" - Contact - the racket is now moved forward to make contact with the ball opposite and slightly in front of the left hip. As this happens, emphasize the shift of weight (as practiced before) onto the left foot where the left knee is held firm. The head of the racket is kept at least as high as the wrist which is locked at the
moment of impact, and the arm is comfortably straight (as shown in Figure 10).

4. Count "four" - **Follow-Through** - continue the swing of the racket forward, keeping the wrist and racket in the same plane in the first part of the movement; imagine that the ball is being carried forward, not across, on the strings. The wrist is then relaxed as the racket is swung in an arc over the left
shoulder. The body pivots around the left hip with the left leg braced. The shoulders and hips face the net at the end of the movement (see Figure 11).

FIGURE 11
FOLLOW-THROUGH POSITION
FOR THE FOREHAND STROKE PRACTICE

5. Count "five" - Recovery - return to the starting position facing the net with the weight on the balls of the feet and the racket held in front of the body ready for the commencement of the next stroke.
C. The numbers should be called slowly at first, with each position being checked closely for correctness. The stroke can then be made more fluent by calling the numbers at a faster rate and then reducing the numbers to "one, backswing," "two, stroke," "three, back to ready position."

D. The forehand stroke should now be executed without numbers, and when the class is adept at weight transference the stroke should be varied by pivoting on the left foot while taking the right foot backward and to the side at the start of the backswing.

VI. Backhand Drill

A. The same procedure for class instruction of the backhand stroke may be adopted as was used for the forehand. The first stage is, therefore, to give numerical representation to each of the five stages of the stroke, e.g., "one" - Prepare - by turning side on to the net, "two" - Backswing, "three" - Swing to meet the ball, "four" - Follow-Through, and "five" - Return to Ready Position. The next stage is to concentrate on the complete stroke, calling the numbers fluently and reducing the numbers until they are no longer required.

B. Practice is given in moving from the forehand stroke to the backhand stroke and vice versa concentrating on the
development of coordination and also on the points emphasized earlier for the development of correct technique.

C. Practice should be given next in the forehand and backhand strokes at low, high and medium heights. The teacher should insist upon the differences and similarities in technique being demonstrated clearly. The aim should be to cultivate a quick response (for example, by calling a high backhand, then a low forehand, then a high forehand, etc.).

D. Moving to the Ball

1. Up to this point strokes have been practiced on the assumption that the ball is in the correct position for stroking according to the spot on which the pupil is standing. Now it is necessary for the pupil to be shown how to move to the ball quickly, and in a coordinated way, so that he assumes the correct "ready" position at the right place in relation to the ball.

   a. The squad practices moving sideways across the court a short distance. This may be practiced by the squad moving sideways from the ready position to the right as the teacher calls "right - together - right" (or "one - and - two"). From this position the forehand stroke may be exe-
cuted, after which the pupil returns to the ready position and skips to the left ("left - right - left") following the movement with a backhand stroke. This may be repeated, the commands being "Go!" "one and two and three" (forehand) and "one and two and three" (backhand). The teacher should emphasize that the body weight must be on the back foot and the body turned sideways at the commencement of each stroke.

b. When the above practice is mastered the class is shown how to turn and run to the right and to the left. For the forehand the movement is "right, left, right and stroke" and for the backhand it is "left, right, left and stroke."

c. The next practice is to run forward obliquely to the right (and left) and also backwards varying the distance and the number of steps. Emphasis should be placed upon the use of short steps, the body weight should be well balanced between the balls of the feet and the weight should be on the back foot at the commencement of each stroke.

VII. Service Drill

A. The teacher demonstrates the flat service, then explains the grip, the stance and the parts of the service.
B. The class is assembled as for the class drill (i.e., facing the net, each pupil with his racket on the ground in front of him). It should be explained that serving is fundamentally akin to throwing a ball overarm. The pupils pretend that they are throwing a ball overarm over the net, then each member in the class should try throwing a number of tennis balls over the net; emphasis must be placed upon the fact that the elbow leads and the wrist comes forward over the shoulder. The class should then turn sideways so that the heels are in line with the direction of the serve, the throwing movement is repeated with the hips turning and the body and arm movements coordinated.

C. The class next takes up rackets and practices the serve without using a ball in the following sequence:

1. Count "one" - **Ready Position** - the body is sideways to the net with the weight evenly distributed. The left foot is just behind the baseline; the feet are about shoulder width apart; the racket is held on the left side and the left hand is at the top of the throat of the racket as in Figure 12.

2. Count "two" - **Backswing** - the racket is swung down, back, and up to the top of the backswing while the weight is transferred to the right foot and the left
hand throws up an imaginary ball as in Figure 13.

3. Count "three" - Contact - the weight commences to shift forward to the front foot as the hips and then the body are rotated while the racket head is looped behind the head as the elbow bends. As the weight shifts to the left foot the left side of the body is stretched, the leg is extended on the toe and the racket is swung to meet the ball, with the racket head in advance of the wrist and the body, as in
FIGURE 13
BACKSWING POSITION FOR SERVICE PRACTICE
4. Count "four" - **Follow-Through** - the right leg is swung forward as the racket swing continues down and to the left side of the left leg (Figure 15).

5. Count "five" - **Return to Start** - each number is called slowly at first so that each point of the serve may be checked for faults. Gradually the count is speeded up. The following commands are then submitted as "one" (for the backswing) and
FIGURE 15
FOLLOW-THROUGH POSITION FOR SERVICE PRACTICE

"two" (for contact and follow-through).

D. Ball Throwing Practice

1. This is a most important practice. Pupils must concentrate on the accuracy of the throw at the point of contact, so that the ball consistently drops in front and to the right of the left toe and in the path of the racket arm and shoulder. Pupils must also obtain the correct height and learn to coordinate the throw with the backswing. This can be practiced with or without a racket.
VIII. Other Strokes

A. The volleys, half volleys, smashes and lobs can be practiced in the same way as the more elementary strokes.

Method II. Teaching Tennis by Task

I. Task Teaching

A. Definition.—The task style of teaching may be applied to the teaching of tennis at all levels with small, or large classes. The tennis teacher is able to communicate with more students at the individual level, thus eliminating early errors in grips, strokes, footwork, etc. Mosston (9) states that the task style is very effective with large groups. Each task is presented to the class which, in turn, performs the skill at its level of ability. In this method of teaching tennis the student has the opportunity to make many more decisions as compared to the command style. The teacher, as in the command style, gives an explanation and demonstration of the task to be performed. The teacher gives the students prepared task cards, which describe the nature of the skill practice or task. The students then perform the skill in accordance with their individual ability level.

