

TENNIS WORKS NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 - Issue 6



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A LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Melvyn Jones & John Cavill

Hello and what a start to the 2012 Majors! Two excellent but very different finals in the Australian Open with Victoria Azarenka winning her first Grand Slam event and Novak Djokovic continuing his outstanding form of 2011.

Welcome to this edition of the **Tennis Works Newsletter (TWN)**. We welcome three new contributors this month and kick off with Daniel McCain writing about 'being in the zone', mentally, which is applicable to all that we do, not just tennis. Next up we have Jack Broudy, again referring to being in the zone, but this time from a physical state as he shares with us his thoughts on dynamic motion. 'A learning journey made simple', sees the return of Andy Knibbs sharing the benefits from adopting non-directive coaching techniques. Paul Bayliss, another new contributor then highlights the qualities of the 'people' throughout the coaching world who deliver quality coaching.

The Tennis Drill Series sees Dan Kiernan of the Soto Tennis Academy share two more drills for successful doubles. John writes about 'The protective growth bubble', and the environment that coaches can create to promote learning. Jesse Cannone of 'lose the back pain' fame writes about

'Pulled back muscles', how to treat them and how to avoid them. Finally Josh's Diary sees Josh tell us about his month of training.

We are still working towards our partnership with Keith Reynolds and Paul Dent and the integration of The Tennis Coaches Toolkit resource within the site which is happening throughout February. We will notify everyone when this is completed. The membership option changes will also be communicated during February.

For those of you local to Milton Keynes (UK), we have Alan Jones and Jo Durie presenting the March Tennis Works seminar entitled, 'So you want to produce a pro player'? Alan and Jo last presented for us in late 2009 and it was an excellent event, so don't miss this one.

Have a great month, and watch out for our emails.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Caird". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melvyn Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.



H.E.R.E - FOCUS AND FLOW ON THE TENNIS COURT

Daniel McCain

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, the world's leading researcher on positive psychology, coined the concept “flow state” in the 1960s, similar to being “in the zone”. He said people are happiest when they are in a state of complete absorption with the activity at hand occurring in the present moment.

Playing in the zone is an idea that any competitor would love to reproduce. If we know exactly what flow entails, then it’s something attainable that can be trained for, an ideal for all tennis players to strive towards. Csikszentmihalyi showed some pre-requisites to ascending into the flow state. They are life skills: staying in the present moment, having clear goals, curiosity and a growth mindset, confidence, low self-centeredness, feelings of personal control over the outcome or situation, high intrinsic motivation – and even a loss of self-consciousness, or timelessness.

Have you ever had one of those days when you are completely stuck in your head? The trouble for

most when this happens is not being present or aware of thought patterns that distracts us from life and athletics. Why is this?

The self, or Ego, is an active wannabe superintendent of our heads. Thoughts spin out of control some days more than others, where we fret about the past or future, worry about things or people we know, or revisit old wounds, fears, or insecurities. Staying present in the moment is uncharted territory for the mind, and a threat to the survival of the ego.

An active mind/ego on court usually means poor focus on competing. Playing a tennis match can inspire a range of emotions for players. The last shot missed or game played, what could be or should have been, potential judgments of others, are all typical internal distractions. This is the ego emerging and the opposite of playing in the zone.

Athletes can make it a practice throughout the day to check-in with their minds and become aware of

mental images. Controlling our internal dialogue allows us to be in the moment. The act of being present is like a muscle that needs to be strengthened. When the mind wanders, hyper-focusing on breathing and what the senses detect - like what is felt, tasted, smelled, seen or heard can help people return to what is in front of them.

In a Wired Magazine interview, Csíkszentmihályi described flow as "being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost."

Formula One driver Ayrton Senna, who during qualifying for the 1988 Monaco Grand Prix explained: "I was already on pole, [...] and I just kept going. Suddenly I was nearly two seconds faster than anybody else. I realized that I was no longer driving the car consciously. I was driving it by a kind of instinct, only I was in a different dimension. It was like I was in a tunnel." When tennis players become focused only on the movements of their body, the force of their lungs, and the feel of the ground beneath their feet, attention is placed only on external things rather than internal mind activity – and they enter the

zone.

Attentional theory by Easterbrook (1959) states that a person's attention can lie on two possible continuums; an internal or external focus of attention, and of broad or narrow focus. An average performance has athletes moving their attention from broad to narrow - internally and externally, just as they do in life. However, a player reaching a flow state becomes so immersed in the task at hand that the internal focus goes away. Players point their attention only to relevant task cues in their immediate environment, and their attention "flows" only from broad to narrow focus on their external environment. Competitive instincts take over, self-talk dissipates, and the conscious mind quiets.

The act of focusing on external attention only with internal focus dissolving away is the act of playing in the zone. In tennis, a player in flow sees only the opponent and the general situation in the match (broad external focus) before each point begins. Once each point starts, he places full attention on the ball and into instinctively executing each shot (narrow external focus).

Matthew Krug's 1999 article in Athletic Insight, the Online Journal of Sport Psychology, showed his study of Monica Seles and her concentration. Seles' high narrowing score meant she could block out

any and all distractions when playing, and fully focus and hitting each shot to the best of her ability – helping her win nine grand slam titles. Said Seles, “Once you think about being in the zone you are immediately out of it.”

She also helped prove in the study that technique and strategy must through practice and repetition be made reflexive. “By making these actions reflexive,” wrote Krug, “the mind is free to become immersed in an external focus. This immersion defines the zone.”

For tennis players, practicing strokes and strategy with feedback from coaches can develop good habits and make such actions reflexive during matches, especially if they adopt what Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck calls the Growth Mindset, where they believe their talent can be developed through learning and experience.

To be present, or H.E.R.E – means that an athlete is Honouring Every Recognised Experience - moment-to-moment. It’s not ‘what if’, it’s ‘what now’.

