

# TENNIS WORKS NEWSLETTER

Volume 2 - Issue 7



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## A LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Melvyn Jones & John Cavill

Welcome to this edition of the **Tennis Works Newsletter (TWN)**. We have a varied offering for you this month which we hope you will enjoy with the return of some regular contributors. We kick off with Tomas Ruzicka who imparts his views on the transition from a Junior to Senior player. Dan Kiernan then shares his experience of the Australian Open, where his Academy players, Josh Ward-Hibbert and Liam Broady won the Boys Doubles title. We then have extracts from an interview with Alan Jones, former career coach to Jo Durie, former World No. 5. Alan gives us an insight into his outlook on tennis and life and how important it is for a coach to support and share their players journey and the major impact that a players character and attitude has.

Celia Taghdiri, joins us for the first time with an article on the benefits of using tennis ball machines. The Tennis Drill Series sees John share some warm-up drills. John also shares the importance of unity of coaches and how his network of coaches and friends have aided his development.

Another extract from the 'Sports Nutrition Series' sees Melvyn Jones share information on the

need for protein, rather a long one this, but persevere! Finally Josh's Diary sees Josh tell us about changes to his coaching team as he moves to the National Tennis Centre (NTC) in Roehampton under Greg Rusedski.

As you know we have been working in partnership with Keith Reynolds and Paul Dent towards integration of The Tennis Coaches Toolkit resource within the site, which continues to take place and will be complete during the month of March. We also have some other exciting joint ventures to launch on April 1st, as well as our new membership packages, which we have delayed from March 1st due to the technical changes within the website, however, the delay will be worth it in the end. We are holding a special live Webinar, entitled 'Working in partnership - the new Tennis Works website' on Thursday 29th March. Details can be found at the end of this **TWN**. Another of our new joint venture partners, Nicolas Christiaen of Tennis Video Coach is holding a live Webinar in April, again details can be found at the end.

For our existing website members we will be writing to you in March with details of what the changes mean for you and the special offers we have.

Have a great month..





## SOME IDEAS ABOUT THE TRANSITION FROM JUNIORS TO SENIORS

**Tomas Ruzicka**

***'Never underestimate your power to change yourself.'***

***'Never overestimate your power to change others'***

I am currently on tour with a player in Turkey and this is an ideal time to gather my thoughts and discuss some ideas about what I consider as the most important stage in tennis development....the transition from junior to senior tennis.

This article is about the qualities that players need to succeed in the senior game and the reason why I think this stage is the most important. This period is when we start to separate the men from the boys and the girls from the women. It is the 'make' or 'break' stage in a players life!

My philosophy of coaching has always been person first, athlete second and tennis player last and this is for one simple reason: It is our character and inner motivation which drives our decisions and this is where we make commitments. Once a commitment has been

made, this is where everything starts. Being an athlete is an obvious one as without the ability to control and coordinate our body we can't progress with our technique and with our game. Without body awareness we can't connect our body with our head. We can want things very badly, but without a well trained body, we will not achieve our physical potential. Finally, being a tennis player – the emphasis on being a player who plays a game of tennis and understands everything they need to know about the game.

How do we teach 7/8 year olds how to be a tennis player? To make an analogy, if you dressed a 7 year old in a business suit and pretended he/she is a businessman, you really know they are not as they are just a kid and we are trying to make them into something they need to grow into. This is exactly the same in tennis.

There is too much emphasis on developing tennis players too soon in my opinion. All the talent identification process is, is really a big guessing

game as we do not have the most important information about the player when they are at such a young age. The information we don't know is about their intrinsic motivation, family environment, broad environment, all relatives, friends, and how they will work out and look in years to come in completely different playing fields. The one big thing that I have observed over the years, which makes a difference between players continuing the journey or standing still, is their emotional stability. This must come from their home environment, so getting to know where the players are coming from can give us some indications.

When you pose the questions, 'what do you want?' or 'how much are you willing to give?' to a young child, it can't really be answered at that stage. Only in the transition stage can players answer those questions and make a commitment.

Unfortunately some governing bodies organise the way that cards are dealt but in a standard process, players select themselves through to their

commitment and ability to give, to learn and to grow. In this case we just support the ones willing to go that extra mile as they have already demonstrated their commitment and we are also in a far better position to judge their talent and environment around them by simply observing.