B. Task Activities

1. The following practices may be used as activities where the whole class is involved with the one prac-
tice, or they may be used as group or individual task practices by one section of the class while the rest of the class is occupied with other tasks or is playing tennis.

a. The class is organized in pairs; each pair works from the same end of the court. Four pairs to a court makes a suitable group but more can be fitted onto the court if necessary. Player No. 1 takes up a ready position for a forehand drive and No. 2 prepares to drop the ball from the

FIGURE 16
FOREHAND STROKE PRACTICE IN PAIRS
hand which is held high so that the ball will drop in the right position for a good drive. The person dropping the ball will observe, correct and evaluate his partner's performance (Figure 16).

b. The above practice may be varied (Figure 17) so that the pupil himself drops the ball and strokes it either on the forehand or backhand side. His partner will observe and complete the appropriate task card.

FIGURE 17
FOREHAND STROKE PRACTICE
c. The following task shown in Figure 18 can be performed in threes for all strokes except the service. Each group works independently as follows:

(1) Player A in each group stands just inside the baseline ready to stroke the ball.

(2) Pupil B stands on the other side of the net with a basket of practice balls and throws
ball bounces at the correct height and in the correct position for practice of the nominated stroke.

(3) Player A strokes the ball back to B and the balls are retrieved constantly by pupil C.

(4) Pupil B acts as observer, corrector and evaluator.

(5) After a stated number of turns, the positions are rotated. B records the performance on the task card and the teacher moves from one group to another assisting pupils B whenever necessary. It is advisable to have no more than two groups per court for this task.

d. As progression on (c) the players can be placed as in Figure 19 on baselines and directed to practice particular strokes, concentrating on length and accuracy. Following this, the better players can be utilized to hit balls from the net to players standing on the baselines.

e. Other aids which can be used to improve stroking are described below:

(1) Areas into which the ball should be placed are marked on the asphalt or tennis court.
As illustrated in Figure 20 this aid can be used for the development of soft and hard shots, straight and angled shots, lob and drop shots.

(2) Pupils should practice throwing a ball up so that it consistently reaches the same height, and then lands in a square or small hoop in front and to the right of the left foot; the ball should be traveling in line
FIGURE 20
TARGETS ON SERVICE LINES
FIGURE 21
BALL THROWING PRACTICE

with the right shoulder as the shoulder moves forward. (See Figures 21 and 22.)

(3) Targets can be marked on the service court. (Figures 23 and 24.)

(4) Targets can be attached to the net as in Figures 25 and 26.

f Combination tasks may be developed, e.g., a lob with a "smash," a volley with a ground stroke, a
FIGURE 22
BALL THROWING PRACTICE
FIGURE 23

TARGET PLACEMENT FOR PRACTICING SHORT SHOTS
FIGURE 24
TARGET PLACEMENT FOR PRACTICING
SHORT AND MEDIUM SHOTS
FIGURE 25

ACCURACY PRACTICE
FIGURE 26
ACCURACY PRACTICE
service with a return service, a ground stroke with a drop volley. Better players can perform more difficult tasks, e.g., player A will serve, players B and C will volley, D will lob for A to smash.

Method III. Teaching Tennis by Reciprocal Style

I. Reciprocal Teaching

A. Definition.—Mosston (9) explains that reciprocal teaching is a process of learning based on a one-to-one relationship. "The Buddy System" has been successfully used in many physical education programs, such as in water safety and gymnastics. The teaching role proposed here involves entrusting the partner with the observation of the performance of a given task and supplying the partner with the information about "rights" and "wrongs" of the task. If the students know WHAT to look for and HOW to correct OBSERVED errors they gladly and successfully can perform the role of an observer and a corrector. This style requires more decisions on the part of the learner and fosters more social, intellectual, and emotional development.

II. Preparation

A. Prepare task cards (see Appendixes A, B, C, and D) well in advance and glue to cardboard or use clipboards. After
dividing the class into pairs carefully explain the role of the observing partner.

1. Explain how to evaluate and score the performer's skills. Before the class moves to designated areas to perform the task, each task should be carefully demonstrated by the teacher, explicitly explaining the "THINGS TO LOOK FOR" section.

III. Teaching Progression

A. The teacher should move about the class, as in Figure 27,
observing the involvement of the observers and performers. If corrections are necessary they should be directed toward the observers, not the performers, and should be related to the task being performed.

1. All tennis strokes may be taught using this method.

Figures 28 and 29 illustrate a typical reciprocal style teaching situation. In pairs, one is serving and one is observing and recording performance on the task card. Up to four pairs may occupy one court.
Method IV. Teaching Tennis by Use of the Small Group

I. Small Group Teaching

A. Definition.—Mosston (9) indicates that this style is a progression from the "Use of a Partner Method." It calls for more than two people to participate, observe, correct and reinforce. Each person in the group has a specific role, e.g., in a group of three, No. 1 is the performer, No. 2 is the observer, and No. 3 is the
recorder.

1. The performer executes the task.

2. The observer comments and exchanges views on observation.

3. The recorder records the performance of the doer and the comments of the observer.

   a. This type of interaction develops a greater sense of responsibility among tennis players; there is a stronger sense of communication, while the students' potential to observe, record, and analyze is increased.

B. Preparation

   1. The teacher's role is to prepare the task card (Appendix E) and assist the observer with his comments and evaluation.

C. Teaching Progression

   1. Advanced players can use this style when dealing with the tactics of singles and doubles. The style can also be extended to include pupil participation in the development of drills and lead-up games.

METHOD V. Teaching Tennis Using the Individual Program

I. The Individual Program

   A. Definition.--The individual program in tennis calls for self-motivated learning and personal assessment of one's ability. Unlike the reciprocal and small group styles
of teaching, this method calls for a greater degree of self-assessment. More responsibility is accepted by the student in the teacher-learning process. Mosston (9) outlines many different ways of implementing the individual program, all of which can be adapted to teaching tennis.

B. Preparation

1. The teacher must prepare the task cards carefully, considering the level of ability of the individual (see Appendix F).

C. Teaching Progression

1. The student is responsible for the performance and self-evaluation of the required tasks. The role of the teacher is mainly one of observation, correction and evaluation when necessary.

2. This method can be expanded to involve the student in the assessment of weaknesses and the planning of appropriate means of correction (i.e., poor grip strength—correct with a ball squeeze exercise to be carried out at home).
CHAPTER IV

SKILLS PRACTICES AND LEAD-UP GAMES

The development of the basic skills of the forehand, backhand, service, volley, lob and smash are of major importance in any well planned tennis program. The list of skills practices which follow are designed to help the elementary and secondary physical education teacher plan his tennis program.

Skills Practices - Service

A good service is essential in the game of tennis. Once the basic technique has been mastered, approximately 50% of every practice session should be spent in serving. The following skills are designed to increase serving ability (beginners to advanced players).