To play in focus and flow is a challenge for everyone, whether a pro or at the adult recreational level. However, when a player has solid technical and strategic instincts and an awareness of being present, he can purposely

quiet his internal dialogue during competition, place his attention fully on the external task relevant cues, and become completely absorbed in enjoying the process of playing – and enter the zone.

Born in 1979, Dan McCain has tennis in his blood. His father was Director of Tennis at Saddlebrook in Tampa and Dan and his sister both became College coaches. As a player he had career wins over players like James Blake, Taylor Dent and Robert Kendrick, but considers the highlight of his playing career to be winning the Boy’s 18 and Under US National Indoor title, just weeks after signing for a scholarship to play at the University of Michigan, where he graduated in Journalism and Psychology. His highest junior world ranking of 126 was achieved in 1998.

As a coach, Dan has travelled and helped players on the ATP and WTA tours. He has been a Division 1 College Coach, Tennis Academy Director, and USTA Manager of Player Development.

Dan is currently the Head Tennis Professional at the Cavalier Golf & Yacht Club in Virginia Beach. He contributes to numerous magazines and is the author of [Building A Champion: The Fundamentals of Playing & Coaching Tennis](#). For more information visit [DanMcCain.com](#).



HOW TO GO FROM GOOD TO GREAT...IN ANY SPORT

Jack Broudy

There is a particular body motion in almost every sport or physical activity that a gifted athlete performs intuitively. They know it by 'feel', or as being 'in the zone'. People call them a 'natural athlete'. But this specific body motion goes completely unseen by those of us watching. Even many coaches, trainers, and instructors can't identify it.

But the athletes' entire body is engaged in the most efficient, fluid, and seamless flow of motion, resulting in what appears to be effortless power, control, and grace. This unseen dynamic motion and balance is what makes the greatest athletes stand out from the rest.

However, this unique motion is NOT exclusive to top athletes. It can be learned by virtually anyone. And it can be seen in all graceful or natural motion - from a dancer or martial artist, to a waving flag, or a cracking whip. In fact, even a baby uses this

this same motion to roll over, or when learning to crawl.

Inspired by the works of 20th century scientist and mathematician Rudolf Steiner, it became apparent to myself and my colleague Paul Mayberry, that this particular motion is the 'mother-form' of all natural movement, and in particular all 'natural' athletes. They also realised it can be learned by anyone.

So, let's take a look at what this 'dynamic motion' is all about.

To start, whether throwing or kicking a ball, swinging a bat, swinging a racquet, a golf club, etc., most good athletes know that a tremendous amount of speed and power can be generated without ever having to move their arms or legs. They do it through simple core-body rotation, which in turn creates coordinated centrifugal force and inertia. This works much the way an Olympic

athlete throws a discus. The power and swing is initiated from the core.

Just as a record on a record player moves exponentially faster at the outer rim as compared to the inner, or a water-skier at the end of a tow-rope can go much faster than the boat, so can an athlete generate power and speed just by rotating his body, hips, and shoulders - while their arms or legs remain relatively relaxed.

However, the 'gifted' or 'natural' athlete, whether they realize it or not, rotates their core quite differently from a 'good' athlete, thus causing a noticeably different motion throughout the entire body. Which, in turn, also causes them to move their arms and legs differently as well.

Unlike the simple semi-circle hip or core rotation, the exceptional athlete rotates his hips in a slow, yet continuous figure 8 path - an infinity sign. This motion causes the arms and legs to be pulled, creating a coil effect that is continuously expanding, and intensifying in energy, from the



body's core out to the apex of the throw, the hit, or even a kick.

This dynamic motion of the body, arms and/or legs is similar to that of a bullwhip, continuously and rapidly gaining speed. And when you consider that while the hand may only be traveling at 30-40 mph, the tip of the whip is actually breaking the sound barrier at over 600 mph, you will be well on your way to understanding how top athletes generate the speed and power they do. You are starting to understand 'dynamic balance' and the geometric principles of 'non-linear motion.'

Whether it's throwing or hitting a baseball, throwing or kicking a football, hitting a tennis forehand, backhand or serve, serving or spiking a volleyball, or even driving a golf ball, this same non-linear motion can be seen in every one of these movements. And it's the same motion that can and will enhance any athletes' performance.

Once the sports world realizes this geometric phenomenon exists, sports will once again be truly

elevated to a higher pursuit of excellence: the pursuit of being 'great' rather than just being 'good'.

As this pertains to tennis specifically, let's look at the real difference between the forehands of both Andy Roddick and Roger Federer. It is obvious that while Andy's forehand stroke is good, Federer's is a level up, and great. Andy's forehand stroke consists of a big, wide swing that is relatively the same speed throughout, whereas Federer's stroke is much smaller and slower in the beginning, with all the speed happening at contact. And no matter how fast Roddick swings at the ball he cannot produce the same racket head speed as Roger. Remember, you can't possibly ice skate in a circle nearly as fast as you can by being pulled by someone, as in a "chain" - nor can you skate in as perfect a circle.

Unbeknown to both players, Federer uses the slow, continuous, "whip-like" motion initiated from his hips, whereas Roddick simply swings fast (more by strength and will, primarily from his upper body) in a semi-circle type path. The difference between their forehands is in the geometry of the strokes, and it is tantamount to what separates the two players, good from great.