I believe that you should 'give a helping hand when a helping hand is needed' and this is when the players are at the time of transition between juniors and seniors. I can only talk from my own personal position being a tennis coach for 30 years. I have no understanding of accountancy and how to

run a business with hundreds of employees... my work has been on producing players and my understanding is that each player comes from their own unique individual environment. Somehow, that system has to learn how to grow around the individual's environment and adapt to it, but this will take the player out of their comfort zone and things that are out of their personal control. Young players will give us superficial answers to the above questions because they are still immature so it is

the coach's job to introduce the players to the world of tennis so he/she can understand sooner rather than later what tennis is all about.

By answering these questions there are consequences and the decisions will lead the players down a certain path in their life. As coaches we must guide the players by understanding the path they should follow and explain both to the player and parents what the consequences are of those choices. The coach will also need to decide on their commitment to the player's journey and the player needs the commitment of his/her family.

The support structure has to be based on pillars such as learning, development, love, commitment and potential. Always watch out for words like talent, rankings, ratings or any kind of outside labelling. These are all forms of judgement which in the long term always undermines the player's ability to perform under pressure. When a player reaches a certain level, those forms of pressure will naturally rise to the surface via the media and only then do we have to face them. Creating outside pressure can also lead to adverse effects which lead to early emotional breakdowns and looking for another path in life outside of tennis.

Here are some points to consider while preparing a player for the professional path:

### **Autonomy**

- Does he/she have the right habits on and off court?
- Can he/she organise their time during off days, during tournaments etc?
- Is he/she happy with his/her own company?
- Can he/she do things for themselves or are we doing things for them? - Especially the things they can do for themselves.

### **Game**

- Juniors are finding their game and experimenting with it.
- Seniors have a game and constantly working and refining it.
- Does your player have the understanding of his/her own game, or do they just learn how to play different shots?



## Tactics

- There is more accuracy in the senior game and the players play with more precision as there is stability and some predictability in their games.

## Emotional stability or maturity

- Emotions do run the show.
- The Relationship of trust and understanding is essential for success.
- Both the player and the coach must be on the same page during practice sessions and when off the court.
- The coach has to learn to understand how their emotional stability influences the player.
- The coach is a role model that the player copies.
- Player needs to know and feel that the coach is there for them 100% of the time.

We have to create an environment where all the above components can work together and we need plenty of support from parents to deliver that. Being from the Czech Republic and lived in the UK for 17 years, one of the big issues I see for the British psyche is that they tend to protect themselves from the emotional world, but I believe this is exactly where coaches can make the biggest breakthrough in their coaching.

Only when we get in touch with our own emotions and understand how we genuinely connect with others, will we be able to teach players about their

own emotions and prepare them for the tough world of professional tennis. There are certain things I question which can create obstacles for a coach to do their job, for example, the over protection of young players? Who does it really serve? Do we want to protect players or do we want them to learn to deal with the real world? I completely understand that there needs to be policies and procedures in place designed to try and protect children, but some of these can be a barrier to stop a coach and player forming meaningful relationships that will help that player's development.

These are my very personal thoughts and observations and I have great pleasure discussing them. I am constantly learning the process of how all the factors work together and would like to hear your thoughts, views and experiences.

*Tomas started coaching tennis at 16 and is a qualified teacher. He has focused full time on tennis since he was 26. After working with top juniors in Prague he came to the UK and was Head Coach/Manager of Matchpoint Pro-Tennis in Southampton before becoming Head Performance Coach at Nottinghamshire Tennis Centre, and then the County Performance Officer for Oxfordshire and Head Coach at Oxford University. Tomas is a highly qualified tennis coach. He is currently running his own academy In-between Points in his native Czech Republic, as well as consulting to other coaching centres and tutoring for the Czech Tennis association. Studying everything related to tennis and to his players is his passion as well as history, psychology, travel, good food and people he can learn from. To gain a further insight into the philosophy of Tomas visit [www.inbetweenpoints.com](http://www.inbetweenpoints.com).*



## AUSTRALIAN OPEN 2012—A SLAM TO REMEMBER

Dan Kiernan

As I sit here, a few weeks on from what was a brilliant couple of weeks out in Australia for our Soto Tennis Academy (STA) boys Josh Ward-Hibbert and Liam Broady, I look back with nothing but fond memories of the experience, and not just because they won the Boys Doubles title (but it helped!). Going to any Grand Slam is a great experience, but going as a coach gave me the opportunity to see Melbourne Park in all its glory.