1. Throw the ball over the net using the service action.
2. Practice throwing the ball into the service court.
3. Practice throwing the ball at targets in the service courts.
4. Practice throwing the ball up for service.
5. Throwing and catching the ball keeping the throwing arm straight.
6. Throw the ball up so that it bounces in a marked area near the left foot.
7. Practice the service action without the ball.
8. Practice serving to the forehand court.
9. Practice serving against a practice wall.
10. Practice serving to the backhand court.
11. Serve to target areas appropriately placed in the service courts.
12. Serve through hoops laced to the net.
13. Serve to partner, rush to the net and volley deep.
14. Serve to partner, rush to the net and volley short.
15. Serve to partner, rush to the net and angle volley across court.
16. Serve to partner, stay at baseline and drive deep to backcourt.
17. Serve to partner, stay at baseline, drop shot.
18. Serve to partner, stay at baseline, lob to partner.
19. Serving contest. One player nominates position where serve is to be placed and serves. If he hits the nominated area he scores a point. Opponents perform a similar drill. First team to reach a pre-determined score wins the game.
20. One serve tennis. Same as for tennis, but only one serve is allowed. This practice speeds up singles and doubles play and encourages greater accuracy on the first serve.
21. Serve, rush to the net, walk back slowly. Repeat as often as possible. An excellent match play training drill.
22. Practice all the skills 8 - 21 using:
   a. Flat serve
   b. Slice serve
   c. Top spin serve
23. Practice serving in windy and gusty conditions.
24. Practice serving varying the speed, slice and spin of the ball.

Skills Practices - Ground Strokes

Once the basic fundamentals of the forehand and backhand have been
 mastered, practice sessions should be divided evenly so that an equal amount of time is spent on each stroke. This is very important at the beginner's level. The following skills are suggested to develop these strokes.

1. Practice forehand and backhand strokes, without the ball, from a standing position for high, medium and low strokes; partner observes, corrects, and evaluates.
2. As above, but for running strokes.
3. Drop the ball at medium, high and low levels and drive over the net.
4. As for 1 and 2 but with partner throwing the ball at the various heights.
5. Drop the ball at selected levels and drive into the tennis court fence netting.
6. Drive forehand and backhand against a practice wall.
7. Drop ball and drive to target areas marked at the service line and baseline.
8. Use a tennis ball pitching machine, adjust for high, medium and low balls. Drive over the net.
9. Place target areas at the baseline; drop ball and practice sideline, center-court and cross-court drives.
10. Place targets on the service line; drop ball and practice sideline, center-court and cross-court drives.
11. Practice 10 forehand, 10 backhand strokes against a practice wall.
12. Have partner serve, practice driving down the sideline, center-court and cross-court deep to the baseline.

13. Have partner serve, practice driving short shots down the sideline, center-court and cross-court.


15. Practice stroking ball against as many different players as possible, especially soft and hard hitters.

**Skills Practices - Volley**

1. Volley against practice wall standing approximately 15 feet away, using different routines, e.g., low forehand volley to high forehand volley to low backhand volley, etc.

2. Have partner drive to the backhand and forehand, volley deep to the back court.

3. Stand in the forecourt and exchange volley with partner.

4. Volley tennis.

5. Serve, rush to the net, angle volley sharply across court.

6. Serve, rush to the net, then volley deep to backcourt.

7. Five players. Toss of coin decides which player is the "substitute." Exchange volleys, trying to keep the ball in play for as long as possible. The player making the error is replaced by the substitute. The player making the least number of errors is the winner.

8. Exchange volleys; on third or fourth volley, execute a lob volley.
The game of sphairee (14) calls into play skills similar to those employed in tennis, paddle tennis and, to a lesser extent, table tennis. However, since the area of the court used is small, it is ideally suited to the restricted space of the modern home allotment. Children can manage the equipment at a much younger age than they can begin either tennis or paddle tennis, for both of which games it is an excellent preparation. This is especially so since the stroke production is the same as in tennis.

It is also eminently suited to the needs of veteran tennis or paddle tennis players who still retain their devotion to the tennis type of game and some of their pristine ball sense, but who find with increasing years that too much stamina is required to cover the larger courts. Figure 30 shows the size of a sphairee court.

I. The Court
   A. Dimensions are 20' X 9' with a center line running the full length of the court. (See Figure 31.)
   B. The court surface should be of concrete, bitumen, board or similar firm surface.
   C. The net is 2 feet high, stretched taut.

II. Equipment
   A. The bats shall be of plywood, 4/16 to 3/8 inches thick, faced with cork, an approved type of low-relief pimple rubber or sandpaper. The overall length, including the
FIGURE 30
PLAYING SPHAIREE

handle, shall be 14 to 15 inches. The width shall be 7 to 7½ inches. The handle shall be round, like the handle of a table tennis bat (Figure 32).

B. The ball shall be perforated plastic, 2 3/8 to 2½ inches, as shown in Figure 32.

III. Rules

A. Before a set is commenced, the contestants "play for the serve." They do this by playing a special rally in which
The court surface should be of concrete, bitumen, board or similar firm material.

The net is 2' high. Temporary lines may be marked on gymnasium floors with white plastic self-adhesive tape.

**FIGURE 31**

**DIMENSIONS FOR SPHAIREE COURT**

the ball must cross the net three times before a decision is reached. The winner of this rally serves in the first game; thereafter the service alternates between the opponents. Ends are changed after the first game, and thereafter whenever the games' total of both players in a particular set is an uneven number.

B. The server, in delivering the serve, must stand behind the baseline, but within the space defined by an imaginary continuation of the center and side lines. The first serve is delivered from the right side of the center line (from the viewpoint of the server as he faces the net).

1. Figure 33 illustrates that no part of the server's
feet must touch the baseline. After each point the server moves to the other side of the center line. In each case he must serve into the diagonally opposite box. The server is allowed one underhand serve, delivered from below the level of the hips; but should the ball touch the top of the net and then land in the correct service box, a "let" is called and another serve is allowed.

C. The receiver, in singles and in doubles, must allow the
serve to bounce before playing it.

D. In singles the server must allow the return of service to bounce before he plays it. Thereafter both players may play volleys. This is known as the one bounce rule and applies to singles only.

E. A point is scored when one player fails to return the ball within the confines of the court as defined by the outside edge of the lines. A ball landing on the line...
landed out, the ball is still regarded as being in play, and if such player fails to return the ball fairly, the point counts against him. Likewise if, before bouncing, the ball should touch any part of the body of a player, including his clothes but not including the thumb and fingers of the hand holding the bat, the ball becomes dead and the point is scored against the player whose body it has touched. Similarly the point is scored against a player who catches a ball before it has bounced.

F. The point score is as in tennis.

G. If a ball should break, crack, or otherwise deteriorate during a rally, or be found to be defective at the end of a particular rally, that rally must be replayed, but the result of any previous rallies remain unaltered.

H. In doubles:

1. Both the receiver's and the server's partner must stand behind the baseline until the server has struck the ball in the act of delivery.

2. The players serve in rotation, each server takes his turn to serve for one whole game, and the service alternates from team to team after each game.