*Jack Broudy has been instrumental in the development of several Southern California champions. He's been the mentor to thousands of tennis pros and players World-wide – particularly those wanting a more scientific alternative to conventional "tips, drills and repetition" approach. Jack has worked with the winning teams at USC and Pepperdine, as well as winning coaches Peter Smith, Nick Bollettieri, Emilio Sanchez, Todd Dissly, Tim Snaible and Steve Johnson Sr. He has also worked in the developmental stages with champions Sam Querry, Steve Johnson, Abigail Spears, Warren Wood and Steve Forman among countless other top-ranked Juniors. He has spoken at several USPTA conventions and college tennis and golf teams. He is author to *The Real Spin on Tennis* and director of Jack Broudy's School of Tennis, the only online tennis course.*

Broudy has recently completed his Online School with a complete curriculum and certification on his patented tennis teaching method, based on physics. His next goal is to challenge the minds of pros and players alike, to understand that the natural tennis strokes can be duplicated, by anyone if they have a clear understanding of the geometric theories inherent in them. Broudy has unlocked the mystery of the natural strokes in tennis, as well as all the "throwing" sports, through the science of infinity.

If this thinking strikes a chord in you please feel free to visit www.SchoolOfTennis.Net or email Jack at jack@SchoolOfTennis.Net or follow him on [Facebook](#).



A LEARNING JOURNEY MADE SIMPLE

Andy Knibbs

'I have always wondered if it is possible to go up a steeper learning curve with non directive coaching skills – now I believe it is.....'

My coaching journey spans almost twenty years and a large part of that journey has involved learning to integrate counselling skills and non-directive coaching skills with my well-practiced command and control style. Understanding more about effective questioning was a key milestone, but it certainly wasn't as easy as I first thought. Because of this, I am always interested in how coaches use questions and particularly in any difficulties that they may encounter. So whenever I get the chance I will ask them about their experience.

When coaches describe the way that they are using questions it sometimes seems like there is a gap between their knowledge of non-directive coaching and their actual skill level. There have even been some high level coaches from different

sports who have confidently told me that they were 'already doing all that.' But then when they gave me examples, or I saw them coach, my experience told me that they hadn't actually got the skill level that they thought they had.

Some of the coaches who have attended our one-day workshops have told me that they tried asking questions for a bit after the course, but then gave up on it. Three common reasons for not persevering were;

- 'When I was practising asking questions I got stuck, so I went back to what I know'
- 'I thought I had to ask the right question, so I stopped'
- 'I found it difficult to keep it going and ask a follow-on question.'

When I first began to practise the skills of non-directive coaching whilst training to be an Inner Game Tutor for the BTCA, I also struggled

with how and what question to ask. In particular, I found it quite difficult to know what question to ask next.

My stock question which I found myself using for a good year or so was, 'What do you notice?' This is actually one of the best questions to begin with when helping someone to increase their awareness. It is also very useful to return to if you ever get stuck with the process of being non-directive. But at that time on my journey I had very little to back this question up with and I found myself only half listening to my players, distracted by thinking about what question to ask next.

My breakthrough came when I fully realised the importance of having a simple series of questions in the back of my mind that seemed to work like magic and helped me to develop my skills much more quickly. This simple series of questions aimed at helping increase focus and awareness, began with either, 'What,' 'Where,' 'When' or 'How much.' For example, in response to a player who told me that they noticed their left shoulder coming forwards on the serve, I was then able to ask, 'On the next serve, could you tell me When do you notice this?' It was an exhilarating challenge to discover the ways in which these questions could be used to help the coaching process.

Similarly, my next milestone came when I learnt how to help a player set a performer-centred goal which is SMART. (SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Agreed and Achievable, Realistic and Time phased). Below is an example of how I used questions to set a performer-centred goal which is SMART;

What would you like to work on today?

I'd like to work on my serve and my backhand topspin crosscourt.

Which one would you like to work on first your serve or your backhand topspin crosscourt?

My backhand.

What specifically would you like to work on with your backhand? (Specific)

I'd like to get a bit more depth on my shots.

How deep do you want to hit them?

Oh so they are over the service line.

How many out of 10 would you say you can hit over the service line at the moment?

Oh about 3.

What would you like to achieve in the next 15 minutes? (Measurable and Time phased)

I'd like to make about 6 or 7. (Realistic)

Ok, and how would you like these feeds?

I'd like you to hit one down the middle to my forehand and then one to my backhand.

What type of feed would you like?

Could you hit both topspin and landing quite deep?

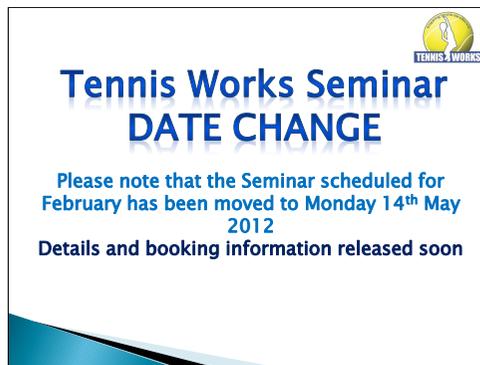
Ok, so just to re-cap, over the next 15 minutes that we have, your goal is to achieve 6/7 out of 10 backhand topspin crosscourt shots with the first feed going down the centre and the second to your backhand side. (Agreed and Achievable)

Just having in the back of my mind a series of questions to ask to increase a player's awareness and helping a player to set a performer-centred goal which is SMART has increased my confidence for using this approach. Being more comfortable with the skill set and hence able to stay with the approach for longer has increased my own awareness of how valuable this approach is to children, in terms of developing their confidence and self-belief.

Andy Knibbs is an LTA ICA tennis coach with over 20 years' experience and has an MSc in Counselling Psychology from the City University, London. He currently works as a Sports Education Tutor delivering courses on 'How to Help Children Develop Self Belief', using the Inner Game and Child-centred coaching. He is also a tutor for the LTA delivering their UKCC level 1 and 2 courses.