Sharing a tournament car with Jo-Wilfred Tsonga, watching our own STA player Valeria Savinykh qualify for his first Slam Main Draw, getting the chance to go on court with Roger Federer, when Liam warmed him up before his semi-final against Rafael Nadal. Roger, was full of stories of Juniors, as we played juniors together and had lots of positive things to say about the British players at the time, in particular Simon Dickson, a British player who beat Federer in his junior days but unfortunately didn't progress in the senior game.

It was surreal, but really just felt like talking to a mate... until I saw him strike the first ball. The customary RF Forehand. The practice was



surprisingly low intensity and he strolled around trying some different shots, getting Liam to kick up balls to his backhand for him to slice and dice and work out a way to carve through Rafa. It also stood out to me that he hit `over` every serve he faced from Liam, maybe a

tactic he is trying to employ to stop Rafa taking the initiative against him. It certainly worked in set one, but struggled to maintain over 5 sets.

But the real reason I was there...Josh Ward-Hibbert & Liam Broady...I have been fortunate enough to work with Josh Ward-Hibbert for the last two years and he has had a massive change of fortunes in his results over the last 3 months including moving into the World (Junior) top 20 and picking up doubles titles at the prestigious Orange Bowl in Florida as well as the Australian Open (with Liam). I have been asked the question as to why the dramatic change in form?

The answer is 10 years of hard work! Not just with myself over the last 2 years, but all his previous coaches....but the number one reason is Josh himself. Josh will, and continues to control his own destiny through hours on the court, in the gym, and off the court, from what he eats, to how he sleeps. Little decisions, like giving up his New Year at home with his family and friends to spend 2 weeks training on the hard outdoors in Sotogrande before we flew off to Australia. Those players who are willing to make



the extra sacrifices and put in the extra yards WILL seek their reward in whatever form that comes.

In Australia, for the first time we saw Josh looking like the player we envisioned 2 years ago and have worked towards. Did this change in the 2 weeks prior to the event? Of course not... When Josh was losing all those matches 6 months ago, was it because he was no good, or because he was not working hard enough? No, not at all. These things take time. Committing to the right way of playing and then working, working, working in a purposeful way towards those goals. The secret for me is not getting too `up` when you win and not getting too `down`

when you lose. Keep a philosophical view of your tennis and always keep the bigger picture in mind whether you are a player, parent or coach. Not easy I know!

Has Josh now got it cracked because he is a Junior Grand Slam Champion? Has he heck! And he knows this and is already cracking on with his next stage of

development, this never stops! Which leads me into my second example from Australia- Andy Murray!

I was lucky enough to spend some time in Melbourne with Andy Murray and his new coach, the legend that is Ivan Lendl. Andy has taken the decision to continue to develop his game rather than resting on his laurels as one of the World's Best Players, and he has entrusted Ivan (and his team) with this- it is an on-going process and it was refreshing to see first hand. In my opinion Ivan has brought a calm to the team and is the godfather of a wealth of knowledge and talent that sits within the Murray camp. He has helped Andy to commit to taking the ball on further up the court, especially in the key moments. And lastly, and possibly more importantly the positive self talk in helping him believe that he can be a Grand Slam Champion and I believe he will.

The key point I am trying to make is that we never stop learning; Rome was not built in a day! And persistent hard work DOES pay off! Josh and Liam got what they deserved through sheer hard work and persistence, and they developed greatly throughout the 2 weeks. I always like to see good people who do good things, get rewarded and this was a prime example of this.

This is the same journey we all go through as

tennis coaches at any level and we must not lose sight of the vision we have for our players and the hard work that is needed to achieve these visions. Onwards and Upwards!

Play to Win

*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](http://www.sototennis.com)*



### ALAN JONES (Career coach to Jo Durie - former World Number 5 )

**Interviewed by John Cavill**

Alan Jones has coached many international professional players and British National Champions at junior and senior level over the years and is one of the most respected coaches in British Tennis. Internationally renowned for having masterminded Jo Durie's career (World Number 5), Alan spent 17 years on the international WTA women's tour.