3. The players must decide mutually from which service box they will receive and, due allowance being made for change of ends, must continue to receive from the same
service box until the end of the set

Lead-Up Games - Team Hand Tennis

The players divide into two even teams (six to eight to a side) and each team occupies one-half of the court (Figure 34) which is divided by a net, rope and two benches, or similar device. The game, as in tennis, consists of hitting the ball over the net in such a way as to make it difficult for the opponents to return it. The ball is hit with the hand, using the open palm (14).

I. Rules

A. The server bounces the ball within the service base and hits it forward over the net into his opponents' court or
to one of his own team members nearest the net who can help it over.

B. The ball is in play and may be returned over the net as long as it is still bouncing. It is dead only when it has rolled along the ground, or has been hit into or under the net.

C. It is not necessary for a player to return the ball immediately over the net. In saving a difficult shot it may be wise to "nurse it"--that is, hit it up in the air to control it and allow another player who is better placed to hit it across the net. The same player cannot hit the ball twice in succession.

D. Players rotate and serve as in volleyball.

---

**Lead-Up Games - Quoit Tennis, Circlos, Deck Tennis**

A miniature singles tennis court is marked out as in the diagram. The dimensions will vary with the skill of the players but a court about 25' X 15' is suitable for children of average ability (refer to Figure 35). The quoit must be of soft material to avoid damage to the fingers of the children. Sponge rubber quoits are ideal. A pair of high jump stands or other uprights with a rope stretched across at a height of four to five feet may be used as a net. The game may be played by two or four players, a "side" consisting of either one or two players as in the singles and doubles game of standard tennis.
FIGURE 35
QUOIT TENNIS, CIRCLOS, DECK TENNIS COURT

I. Rules

A. Service is taken from behind the back line and the throw must be made by an underarm or horizontal action of the wrist and elbow. The arm may not be raised above the shoulder at any time during the service or in
any subsequent throwing.

B. The service must pass over the net into the service court diagonally opposite. If the quoit touches the net and drops over, the service is taken again. The quoit must not be twisted when serving.

C. The scoring is similar to that used in standard tennis.

D. In catching the quoit the right or left hand may be used but not together. A clean catch must be made.

E. Either hand may be used in throwing and the "return" is made from the place at which the quoit is caught.

F. Points are lost to the receiver when the quoit is allowed to fall to the ground, and to the sender when the quoit passes under the net or falls outside the lines of the court.

G. The rules of standard tennis apply to points of the game not already specified.

Lead-Up Games - Hand or Paddle Tennis

Hand tennis (14) in which the ball is hit with the hand, and paddle tennis in which the ball is hit with a paddle bat, are games adapted from the standard tennis game. The court is approximately the size of a badminton court, but can be made larger or smaller depending on available space (see Figure 36).

The rules of the game conform to standard tennis rules and the scoring method is the same. Singles or doubles may be played.
FIGURE 36
PADDLE TENNIS
USING HALF OF THE SERVICE COURT AREA

Lead-Up Games - Volley Tennis

This game is a modified singles game and may be played as a singles or doubles game. In singles, half of the service court area is used, while in doubles all of the service court area is utilized.

I. Rules

A. The service is made from behind the service line and must be a ground stroke action.

B. The receiver must remain behind his service line until
the ball is served.

C. The serve is the only shot that is allowed to bounce. All other strokes must be volleys or smashes.

D. Score the same as for standard tennis.

**Lead-Up Games - Tabloid Sports System - Tennis**

The tabloid sports system (14) can be successfully applied to the game of tennis. A tabloid sports system is a form of organization in which a number of tasks are selected and a suitable area for performing each is marked out in a predetermined order. The tennis class is divided into groups of approximate equal ability. Each group assembles at a different area on the court and performs the selected task, starting and finishing on a signal from the teacher. The teams progress until each team has had a turn of equal duration at each task. The leader of each group reports the scores and performance of his team.

I. Suggested Tasks

A. Forehand drive to hit target on practice wall. One point is scored for each time the target is hit.

B. As for 1, but backhand drive.

C. Serve to the forehand court. One point is scored for every good serve.

D. As for 3, but serve to the backhand court.

E. Drop ball, lob to a target area near the baseline. One point is scored each time the target is hit.

F. Paddle tennis. Keep the ball rallying. If the rally
## FIGURE 37

**TABLOID SPORTS SCORING SYSTEM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve-Forehand</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve-Backhand</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve-Backhand</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lob</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddle tennis</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>4th</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

go back and forth 20 times, the team scores 20 points.

Many other tasks could be suggested. Tasks that are simple to score are recommended. The time on each task depends on the duration of the lesson, e.g., in a forty-minute lesson each team would spend approximately 4 - 5
minutes at each task.

II. Method of Scoring

A. The actual scores, as in Figure 37, are recorded in the top half of the square and teams are then allocated points for 1st position to 6th for each particular task, ranging from 6 points to 1 point, consecutively.

B. To find the overall winning team, only the bottom figures (rank order scores) are added. This method of scoring is a very fair way of determining the winning side.
CHAPTER V

COURT POSITIONS AND TACTICS

Once the basic fundamentals of tennis strokes have been mastered, students will rapidly progress to the game of tennis. It is now necessary to include in the tennis program a section on court positions and tactics. In addition, Barnaby (1), Donnelly (3), Faulkner (6), Laver (7), Murphy (12), Talbert (15), and Tobey (16), are excellent sources to supplement this facet of the tennis program.

Singles Tactics and Positional Play

I. A Player Should

A. Try to sum up his opponent in the "warm up" and during the first few games.

B. Normally elect to serve if he wins the toss.

C. Check the net and the singles posts (if any).

II. Serving

A. The server should stand in the center position approximately one pace from the center mark.

B. Beginners should keep both serves at a similar pace.

C. A player should vary his serve from the backhand to the forehand side of his opponent.

III. Receiving

A. The receiver should align himself with the server.

B. He should stand near the baseline, either just inside or just beyond the line.
I. It is usual for the receiver to take a couple of steps in toward the net for the second serve.

C. When the server nets the ball the receiver should continue through with his stroke production.

D. Good returns of service
   1. From the right-hand court
      a. A drive straight down the sideline
      b. A deep cross-court drive
      c. A short-angled cross-court shot
   2. From the left-hand court
      a. A hard drive down the sideline
      b. An angled cross drive, either short or deep

IV. If an Opponent Follows a Ball to Net
   A. The receiver should lob to either side of the court.
   B. He should try not to play a ball straight back to his opponent.
   C. The faster a player tires his opponent by making him run, the harder it is for the opponent to make good strokes, hence he is placed on the defensive.

V. Attack Play
   A. In play, when one has made an attacking shot, which puts the other player on the defensive, it is wise to follow the ball in to the side of the court from which it is likely to come back, i.e., to that side of the court which
the ball is on (see Figure 38).