*Andy began learning the Inner Game methodology with Sir John Whitmore, Sir David Hemery and Caroline Harris in 2002 and subsequently founded [Inner Works Coaching](#) and more latterly [Coachingkids4SelfBelief](#). He believes that the effective application of child-centred coaching skills, are essential in helping children realise their full potential and developing self-belief. He is author of *Online Child-centred Coaching for Sports Coaches* specifically aimed at helping coaches, teachers and parents learn the skills of effective questioning and attentive and empathic listening. The programme is interactive and includes video footage of children engaging in the coaching process.*

You may contact Andy at andy@coachingkids4selfbelief.com



Tennis Works Seminar
DATE CHANGE

Please note that the Seminar scheduled for February has been moved to Monday 14th May 2012
Details and booking information released soon



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PEOPLE, PEOPLE, PEOPLE

Paul Bayliss

When I was asked to write an article by John Cavill I began the process of thinking not only what subject I would write about but what I considered that I am most qualified to present. Having spent all of my working life managing and coaching, I decided the subject should be 'people'.

I have been very fortunate meeting a wide variety of people from all over the world of tennis, having spent the last 6 years helping to steer the RPT to the largest coach education provider in the UK market. My role within the RPT is to engage and network with coaches that 'like what they see' when they have been on our courses. As a result I come in to contact with coaches that work in every aspect of the game in this country from small community venues to a growing number of coaches like John

Cavill that are located at a major club but run programmes in a number of venues heading up a large team of coaches.

I find myself always trying to find out in my own mind what is the common denominator with the

successful coaches that exist within the UK? These are either coaches that have continually produced high level junior players or built their club to be a major force in their local area. They all share the vital component of being passionate about the sport. They show a zest for even

more knowledge and do not get complacent and strive to find even better ways to coach.

But, what is the 'Golden Nugget' in terms of those



that continually 'raise the bar' and keep going forwards in their career?



Obviously it is not possible to be a successful coach without possessing a good knowledge of the four key areas of tennis; technical, tactical, physical and mental, however although a coach who possesses this knowledge may have all of the ingredients I believe that there is something still missing in the recipe that needs to bind this all together ... a very large dose of PEOPLE SKILLS and a WELL ROUNDED PERSONALITY.

To best explain my belief that it is more about People, People, People and not as I was taught when I started work Location, Location, Location. However important a good location is good people are beacons that shine through wherever they exist.

I would like to present a few examples of people that I have met to quantify my belief.

Each year the RPT stage its UK annual conference. This year 200 coaches from throughout the UK spent 2 days enthralled by a world class line up of presenters-Claudio Pistolesi (former coach of Robin Soderling), Gabe Jaramillo (coach to 8 former world #1's and 26 top 10's) Samuel Lopez (coach of Nicolas Almagro) Luis Medeiro (RPT founder Spain), Juan Esparcia (former coach of Guillermo Garcia-Lopez), Dan Kiernan (founder SOTO tennis Academy), Paul Jessop (CEO Tennisforfree). These coaches have a lifetime of experience between them and all of them have either played or coached at the cutting edge of our game.



I feel so fortunate to have spent many hours talking, observing and listening to not only these top coaches but have also been totally enthralled at

time spent with Emilio Sanchez and Toni Collom (previous coach to Rafael Nadal). In my experience and in particular referring to the Spanish coaches they are totally dedicated, they are sincere and incredibly humble. They have achieved what I am sure many of us aspire to and dream of being in their position. They are genuinely as interested in what you have to say as much as what they believe, open minded and always willing to share ideas. All very heart warming but in my opinion something (in particular) the humble nature is what is missing largely within the framework that exists in our country. Some of you reading this may feel that this is a generalisation and maybe it is, however I am someone that has tried throughout my career to find what is the difference in what happens in Spain and in the UK? There will always be the argument that it is our facilities that hold us back as a tennis nation, I'm not sure that a nation that is fortunate to invest over 15 times more than is available to Spanish clubs can cite poor facilities and, yes, our climate doesn't compare as favourably to Spain. However, if I was to put 'my house on' the one thing that our 'system' in the UK needs to replicate and promote more is that of people skills and strong human qualities that can surge through every level of our game.

A champion starts from within...

Paul Bayliss has been a full time coach since 1991. He is currently the Head Coach at Penns Tennis Club (Warwickshire, UK) and is the Operations Director of RPT Europe as well as an RPT and LTA tutor. For further information visit www.rpteuropa.com or www.pennstennisclub.com or email Paul at paul@rpteuropa.com.

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THE TENNIS DRILL SERIES

Drills for successful doubles

Drill No 31 - Close the gaps

Drill No 32- Making it through the maze

Dan Kiernan

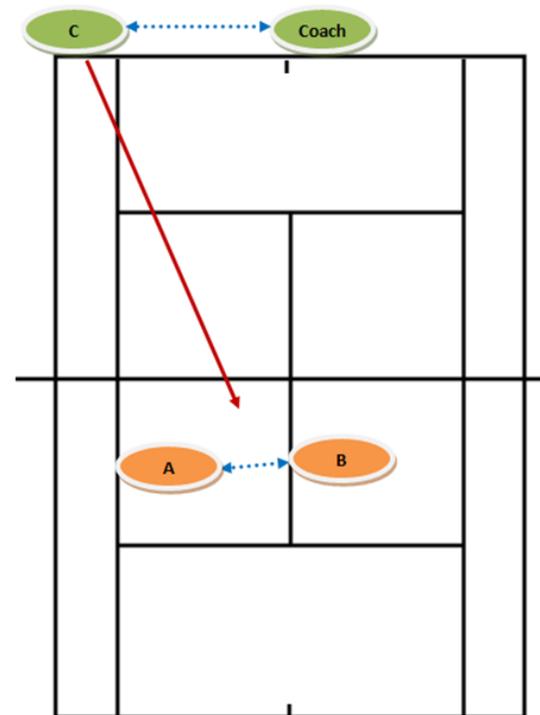
Here are the follow-on drills from those that I shared with you last month to help you improve your doubles.