On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February, Tennis Works' John Cavill conducted a telephone interview with Alan about his tennis journey and other interesting insights into the game.

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John: How did you get into tennis?

**Alan:** *With a slightly 'tongue in cheek' comment, I was talent spotted at the age of 15! Sport has always been in the family as my uncle used to play football for Spurs and I was always doing sport. In the summer I used to muck around with a tennis racket down at the local park and a local coach said I should give tennis a go. I hadn't thought about it before as I came from a working class background, so I took his advice and joined and I went on to win junior nationals and ended up as number 10 in the country at under 21's. Within 5 years of taking up the sport, I found myself at a pretty reasonable level.*

John: With the decline in parks tennis, are we missing out on potential future players to the game and did coaching make a big difference to you?

**Alan:** *You never know. The incredible thing we had was a tournament in London called the Evening News which I won in the 1960's and I got a £30 coaching voucher which I took advantage of, but after 20 minutes of the lesson I thought this guy doesn't understand me and he was trying to teach a style that isn't relevant to my game so I*

*stopped the lesson and that was the last lesson I have had in my life.*

John: Did your parents support you playing tennis?

**Alan:** *The thought of me playing tennis was unheard of coming from a working class family, as it was also thought of as a sport for girls. They could not believe that I wanted to take this sport up and if my father was alive today, he would never of dreamed of the life I have had through the game with travelling the world, being at the top of British and International tennis...he would have been amazed!*

John: So when did your tennis playing career lead into a coaching career?

**Alan:** *I came into tennis at an era when tennis was just played for enjoyment and wasn't about winning money, so when I was 19 I looked at the various options available to me, for example, going to work for a bank in London, but I loved the sport so much that I started working with a friend of mine who was a dedicated coach. We started to work around the clubs in north London and private gardens, but I quickly found myself working at Hazelwood Tennis Club from the age of 21 which is where I established most of my coaching life. Like most coaches I would teach adults and juniors but I was always interested in performance as it was an area that was neglected. I started to work with a girl from Middlesex who played extremely safe tennis and they wanted to change the way she played her game. She was most probably one of my best learning experiences as she blew me away with how dedicated she was and at 16 years old she won the Under 21 National Championships. Off the back of working with her, I attracted more players from all over the country as no one else was doing it apart from a couple of people. I then worked with another player who was Under 18 National champion and then this led to me being offered the job as national coach in 1977 and 1978, when Bisham was first established as a national tennis centre in the UK. After setting up different squads for those who trained outside of school hours, those who trained in the day and those who played Davis and Fed cup, I left the LTA disillusioned as I felt the players didn't work hard enough and on my way out I made a particular pop at Jo Durie and Jeremy Bates telling them that they could be good but they were too lazy. From this Jo and Jeremy were wondering 'who is this guy to say that' but 6 weeks later they rang me to say they had started to understand what I meant about the task and whether I could work with them.*



John: What were the big changes you saw with Jo when you started to work with her?

**Alan:** *Obviously this girl could play as you couldn't not be impressed with the way Jo hit the ball. As a coach working with a world class player, you have to recognise that you are not the reason they are good and I was very appreciative of Jo allowing me to work with her which elevated me as a coach. Too many coaches think that they are the real reason the player is any good and yes, as coaches we have a role, but in essence it is the players that make the coach. Once Jo had cottoned on to having to work a lot harder, she became more professional and her infinity to act on and recall information was extraordinary along with her intellect and skill...this all blew my mind!*

John: How many years did you spend with Jo on the tour?

**Alan:** *It was very unusual as we stayed together for the whole journey, so she started with me at the age of 18 and retired when she was 35, so we spent 17 years on the tour although during that time we would have other players join us to work with Jo. There were about 3 occasions when I said 'this isn't working' and this was because I believed that what I was saying was right. I did give her the option to part company if she didn't think what I was saying was right for her but on each occasion Jo would reflect and come back to me saying that she valued my information, not to give up on her and that she would pay attention to what needed to change.*



John: What would be your top agenda items when working with teenagers trying to develop into professional players?