B. An attacking player must be nimble and on the alert. He should be ready to move in any direction.

C. A player should check the wind; if it is blowing cross-court the player should always aim a little the other way, i.e., pull the shot to compensate for the wind.

D. Key words for singles are, KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE BALL. The player in Figure 39 illustrates this point.

E. The best shot for forcing a short return is another short return.

FIGURE 38
DIRECTION TO FOLLOW BALL TO THE NET IN ATTACK PLAY
VI. Points to Remember

A. If a player is losing, he must assess his own game. He should try to vary his own play to make a steady stroke-produc
ing game. Also he should try something new (e.g., slow up the game) in order to throw his opponent off balance. After all, he has nothing to lose by trying a new approach.

B. A player should try to anticipate his opponent's return.
Usually an indication is given by the direction of his feet and shoulders. A player should keep his eyes on the ball as it leaves his own racket and as it takes off his opponent's, he can then move accordingly.

C. A player should always endeavor to regain a center position.

VII. When a Player is Overmatched

A. He should "break up" the game (i.e., when the game is fast, he should slow it down or vice versa).

B. If an opponent storms the net, it is wise to lob often; this can unsettle the other player.

C. If the opponent is a steady player, the aim should be to run him about, or to upset his play by using varied tactics.

D. If the opponent discovers a player's weakness (e.g., playing to a weak backhand) then the aim should be to eliminate rallies, or to drive the ball really hard.

Note: When a player is winning, he should take nothing for granted, but keep on with his own play. A person should play for the game rather than to beat an opponent. A player should never give up; the game is not lost until the last point has been played.

Double Tactics

The doubles game presents more difficulties than singles. The tactics are more varied and the moves are more complicated. It is not
true that in doubles "a player has only half the court to cover." The secret of doubles play is in the teamwork which players bring to it; they must cover the whole court together.

The Server - Doubles. The normal position for serving in team play is shown in Figure 40. The server stands about midway between the center of the baseline and the singles sideline, leaving himself the shortest route to the net position. The server's partner stands from 6 to 9 feet from the net and about 1 foot to the right of the mid-point between the line dividing the service courts and the far sideline.

In addition to these normal positions there are unconventional positions which the serving team may elect to adopt, but it is suggested that these should be left until the players reach at least "A" grade standard, and then they should be used only if the players have reached a perfect understanding insofar as their teamwork is concerned.

The server has two functions. The first is to attempt to force the receiver into making a weak or defensive return of service. To carry out this function the server commands the weapons of speed, spin and placement of service. The most important single object in serving is to put the first service into play. The reason for this is that the receiver, fearing an attempt for an ace, invariably plays further back on the first serve than on the second, thus giving the server valuable additional time to carry out the second function, which is to follow the service rapidly to the net to gain the proper position for volleying the return.
FIGURE 40

DOUBLES COURT POSITIONS
**The Server's Partner.** When the ball is served this player must first be ready for any return up his sideline or up the center of the court and, secondly, he must be ready to move back to return a ball which is lobbed over his head. This is important because the server will be following his serve to the net and, consequently, will have little chance to get to the ball.

**Receivers.** The proper positions for the receiving team are also shown on Figure 40. The receiver stands just inside the baseline, or in as close as he dares, depending on the speed at which the ball is served. His partner is at a modified net position just inside the service line and nearer the center of the court than the sidelines. These positions may be varied but, in general, they have been found to give the best results since they are adapted to an attacking or a defensive game. If the receivers are attacking, the player hitting the return of serve moves in to the net, thus bringing both players into the net position. If, on the other hand, they are on the defensive, the receiver's partner can retire to the baseline after the return of service. For the beginners, this defensive play is suggested in order to give the players confidence in ground strokes.

**Teamwork.** The first step toward playing doubles is to form a team. A team is more than two players on the same side of the net. It is a combination of two players who have developed complementary games and a healthy respect for each other. The team should work to coordinate its offensive and defensive play. It requires extensive planning, prac-
ticing, playing and discussion of the game for two players to weld themselves into a good team.

I. Doubles Information Designed to Improve Play

A. The good service and the areas to which it can be returned with safety.
   1. Shaded areas in Figure 41 show the positions to which the receiver may return the ball.

B. The bad service and its possible replies (Figure 42).

C. The good service (Figure 43) wasted by the failure to follow it up to the net.

D. Winning doubles necessitates all four players being at the net often—waiting for the all-important rising ball which can be volleyed away for a placement. (Figure 44 shows volley exchange positions.)

E. The intercept
   1. Figure 45 shows the intercept most commonly used in doubles. It is made by the net man when a strong first serve by his partner has drawn a weak cross-court return of service.
   2. An intercept may be signalled or unsignalled.
      a. The server comes up path 4 on a signalled "poach."
      b. The server comes up path 5 on an unsignalled "poach."
      c. Positions 1, 2, and 3 (Figure 45) show possible placements of the interceptor's volley.
FIGURE 41

SHADED PORTIONS SHOW AREAS TO PLACE SERVICE RETURN
FIGURE 42

SHADED AREAS FOR RETURN OF WEAK SERVICE
FIGURE 43

DIAGRAM SHOWING USUAL RETURN OF GOOD SERVICE
FIGURE 44

VOLLEY EXCHANGE POSITIONS
FIGURE 45

INTERCEPT POSSIBILITIES
Answers to Some Common Questions

Problem: What should a player do if his opponent has a weak serve?
Solution: Move in closer to receive it.

Problem: What should a player do if his opponent always serves to his forehand side (or always to his backhand)?
Solution: Be ready for it. He can even move over a little to that side provided he does not make it obvious.

Problem: What should be done if an opponent has a faulty backhand?
Solution: Play his backhand mercilessly.

Problem: What defense should be used against opponents who have good smashess?
Solution: The average player always smashes to one side. Cover that side.

Problem: What should be done if one of the two opponents has a weak smash?
Solution: Even if there is only a small difference in each opponent's smash, capitalize on the weakness. Send every lob to that man. Just one or two more errors may cost the opposition a crucial game.

Problem: One player stays a little too far back when he is at the net, How can this be turned to your advantage?
Solution: Hit low to his feet and move in.
Problem: What counter should be good against a player who crowds the net too closely?
Solution: Put a fast lob over his head.

Problem: One player avoids lobs or miss-hits when he tries. How can this weakness be used?
Solution: Take the net every time you hit a ball to him.

Problem: What does a player do when one opponent has a serve that is really hard to handle?
Solution: Try backing up and lobbing. This is better than making many errors.

Problem: One player is anxious about his sideline and always moves over to protect it. What should his opponent do?
Solution: There is an opening at the center of the court. Put the ball there, but do not do this so often that he is forced to close the gap.