Drill No 31 – Close the gaps

The concept of this drill is to close the gaps to make it harder for your opponents to get the ball past you and you to work as a team with your partner. You need 4 players to run this drill or 3 players and a coach.

1. Players A and B start at the net and the player C and the coach both start at the baseline.
2. The pair at the baseline will feed the ball in, but they must change where they stand at the back of the court at the start of every rally.
3. The net players must reposition themselves depending on where the baseliners are feeding from to ensure they have the same distance between them at all times and no obvious gaps are left for the baseliners to exploit.

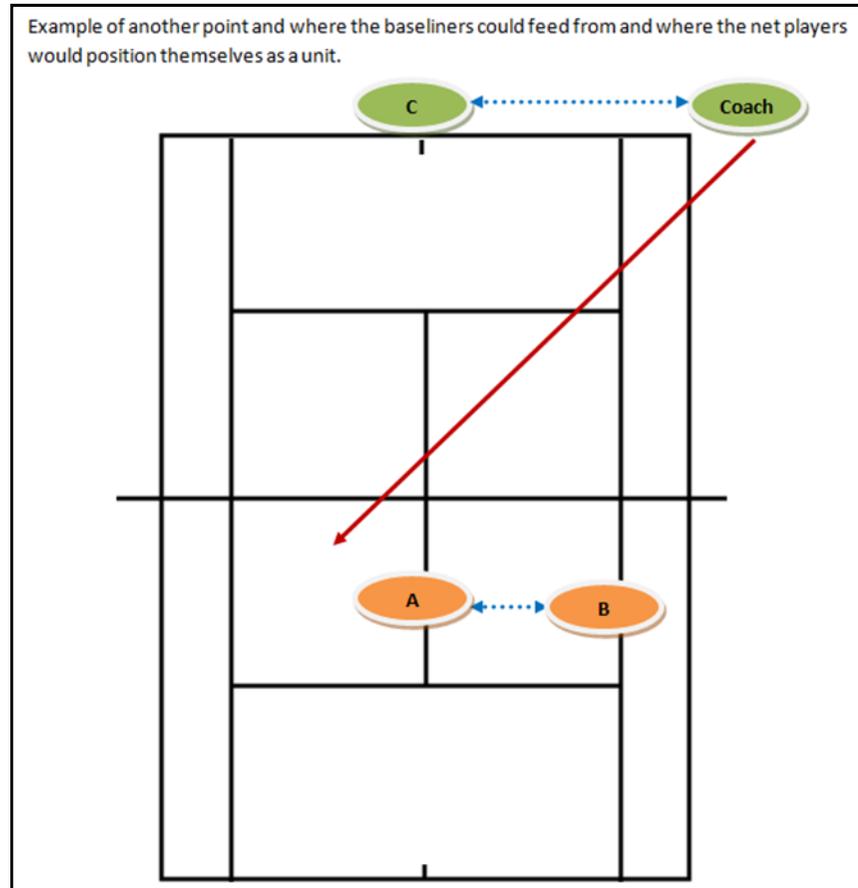
Example of the starting position of a point and where the baseliners could feed from and where the net players would position themselves as a unit.



4. During the rally the net players must follow the ball and continually try and keep the distance between each other the same.
5. The next stage is to allow the net players to feed the ball in to ensure the baseliners are positioning themselves with the correct distance between each other.
6. The drill can then be turned competitive with points. The baseliners feed 2 points, then the net players feed 2 points and then you swap starting positions e.g. the net players become the baseliners and the baseliners become the net players. As an extra incentive, if the baseliners pass the net players then they get 2 points instead of 1.

WATCH OUT FOR

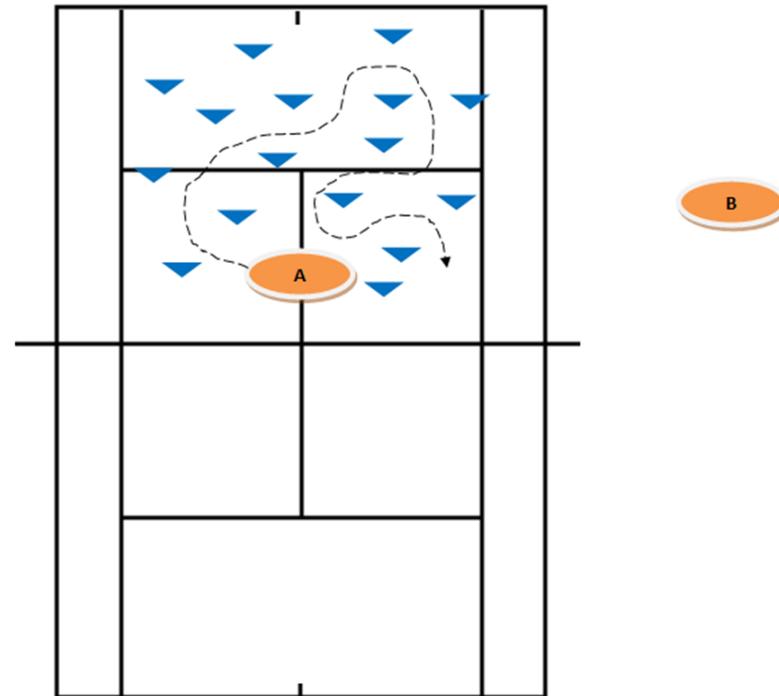
The Tennis Drill Series
Volume 1
will soon be available as an
e-book



Drill No 32 – Making it through the maze

Communication and trust is essential to creating a good partnership for doubles so this drill will help the players to improve these elements for success. This drill works particularly well at the start of a session.