**Alan:** *I think that the coaching world falls foul of the racket skills syndrome, which is almost obsessively driven to seek technical perfection. A long, long time ago, what became evident to me is that people are what matter. When you look at the diversity of styles that have been developed over the years, people like McEnroe, Connors and Borg, they wouldn't have existed in a technically perfect world. When you look at the top 4 men today, Djokovic, Nadal, Federer and Murray, none of them produce the same swings but they all have a huge amount of understanding as to what will happen on the point of impact when the racket hits the ball. Tennis is first of all a visual game where you must judge the flight, speed, spin etc of the ball within a split second of the ball leaving the opponents racket. If a player's eyes aren't aware of what the ball is doing then it's impossible to make a*

*player. After the brain has processed the visual information then it is the job of the legs to move into position. The order in which tennis should be taught, is visual, mobility, technique, but it seems to me I see a lot of people teaching style which is technical work from the basket with perfect feeds...I just don't get it as your opponent is going to give you a ball you don't like.*

*I also feel that there has been a big business built out of coaching tennis rather than letting children play and figure it out for themselves. The pressure to get results at a young age is wrong. Yes, they should be competing but the focus should be on their performance and not the results. It doesn't matter if you lose as the important part is to develop the player's game. I have seen it many times that a player that has a winning game from an early age limits their future success going forwards.*

John: What do you think about the Talent ID process?

**Alan:** *It is part of the modern world and nations are trying to get a running start on players of the future. I would do talent ID around spirit, soul, heart, vision etc but the process is all based around measuring certain athletic and racket skill practices. There are many exceptions to the game e.g. Justin Henin being so small, so I feel that you can't make judgement on a player at pre-puberty...we should be encouraging as many children as possible to play the game.*

*I've come to the conclusion that those who are successful in the junior game are either hitting puberty early, have played way more tennis than the others or have a mindset that doesn't allow them to miss a shot. So, if you are a late developer, late to the game and like to experiment by making mistakes, then you can be easily written off. Being obsessive about early success does not necessarily transfer into being a professional tennis player.*

John: What are your observations of a junior who wants to make that evolution into senior tennis?

**Alan:** *The things you look for are whether they love to play and when they come back to the court the next time, are they even more excited about becoming better.*

John: How many world class juniors that you have worked with have not gone on to be professional players?

**Alan:** *I was looking through some paperwork the other day and I found a round robin tournament sheet with 16 of the best boys and girls Under 12's in the UK. I then had a look to see how many of them were still playing at 18 and I think there were only 3. So what happened to the other 29? It's a very tough place to be at the top from a*

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*young age, especially if you are a part of a system that rewards results because once others come through and you don't get the results you were getting, all of a sudden the support you were getting is under threat of being taken away.*

John: What are your top 3 magic moments in your career?

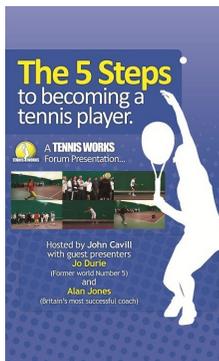
**Alan:** *The first is Jo beating Tracy Austin in the quarter finals of the French Open when Tracy was number 1 in the world, because of the unbelievable level she played at which made me so proud that I had been able to help her develop her game for moments like this. The second is when I first started to coach a couple of brothers who owned a fish and chip shop, called the Caperman brothers, Brian and Peter. They were my third ever clients and they were pretty poor, as they couldn't even hit a ball. Peter gave up very quickly but Brian persisted and he is now in his early 70's, just had a new knee fitted and still playing tennis. This showed me what someone can do with loads of resilience, grit and determination and incredible patience. My third magic moment would be to that man who saw me in the park that day when I was young and suggested that I started playing tennis.*

John: What is your advice to coaches and players starting out in the game?

**Alan:** *My advice to coaches is don't let anyone get in your way, believe in what you are trying to deliver, don't become systemised as it will restrict you and never lose your ambition. For a player it is to not be frightened by failure as most people I have seen become successful have numerous failed. Use failure as a tool to get better.*

John: At the end of your career, what would you like to be remembered for?

**Alan:** *I cared*



### **Final word from John Cavill**

This interview gives the reader an insight into Alan's outlook on tennis and life which I find inspiring and motivational when working with my players. There are many points one could gain from this interview but the one that resonates with me is that it all comes down to the players character and attitude and our role as the coach is to support and share their tennis journey.