Problem: The opposing players are good retrievers who keep getting the ball back no matter how hard the ball is smashed. What should be done?
Solution: Do not smash so hard. Use shorter angled shots.

Problem: What is the correct play when both players have good backhands?
Solution: Try their backhands against high balls. This may uncover a weakness.
Problem: What should be done when the opposition is not having any trouble with the return of service?

Solution: Start mixing your serves. Put more slice on your serve (or less). Deliberately vary direction of your serve.
CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS OF THE TECHNIQUES OF TENNIS STROKES

Basically there are only four strokes in tennis—the service, the drive, the volley, and the overhead shot.

The Drive

I. The Forehand Drive

   A. The Grip

      1. Figure 46 shows the "shake hands" or Eastern method that is advocated. The racket is held in the left hand so that the strings are vertical. The handle is grasped close to the end in a "shake hands" fashion so that the heel of the racket is against the leather butt. The V of the hand (formed by the thumb and index finger) is along the throat of the racket.

   B. The Stroke

      1. The "Ready" Position

         a. The player stands facing the net with the feet comfortably apart, the knees relaxed, the weight forward on the balls of the feet and the eyes on the ball. The left hand supports the racket head at the throat. Figure 47 shows the ready position.

      2. The Backswing

         a. The player on the right toe, at the same time swinging the racket back in a semi-circular path,
FIGURE 46

THE FOREHAND GRIP
FIGURE 47

THE READY POSITION
keeping the racket head well above the wrist.
The left foot is taken across but the weight at this stage remains mainly on the back foot; the left shoulder is now pointing toward the net.
Figure 48 shows the backswing.

3. The Swing Forward

a. The weight is transferred to the front foot as the racket is swung forward; the racket is parallel to the ground and it meets the ball opposite

FIGURE 48
THE BACKSWING
and in front of the left hip. The swing is from the shoulder so that, at the point of impact, the elbow is straight but not locked.

Figure 49 shows the swing forward.

4. The Follow-Through

a. The racket follows through along the line of the ball, the weight is fully on the front foot, the head is steady and the eyes are kept on the ball.
Several variations of turning the racket over can be added to get top-spin. Figure 50 demonstrates the follow-through.

Note: This stroke should be practiced moving to the ball using short skipping steps with the final movement always forward. Low forehand drives, where the backswing is similar, but where the contact is made by bending the knees, should also be practiced, always keeping the racket head above wrist level.
The Forehand Drive as a Sequence of Movements. For a ball which bounces to a medium height, refer to Figures 51, 52, 53, 54, and 55.

FIGURE 51

THE "READY" POSITION
FIGURE 52
MOVING TO THE BALL
FIGURE 53
THE BACKSWING
FIGURE 54

WATCHING THE BALL CLOSELY NEAR POINT OF CONTACT
FIGURE 55

THE FOLLOW-THROUGH
The following illustrations show important points which players should remember:

1. When a player has to run to the ball he should watch it closely, as in Figure 56.

2. For a ball which bounces high on the forehand, as in Figure 57, the skillful player is on his toes when he plays the ball. The high plane is maintained in the follow-through. (See also Figure 58.)
FIGURE 57
PLAYING A HIGH FOREHAND
FIGURE 58

THE FOLLOW-THROUGH FROM A HIGH FOREHAND
Points to Remember

1. The path of the racket is semi-circular, moving from the ready position in an arc, that gradually increases outward as the racket swings through.
2. At the moment of impact with the ball, the grip is tight and the wrist is locked.
3. The racket head is kept above the wrist; therefore, for low bouncing balls the knees must be bent in order to bring the body down so that the racket head may still be kept over the wrist.
4. The player must be side-on to the net.
5. Players must watch the ball closely.

II. The Backhand Drive

A. The Grip

1. For the backhand grip, as illustrated in Figure 59, the hand is turned a quarter turn to the left of the forehand grip, thus bringing the V of the hand a quarter to the back and bringing the thumb diagonally across the back handle.

B. The Stroke

1. Ready Position

   a. This is the same as the position described for the forehand.

2. The Backswing
a. The weight is on the left foot as the body pivots and turns to the left. Figure 60 illustrates this. The right foot swings across and in front of the left foot as the racket is carried back and up behind the left shoulder. Alternatively the left foot can be swung back so that the weight is on the back foot. The right foot should now face the net.
3. The Swing Forward

a. The racket is carried forward on a line to meet the oncoming ball. At the point of impact, the elbow is almost straight—*the racket head is above the locked wrist*—the right knee is bent and the eyes are on the ball as shown in Figure 61.
4. The Follow-Through

a. The racket follows through and turns over with the wrist. Practice should be given also moving to a backhand stroke and in the "low" backhand as in Figure 62.

The Backhand Drive as a Sequence of Movements. For a ball which bounces to a medium height, see Figures 63, 64, 65, 66, and 67.
FIGURE 62

THE FOLLOW-THROUGH
FIGURE 63
THE "READY" POSITION
FIGURE 64

MOVING TO THE BALL
FIGURE 65

THE BACKSWING
FIGURE 66

THE POINT OF CONTACT
FIGURE 67

THE FOLLOW-THROUGH
The following pictures show important points relating to the backhand drive:

1. For a ball which bounces low on the backhand, the player must bend at the knees (Figure 68).

FIGURE 68

FOR A LOW BACKHAND
For a ball which bounces high on the backhand, as in Figure 69, the arm should be lifted to shoulder height and the racket head should be kept high.

FIGURE 69

FOR A HIGH BACKHAND
The Service

The service is identical with the action of the overarm throw.

I. The Grip

A. The grip may vary between that used for the forehand and that used for the backhand. Beginners normally use the forehand grip shown in Figure 70, while more advanced players use a grip closer to the backhand to impart spin on the ball.
II. The Stroke

A. The Stance

1. The player stands sideways to the net, as in Figure 71, the left foot just behind the baseline and the left shoulder pointed toward the court to which delivery will be made. The feet are shoulder width apart with an imaginary line across the toes pointing in the direction of the intended delivery. The racket is held in front and to the left of the body, the right
arm is slightly bent and the racket strings touch the tennis balls which are held in the player's left hand.

B. The Throw

1. The racket is dropped down and back as the left arm swings forward and upward to release the ball at head height. (Note: if the ball were to fall unhit, it should land in an area of a small circle in front and to the right of the left foot, Figures 72, 73, and 74.)
FIGURE 73
BALL AT HALF WAY POSITION
IN THROW UP FOR SERVICE
FIGURE 74
BALL AT THE TOP OF THE FLIGHT
IN THROW UP FOR SERVICE
C. Impact and Follow-Through

1. At the point of impact, the racket should be at full stretch, the body weight should be poised on the ball of the left foot and the racket head should be inclined slightly downward. The follow-through finishes on the other side of the body. Figures 75, 76, and 77 illustrate this movement.