1. Set up a maze on the court with various objects, for example cones and throw-down lines. Player A is blind folded and Player B must communicate with their partner to guide them through the maze with clear simple messages, trying to avoid all the objects.
2. Change over so Player B is blind folded and Player A calls the commands.
3. The next stage is to do the same drill at a faster pace, trusting that your partner won't let you step on a cone.



Dan has been playing tennis since he was 7 years old and at 14 was one of the top juniors in the world. As a junior he won 8 different national championships and the 14 and Under Doubles World Championships, while represented Great Britain in all age groups and competed in junior grand slam events. At 18, Dan was the national junior number 1 and was awarded a tennis scholarship to Louisiana State University and during his four years there, he was part of one of the most successful college teams in the USA. Dan achieved a senior national ranking of 5 in doubles and 25 in singles. After graduating, Dan spent three years travelling the world on the pro tour. During that time he won more than 20 professional singles and doubles titles, and competed at Wimbledon. He was consistently ranked inside the top 15 in Great Britain in singles and the top 700 on the ATP tour. He excelled in doubles, and as well as being former British doubles number 1, he was ranked inside the top 150 in the world. Since retiring from the pro tour in 2005, he has coached several young players up to international level in their age groups and in 2009 he captained the Great Britain Under 12's team in the European Nations Cup in Italy. He also continued to compete competitively in the German Bundesliga league, partnering Michael Stich in doubles, and coaching top ATP players during their matches. In May 2010 he set up Soto Tennis Academy in Spain to create individual and tailored programmes for his players specific needs. For more information, visit www.sototennis.com



THE PROTECTIVE GROWTH BUBBLE

John Cavill

I would like to explore and provoke some thoughts around the environment coaches may create to ensure their player is in the best possible learning environment. For those who know me and are members of tennisworks.net, I have created an area of tennis that I call the 5th Performance Factor which is rarely talked about yet underpins the four performance factors which are physical, technical, tactical and psychological.

I am completely sold on the 5th Performance Factor and many weaknesses within a player can be traced back to this area of the person. So what do I mean when I talk about the 5th Performance factor? Quite simply they are the elements that help or affect a player's environment and consequently influence the player, for example, the standards and expectations set by the parents and the coach, the social groups a player mixes in, the levels of respect, discipline and manners imposed on the player and many more

environmental factors.

This area of tennis development is massive and on tennisworks.net people can learn and read more, but when I put my 'coach's hat' on, my ultimate priority is to look after the interests of my player. To ensure that my player is able to be the best they can be, I must create a **protective growth bubble** that will be rich with learning experiences to help develop their character, personality and tennis.

So how do I influence or create a **protective growth bubble**? The parents are the greatest influence on a child's life. It is their priority to do the best for their child to enable them to be a great adult. In that last sentence, I have immediately highlighted that this is a long term process and not a short term fix, so this implies that we have time to create the person who will be able to stand on court on their own, be accountable and make effective decisions. In my

experience, if the parents aren't on board with a long term vision to create a great person who can play tennis, then I feel it is impossible for me to achieve what can be achieved with the player. Once you have agreed with the parents what the levels of expectation are, agreed a plan on how you are going to be able to help the child and ultimately know whether that child is set on trying to be the best they can be, then you must look at the training environment and other external influences that will affect the player.

Tennis is a brutal game that digs deep into a player's character and can expose anyone at any time. You only have to look at the top pros that have been playing the game for years and developing the skills to control emotions and feelings, to see that they are still susceptible to occasional outbreaks or breakdowns. When working with young players you must set the demands and standards high, so if there are any influences that will affect this, then they must try



to be eliminated or reduced. An example of this may be the group that the player is in. If the player shows a level of effort and desire well above the others, then they must be separated and nurtured in an environment that will keep the aspiring player

heading for greatness and pushing their limits. Other external influences may be governing bodies, club expectations, sponsor expectations etc. As a coach you have to be ruthless and single minded in your quest. If you know that something is right or wrong for the player then you must make an assertive decision based

on this e.g. should the player aged 7 be playing tournaments every week so that they can get a high rating? Should this player be exposed to other training environments that are linked to financial reward but distract from the goals? Should this player be influenced by people who don't understand the player or their long term objectives? These decisions are often very tough

and take a lot of energy to ensure that the interests of the player are looked after but if achieved then 'hand on heart' you have done the best you can for them.

In my programme I know where the players and parents levels of expectations lie and one of the difficult tasks I have is ensuring that everything is aligned to what I feel is acceptable and realistic, based on how much the player, the parents and myself can commit. Sometimes you have to be unpopular and disliked, for example, if a player turns up and they aren't putting 100% into the task then they must be made aware of this either by being firm or by having a meaningful conversation. I have ended sessions early because of this, as I'm not prepared to waste my time with someone who isn't giving as much as I am...this just can't happen. Undoubtedly the child comes back next time with an apology and an understanding of what is expected and the levels that can be attained to get the most out of their time. This may seem a bit harsh in our PR world but tough lessons tend to be the best lessons in life. Likewise, if a player demands more than I am able to commit to, then I would do my best to give them the options to ensure they go on to get what they need, even if this means passing them on to another coach or training environment.

I hope this article makes you think about how you create a protective growth bubble in your coaching and I have created a thread in the tenniworks.net coaches forum to discuss this topic further, so please join me to continue the discussion and debate!

John Cavill is the Co-founder and Director of Tennis at Tennis Works Ltd. He is also the Director of Tennis at Stony Stratford Tennis Club and heads up the [Cavill Academy](#) (established 2005) which is now based there. The academy develops young tennis players and is producing national level players. In 2009, he established [MK Ace Tennis](#), a Milton Keynes, UK based charity that delivers affordable and accessible tennis to schools and public access facilities to programmes which have served up to 600 people a week. Since 2005 John has been organising workshops for local coaches, and in October 2009 the Tennis Works Seminars were launched with guest speakers presenting to coaches that travelled from far to attend. To take Tennis Works to the next level the business required more expertise and financial assistance and in January 2010, John and Melvyn Jones joined forces to establish Tennis Works Limited, an innovative tennis development and educational resources company, leading to the development of tenniworks.net.