You can listen to the full audio interview with Alan [here](#).

### **Special Offer**

Purchase a copy of the Alan Jones and Jo Durie double DVD - '[The 5 Steps to becoming a tennis player](#)', for £24 (inc. VAT).



### TENNIS BALL MACHINES OFFER MULTIPLE BENEFITS

Celia Taghdiri

Tennis ball machines are used by tennis players around the world. Ball machines accomplish more than spit out tennis balls. What if tennis ball machines were available at health facilities? What if residents living in the rural areas and lower-socioeconomic areas had access to the “silent partner?” If every elementary school, every afterschool program and every gymnasium provided at least one tennis ball machine, childhood obesity would not be as serious. Inner cities may not have as many youth joining violent street gangs and some children may even discover an innate talent towards a certain sport. Since tennis ball machines can be pricey for some school districts, local businesses and corporations can participate by putting forward a generous financial donation.

The tennis ball machine revolutionized the sport of tennis. It is an excellent option for players who may not have a game partner or for those who

wish to advance their playing-level. This silent partner allows players to hit as many fuzzy yellow balls as they wish. The ball machine helps meet the different needs of various players at different playing-levels.

But tennis ball machines go back to the early part of the 20th Century. During the 1920s, tennis players were introduced to the first tennis ball machine, which has continued to evolve. Credited for creating the first hand-cranked ball machine is Rene LaCoste, a French tennis player. LaCoste was well known for rigorous practice-sessions so he wanted a partner to keep pace with him. The machine was operated manually by another person on the opposite side of the tennis court.

But it was 1968 when 75-year-old Bob McLure invented the first known electric tennis ball machine. According to tennis experts, McLure reversed the motor on a vacuum cleaner and

created sufficient pressure to spit-out tennis balls from a pneumatic tube. This machine was named the Little Prince. Today's ball machines deliver the tennis balls by squeezing them through rotating wheels.

Throughout the 1990s, the tennis ball machine gained popularity and demand motivating manufacturers to implement clever technological elements and options. Such convenient features on today's tennis ball machines include portability, feed, ejection speed, ball capacity, spin, range of motion and increased battery life. The machines are easy to recharge and the ball hopper can be moved down to the bottom of the machine and used for storage. Furthermore, the machines are easy to transport to and from the vehicle and the court, thanks to wheels. Some machines are modestly priced at about \$300 while the more luxurious models can cost up to \$2K.

Today, champion players such as Rafael Nadal practice the game using a tennis ball machine. Melanie Oudin who won the US Open Mixed Doubles Champions with Jack Sock, uses a ball machine as part of her training. In addition, tennis academies such as The Global Tennis Institute in Florida, utilize ball machines to expose players to different tennis drills.



A significant benefit of a tennis ball machine is that players can schedule convenient play times without relying on a partner. All the player needs is a tennis court. Learning tennis from a ball machine also eliminates the need for a coach or a professional instructor. Ball machines can be programmed to throw numerous serves or lobs at a set velocity. Players can practice as fast or as slow as they wish. Also, much time is saved by not having to collect tennis balls just after a few hits since ball hoppers hold anywhere from 50 balls to 300 balls. The remote control technology allows players to remain at their hitting position and adjust the direction of the tennis balls. In addition to this convenient feature, some machines offer height adjustment, topspin and under spin. Sizes vary. A ball machine can weigh as much as 150 lbs.

Often times, local tennis clubs offer the tennis ball machine for try-out purposes. Some clubs may also rent out ball machines but it is up to the individual players to decide if it is in their best interest to purchase the machine. Let us remember players like Melanie Oudin, who won the U.S. Open Mixed Doubles championship with her tennis partner. She trained with a ball machine and is famous for some excellent techniques.



*On page 6 is the Lobster Elite Grand V Limited Edition ball machine.*

*Here we have the Playmate Genie ball machine.*

*Both available from the DoItTennis (USA) site.*

For the young and the young at heart who wish to practice tennis regularly or to simply increase physical activity, the tennis ball machine is a beneficial investment. Solo players and teams can practice a wide variety of drills on their own turf or at a local tennis court. Ball machines help teach tennis while giving the body a complete physical workout. Students can also practice real game scenarios and various techniques. Thanks to the machine's durability, the ball machine will last for a long period of time. It is an excellent piece of tennis gear for multi-purpose use.