FIGURE 75

CONTACT WITH BALL IN SERVICE
FIGURE 76
FOLLOW-THROUGH DOWN RIGHT-HAND SIDE OF THE BODY
FIGURE 77

MOVING TO THE NET AFTER SERVICE
The Volley

I. The Forehand Volley

A. The Grip and Stance

1. These are the same as those used for the drive.

B. The Stroke

1. There is a short backswing as the body pivots on the right foot and the left foot steps toward the net. The action can be likened to that of "punching," using the forearm, not the entire arm. The short backswing must be stressed. The head of the racket must always be above the wrist, which is locked at the moment of impact with the ball. There is very little follow-through. Contact is in front of the body as seen in Figure 78.

2. Figure 79 shows that the backswing is short; the player watches the ball closely.

3. At the point of impact the player's wrist is firm; the racket head is above the wrist. Figure 80 illustrates this point well.

4. For a low volley the player must bend at the knees; he must continue to watch the ball closely (Figure 81).
FIGURE 78
FOREHAND VOLLEY POSITION
FIGURE 79

THE BACKSWING FOR THE FOREHAND VOLLEY
FIGURE 80
FOREHAND VOLLEY POSITION
FIGURE 81
LOW FOREHAND VOLLEY
II. The Backhand Volley

A. The Grip and Stance

1. These are the same as those for the drive.

B. The Stroke

1. As in the forehand volley there is a short backswing and a punching action; the ball is hit in front of the body; there is little, if any, follow-through; the weight of the body is on the right foot as in the hit. Figure 82 illustrates this stroke.

FIGURE 82

BACKHAND VOLLEY POSITION
2. As in the forehand volley the player must bend the knees for a low ball (Figure 83).

![Figure 83](image)

**FIGURE 83**

LOW BACKHAND VOLLEY POSITION

III. The Smash

A. The Grip

1. The grip for the smash is identical with the grip used for the serve.

B. The Stroke
1. The stance and follow-through are the same as for the service. However, the backswing is usually shorter and more direct; this means that the racket is taken over the shoulder at the outset. The timing for this stroke is more difficult than for the serve because of the variation in the speed and in the flight of the ball. The ball should be hit with the arm fully
extended even though the knees may have to be bent to permit this. The ball should also be a little more in front of the body than it is in serving. (See Figures 84 and 85.)

2. When a high, deep lob is to be smashed, it is generally wise to allow the ball to bounce before the smash is taken. The knees may have to be bent (Figure 86) to allow the player to get into a correct position for the bouncing smash.

FIGURE 85
BACKSWING FOR SMASH
The Toss or the Lob

This stroke is really a combination of other strokes. It is a stroke which can be used defensively or it can be used to change the play.

I. The Grip

A. The grip used for both defensive and attacking lobs is the same as the grip used for drives.

II. The Stroke
A. Whether the lob is defensive or offensive the stroke should resemble the drives both in the preparation and in the backswing since this conceals the player's intention.

III. The Defensive Lob

A. The forward part of the swing prior to contact with the ball is made with the racket inclined so that the racket face is "open" and the ball, therefore, is guided upward. The ball can be hit flat or with a slice. It should be hit fairly high and deep, because the stroke is designed to gain time for the player to move into a better position. (See Figures 87 and 88.)

IV. The Offensive Lob

A. When this shot is being made the ball is usually hit with top-spin so that it bounces away from the opponent quickly. This lob is lower and faster than the defensive lob and can be particularly useful either as a surprise stroke or to prevent opponents from advancing too close to the net. (Figure 89 illustrates this stroke.)

The Half Volley

I. The Grip

A. The normal forehand (or backhand) grip is used for this shot. The half volley should be regarded as a ground stroke which combines the features of both drive and volley.
FIGURE 87
BACKSWING FOR LOB
FIGURE 88
FOLLOW-THROUGH FOR LOB
II. The Stroke

A. The grip, footwork, backswing and follow-through are akin to the action of the drive. However, because the ball is hit immediately after bounce there must be a pronounced bending of the knees. The player should "lean in" to the shot; the racket should be kept flat and the wrist stiff so that the ball is only lofted sufficiently to clear the net. This means that the backswing and the follow-through are more restricted than in the drive.
B. Split second timing is required to perfect this stroke which should not be used extensively. The stroke is to be avoided in doubles particularly.
CHAPTER VII

GENERAL PLAYING RULES

Singles

Choice of Side or Service. Opponents toss a coin or spin rackets for the right to serve or the choice of sides. If the winner of the toss takes the choice of sides, his opponent shall have the right to be either server or receiver, or he may give the choice of any one of these to his opponent.

Service. Both feet must be behind the baseline, and in a section between the center mark and the sideline. The ball shall be thrown into the air in any direction and shall be hit before it reaches the ground.

Foot Faults. While serving the server must not walk or run; he must not stand on the baseline or outside the imaginary continuation of the center mark or the sideline.

Service Faults. The service is a fault if -

1. The server commits any breach of the service or foot fault rules.
2. The server misses the ball in attempting to strike it.
3. The ball touches a permanent fixture other than the net, straps or hand before touching the ground.

Let. A service which is otherwise good is a "let" if the served ball touches the net, strap, or band or thereafter touches the receiver or anything he wears or carries before it hits the ground. In the case of a
"let" that service shall not count and the server shall serve again.

Server Winning Points. The server wins the point if, with the served ball, he touches the receiver or anything which he wears or carries before it touches the ground.

Losing Points. A player will lose points if -

1. He fails, before the ball has hit the ground twice consecutively, to return it directly over the net.
2. He returns the ball in play so that it hits the ground, a permanent fixture, or other objects outside any of the lines which bound his opponent's court.
3. He volleys the ball and fails to make a good return, even when standing outside the court.
4. He touches or strikes the ball in play more than once in making a stroke.
5. He or his racket or anything which he wears or carries touches the net, posts, cord or metal cable, strap, band, or the ground within his opponent's court at any time when the ball is in play.
6. He volleys the ball before it has passed the net.
7. The ball in play touches him or anything that he wears or carries, except the racket in his hand or hands.
8. He throws his racket at, and hits the ball.

Receiver Winning Points. The receiver wins the point if the server serves two consecutive faults or commits any breach of the above
section.

Note: The server's score is always given first. If both players reach "40" the call shall be given as "deuce." When "deuce" is reached one player must win two consecutive points to win the game. Following the score of "deuce," "advantage" shall be called to the server or receiver according to which player won the point.

**Doubles**

All rules of the singles game apply to the doubles game.

**Order of Serving.** The order of serving shall be decided at the beginning of each set as follows: The pair who serve in the first game of each set shall decide which partner will do so and the opposing pair shall decide similarly for the second game. The partner of the player who served in the first game will serve in the third; the partner of the player who served in the second game will serve in the fourth, and so on in that order in all the subsequent games of a set.