PULLED BACK MUSCLE?

The 5 most important steps to take now

Jesse Cannone

What should you do when you pull a back muscle?
A pulled back muscle occurs when the muscle is stretched too far, causing small tears within the muscle.

If you haven't already, you probably will at some point experience a pulled back muscle. It could happen during a game of tennis, while cleaning the garage, or even on the dance floor.

A pulled back muscle may not sound like a serious injury, but the low back pain can be surprisingly severe. Fortunately, pulled back muscles usually heal within days or weeks.

While that pulled back muscle may seem to come on suddenly, chances are it was a long time coming. You could be ignoring some very important warning signs. Which means if you're not in pain now, you might want to sit up and pay attention.

Do you sit in a chair all day? Do you exercise

incorrectly? Are you under tremendous stress? Are you dehydrated? Are you substantially overweight?

Did you honestly answer yes to one or more of those questions? If so, then you're at greater risk of muscle imbalances, trigger point pain, and at higher risk for injuries like a pulled back muscle.

But when you do experience pulled back muscles what do you do? You probably reach for a bottle of pain killers and go and lie down. But what should you really do?

Here's the 5 most important steps you can take now to help your body recover quickly from a pulled back muscle:

1. Apply Cold

You should apply ice to your injury as soon as possible. The sooner you apply the ice the more it will help. Use a cold pack, a zip lock bag of crushed ice, or even a bag of frozen vegetables in a pinch.

Apply the cold pack in a circular massaging motion to prevent the ice from resting in one place too long. You can also place a thin towel between the compress and your skin to help prevent frostbite.

Ice can be applied up to 20 minutes at a time. Repeat over the course of the first few days, or after flare ups. The cold will cause nearby blood vessels to constrict and also help minimize swelling and painful inflammation.

The cold will stimulate your body to rush more oxygen-rich blood full of antibodies and vital nutrients to repair the injury and carry away waste products as it attempts to warm the area.

2. Apply Heat

Try applying heat directly after the ice. This is a powerful way to “double-shock” your back muscles out of the pain-spasm cycle.

Apply 20 minutes of ice followed by 20 minutes of heat and repeat up to three times. This should provide some relief from even severe lower back pain.

There are many ways to apply heat, including a long hot shower, ultrasound, heating pad, and pain cream. As heat is applied, your back muscles relax and circulation increases again as your body sends fresh blood supply to cool the area back to normal.

Repeat heat treatments as necessary.

3. Natural Anti-inflammatories

Think twice before you reach for that bottle of pain killer. It might kill more than just your pain. The truth is inflammation is a normal part of the healing process. The problem with inflammation is our bodies lose the ability to turn off the inflammatory response as we get older.

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like ibuprofen and naproxen can help with both pain and inflammation, but they also carry significant cardiac and digestive health risks.

A better approach is to replace what your body stops producing enough of as you age, specifically, systemic proteolytic enzymes. These are the same enzymes your body uses to naturally quell inflammation once healing is complete and clean up excess scar tissue. By giving your body what it needs to heal instead of masking the symptoms, you reduce both painful inflammation and speed up actual recovery time.

4. Rest – But Not Too Much

Don't rest too long. A little couch time won't hurt, but light activity speeds recovery, so avoid lying down for long periods of time.

Growing evidence shows there is little or no benefit

to bed rest over staying active. Listen to your body. Ultimately, your level of pain will determine your level of activity.

As a rule of thumb, if a certain activity led to a pulled muscle don't repeat it for at least a week. For example, if your back pain started after lifting something heavy, avoid lifting heavy objects for at least a week while your back muscle heals.

5. Stretching and Strengthening

You'll want to be very careful for your first couple of days, but some light stretching can often reduce lower back pain from a pulled muscle by relieving tension. Include both strengthening and stretching exercises.

Try this easy stretch while lying in bed. Gently raise your knees from the bed to your chest, then put a slight pressure on your knees for a light stretch in your lower back.

This stretch can help relieve pain spasms in your back faster than waiting on them to resolve on their own. The stretch should not add to your pain, so again, remember to listen to your body.

Prevent Back Muscle Pain

Often you can avoid back pain by taking some simple protective steps.

Watch what you eat. Stay away from

inflammatory foods, such as baked goods, processed foods, fruit juice, soda, sweetened cereals, and fast food. They make your body more sensitive to pain.

Keep fresh fruits and vegetables a main part of your diet. Also eat foods rich in back pain-relieving Omega-3 fatty acids like salmon, sardines, and walnuts.

You need protein in your diet to help repair damaged tissue and to build and strengthen muscle. And don't forget to drink plenty of water to hydrate tissues and organs and allow your body to regulate its temperature throughout the day.

Relieve stress. Many people hold emotional stress in their muscles. Frequent stress, anxiety, and tension can lead to tight muscles and muscle strains. You may be able to prevent new or recurring back pain with simple techniques such as massage and meditation.

Studies show that massage is an effective way to reduce stress and relax tightened muscles. And if you haven't tried meditation, maybe you should. As little as 10 minutes being still, breathing deep, and centering your thoughts can quiet both mind and body after a stressful day.

Support Your Back. What kind of support does your

desk chair, car seat, or couch offer? Probably not enough.

Try using a back support cushion, or any of the many devices which cradles your pelvis and floats your spinal system to reduce all-day pressure build-up and automatically correct slouched sitting positions.

By improving your sitting posture you can relieve excess strain on back muscles that can make you prone to a pulled back muscle.