**Changing Serving Order.** The order of the serving by partners may be changed at the conclusion of any set.

**Order of Receiving.** Partners shall receive the service alternately throughout each set.

**Ball Touching a Player.** In the service, if the ball served hits the server's partner or anything which he wears or carries it is a "fault." If the served ball touches the receiver's partner or anything which he wears or carries before it hits the ground, provided it is not a "let," the server wins the point.
New Rules of Tie-Break Method

USLTA 5-Out-of-9 Points Tie-Break Method

**Singles.** If it is player A's turn to serve the 13th game (at 6-all), he shall serve points 1 and 2, right court and left court; player B then serves points 3 and 4 (right and left). Players then change sides and A serves points 5 and 6; B serves points 7 and 8. If the score reaches 4 points-all, player B serves point 9 from the right or left court at the election of the receiver. The set shall be recorded as 7 games to 6. The tie-break counts as one game in reckoning ball changes. Player B shall serve first in the set following the playing of the tie-break (thus assuring that he will be the first server if this set also goes into a tie-break). The players shall "stay for one" after a tie-break.

If both the first two sets in a best-of-three set match or if either two or four sets in a best-of-five set match end in tie-break games, the players shall spin a racket at the start of the final set to establish service order and side. (Umpires should note that, if this results in a change in serving sequence, the next ball change, if any, should be deferred one game to preserve the alternation of the right to serve first with new balls.)

**Doubles.** In doubles the same format as in singles applies, provided that each player shall serve from the same end of the court in the tie-break game that he has served from during that particular set. (The tie-break sequence shall count as one game for ball-change reckoning.)
USLTA 7-Out-of-12 Points Tie-Break Method

**Singles.** Player A shall serve points 1 and 2, right court and left court; player B serves points 3 and 4; A serves points 5 and 6. The players then change sides. B serves points 7 and 8; A serves points 9 and 10; B serves points 11 and 12. If either player wins 7 points, the set is recorded 7 games to 6. If the score of the tie-breaker game reaches 6 points - all, the players change sides and play shall continue with serve alternating on every point until one player establishes a margin of 2 points, as follows.

A serves the 13th point (the right court); B serves point 14 (right); A serves point 15 (left); B serves point 16 (left). If the score is still tied, the players change sides every 4 points and repeat this procedure. Then B shall serve first in the set following the playing of the tie-break. The players shall "stay-for one."

If both the first two sets in a best-of-three set match, or if either two or four sets in a best-of-five set match end in tie-break games, the players shall spin a racket at the start of the final set to establish service order and side.

**Doubles (A and B vs C and D).** Assuming that player D has served the 12th game to make the score 6 games - all, the teams shall "stay" for the first 2 points of the tie-break, then change sides and change every 4 points thereafter during the first 12 points. A shall serve points 1 and 2, right court and left court; change sides; C serves points 3 and 4; B serves points 5 and 6; change sides; D serves points 7 and 8;
A serves points 9 and 10; change sides; C serves points 11 and 12. If either team wins 7 points, the set is recorded 7 games to 6.

If the score of the tie-break reaches 6 points - all, B shall serve point 13 from the right court; change sides; D serves point 14 from the right court; A serves point 15 from the left court; change sides; C serves point 16 from the left court; B serves point 17 from the right court; change sides, and so on.

Upon completion of the tie-break game, the teams shall "stay for one," and either C or D (members of the team who served the last full game before the tie-break) shall serve the first game of the next set.

If both the first two sets in a best-of-three set match, or if either two or four sets in a best-of-five set match end in tie-break games, the players shall spin a racket at the start of the final set to establish service order and side.

The tie-break counts as one game in reckoning ball changes.
CHAPTER VIII

SELECTED TENNIS REFERENCES

Many excellent books have been written on tennis today. The list below is recommended for the tennis teacher's library.


Tennis U. S. A. (formerly USLTA Official News), Box 2248, So. Hackensack, New Jersey 07606. Published monthly.


UNITED STATES LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION. Official USLTA Yearbook and Tennis Guide. New York: USLTA, 51 E. 42nd St.


World Tennis Magazine. Box 3, Grace Station, New York, N. Y. Published monthly.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX
APPENDIX A

TASK CARD NO. 1

Task No. 1

Perform 10 - 20 forehand strokes. Partner throwing the ball from the net position.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

Correct grip.
Correct Backswing.
Racket head above wrist level.
Correct footwork (step forward with the left foot).
Contact ball with flat racket face, with eyes on the ball.
Correct follow-through.
Transfer of weight from back to the front foot.

EVALUATION:  P = poor, F = fair, G = good.

Name__________________________________________Partner__________________________
APPENDIX B

TASK CARD NO. 2

Task No. 2 Perform 10 - 20 backhand strokes. Partner throwing or hitting the ball from the net position.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

Correct grip (approximately 1/6 turn from forehand grip).
Racket fully extended on backswing.
Correct footwork. (Step forward to the ball with the right foot.)
Contact ball when it is approximately in line with the right foot.
Lean into the ball; keep knees flexed.
Correct follow-through.

EVALUATION: P = poor, F = fair, G = good.

Name ____________________________________________ Partner ____________________________________________

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APPENDIX C

TASK CARD NO. 3

Task No. 3  Serve 10 - 20 times, alternating directions from forehand to backhand side of service court.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

Correct grip.
Correct ready position.
Ball thrown up correctly.
Good position of racket in the backswing or cocked position.
Contact with the ball with racket arm fully extended.
Correct follow-through.

EVALUATION:  N = netted, O = outed, IF = in forehand court,
               IB = in backhand court.

Name_________________________  Partner____________________
APPENDIX D

TASK CARD NO. 4

**Task No. 4**

From the baseline drop the ball and lob high into a target area placed midway between opponent's service line and baseline. Repeat 10 - 20 times.

**THINGS TO LOOK FOR**

- Shorter backswing.
- Racket inclined so that racket face is open.
- Ball should be guided upward and fairly high.
- Follow-through should be high over the left shoulder.
- Keep eyes on the ball at all times.

**EVALUATION:**  

P = poor, F = fair, G = good.

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APPENDIX E

TASK CARD NO. 5

NAMES: Performer ____________________________
Observer ____________________________
Recorder ____________________________

Task Assigned: Serve 10 - 20 times to the forehand and backhand court.

OBSERVER'S COMMENTS

1. ____________________________________________

2. ____________________________________________

3. ____________________________________________

EVALUATION:

Good
Fair
Poor
APPENDIX F

TASK CARD NO. 6

The Individual Program

Name ____________________________

SCORES

<table>
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<tr>
<th>TASK ASSIGNED</th>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Day 3</th>
<th>Day 4</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Serve 10 times to the forehand court.</td>
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<td>2. Serve 10 times to the backhand court.</td>
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<td>3. Lob or toss ball from backline to a target in the backcourt.</td>
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<td>5. As above, using backhand stroke.</td>
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