Jesse Cannone is recognized as one of the top fitness trainers and natural health experts in the United States. With the help of massage therapist Steve Hefferon and a hand-picked board of medical advisors, he created the world's first self-assessment and self-treatment program for back pain and sciatica sufferers. The system, which is called Lose The Back Pain, has proven extremely effective and over 35,000 copies have already been sold in 85 countries.

As a result, Jesse has been able to help millions of people reach their weight-loss and fitness goals through his articles, books, audio programs, videos, and seminars. In addition to being a certified fitness trainer, best-selling author and national fitness presenter, he also holds many other certifications, such as Post-Rehabilitation Specialist, Specialist in Performance Nutrition, Advanced Level Fitness Trainer and Master Fitness Trainer

Jesse believes that one of the keys to his success has been his philosophy of always delivering more than he promises and giving every client a WOW experience that they can't wait to tell their friends about.

For further information visit losethebackpain.com.



Live Tennis Works Seminar

'So you want to create a Pro Player'

Guest presenters

Alan Jones & Jo Durie

Live Seminar in Milton Keynes, UK

Monday 5th March 2012

Open to all Coaches

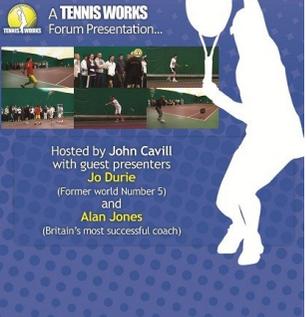
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'JOSH'S TENNIS DIARY'

Hi everyone and I hope your year has started well! This is going to be a very important year for me as I start to play more senior events to help develop my tennis for the men's game.

This month I am in a training block that is going to last for 8-10 weeks to work on improving my fitness and technique for future benefits. Due to all the health issues I had last year, it is important I try and address the elements that will help me stay fit and strong! As part of this work, I started the month doing low intensity work for the first week, training for an hour a day with one high intensity session in the week. The next week we continued with the low intensity work but started to increase the duration to 2 hours a day and since the weeks have gone on, I have been increasing the intensity levels and duration as I'm getting fitter. Lots of this work has been based around my heart rate to guide us as to where I am at. I have also been ensuring that my nutritional intake is the best it can be. For those who know me, food is one of many pleasures, so when you're faced with super soups and high nutritional foods every day, it won't be long until I turn into Popeye!

The majority of my training sessions have been taking place at Letchworth Tennis Club. During the sessions I hit with players who are on the British Tour while my coach, Neil Claxton, is able to support from the side-line. He helps with making sure the drills and practice sessions are set up properly to enable me to achieve the



outcomes and when we discuss my game he never fails to keep me on my toes. When I do my fitness, Wayne Dumbleton is at hand as he continues to help me with my physical development. Occasionally I have been able to get across to visit Matt Dunkley at Riverside Tennis Club in Bedford. During these sessions we have been working hard on my serve and return, making them both more consistent.

Last week I played my first competition of the year, which was a British Tour event in Bath. I had to start by playing two rounds of pre-qualifying of which I won my first match against Benjamin Tyrrell 6-3, 6-3 and my second match against Simon Pritchard 6-1, 6-4. I then made it

into the qualifying rounds when I played Alexander Gasson in a close 3-setter which I won 6-2, 6-7(3), 7-6 (3). My next qualifying match was against David Porter from Cheshire which I won 6-4, 6-2. I had then made it into the first round of the main draw but I wasn't to go any further as I came up against David Hodgetts and lost 6-3, 6-2. This event was more about testing my fitness and getting a few games under my belt. The British Tour is going to be very good for me as it's a great platform to experiment with my game and try to



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implement what I have been working on in training against adults, so I'm pretty pleased with how things went.

Now onto the bad news! My smurf village has been destroyed. 😞 I have been playing this computer game for ages in my spare time and after numerous encounters against my fitness coach, Wayne, who has been trying to attack my village, it has finally gone...and that's not because Wayne won but because I had to upgrade the game and it set me back 16 levels! Beware Wayne...I'll be back!

As I write this, I have been spending a few days with Ryan Jones in Enfield, who I have been hitting with each day and staying over at the family house. For those who don't know Ryan, he was a former national level player and his dad, Alan Jones, helped Jo Durie to world number 5, so it has been good to spend some time with them talking about tennis.

Well, that's me done for now and I look forward to updating you next month. Take care and I'll see you all again soon.

Forty Love,

Josh Sapwell— 31st January 2012





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Monday 5th March 2012: Join us in Milton Keynes at this rare opportunity to see this internationally recognised duo. Alan and Jo will through an on-court session will share their experiences and help coaches to understand the various elements involved in producing a top player and the pathway to becoming a professional. You will learn new drills and have the opportunity to grill them about player development.

OVERVIEW
Never before have Jo Durie and Alan Jones been filmed in front of a live audience whilst presenting their invaluable insight into developing a tennis player. Filmed in October 2009, this production takes any player, parent, coach or enthusiast through the 5 Steps to becoming a tennis player. Jo Durie reached a career high of number 5 in the world along with her coach Alan Jones, who has produced the most top level players in Britain. The internationally experienced duo are still actively coaching and this DVD brings to life all the information you require when developing players, including: warming up, levels of expectations, drills, understanding your player, creating the right environment and much, much more! This DVD is an essential tool to understand the elements for tennis success and the mentality required.



*Jo Durie - World No 5 - 1998
Alan Jones - World No 1 - 1982 to 1995*

"The information and delivery of the presentation is some of the best I have seen but Alan and Jo's observations will make any person think deeper into the requirements their player needs to reach the highest standards. This DVD is a must for everyone involved in tennis and will be referred to again and again."
(Simon Tomkinson - Coaching since 1993 who works with top European Ranked Juniors.)

RUNNING TIME:
Disk 1 - 48 mins approx. Disk 2 - 79 mins approx.

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