*Celia Taghdiri is a freelance journalist in the U.S. who has had articles published by notable publications. Her recent endeavor has taken her into the wide world of tennis blogging for Do It Tennis, an [online tennis warehouse](#), and she maintains her own [tennis blog](#) where she has made it her purpose to find notable philanthropic efforts made by the professionals of the sport.*

*For more information on tennis court equipment, please contact [ctaghdiri@yahoo.com](mailto:ctaghdiri@yahoo.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 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

**Open to all Coaches**

Enjoy an interactive learning experience with Alan and Jo as they discuss the various elements required to produce a top player.

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## THE TENNIS DRILL SERIES

Warm up drills

Drill No 33 - Rallying cross court with a ball rolled in

Drill No 34 - Racket in each hand rally

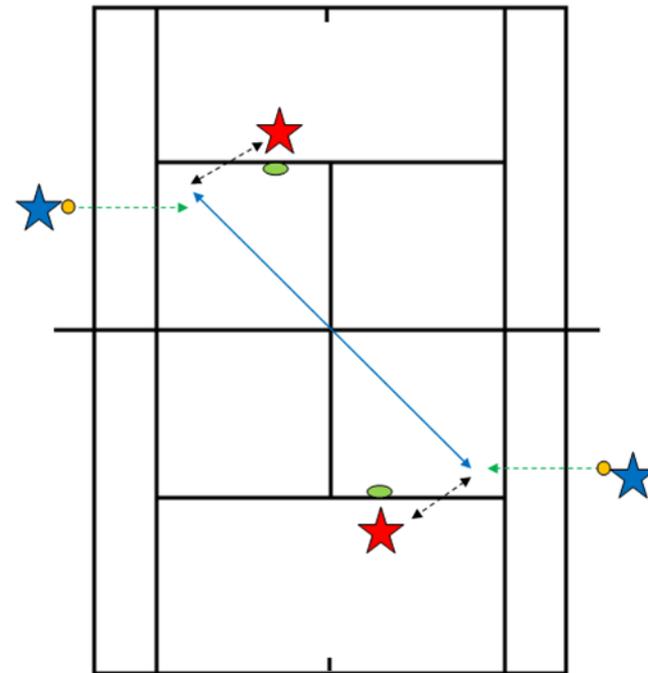
**John Cavill**

Many drills I use have been adopted from different people and modified for my own purposes, so these are no exception. The first 10 minutes of the session is about setting the standards and intensity levels required for the rest of the session, so it is very important to start well. Here are a few drills that I use with my Academy players during the warm up.

### **Drill No 33 – Rallying cross court with a ball rolled in**

This drill helps the player multi task while warming up their rallies and also improves their mental skills, concentration, reaction speed, coordination and perception skills.

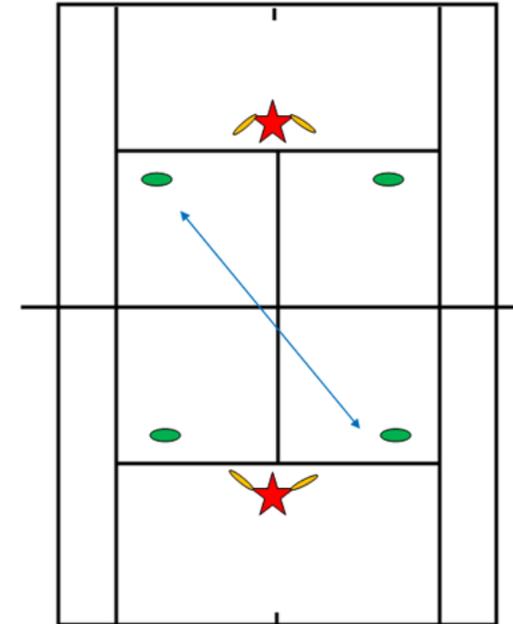
1. The players indicated as red stars, must rally cross court in the service boxes to each other while recovering after each shot to the green marker.
2. At any point, the assistant which is indicated as a blue star, can roll the ball in from the side the player must kick the ball back while keeping the rally going.
3. Do the same exercise but in the opposite cross court direction.
4. You can also do the exercises hitting down the line on both sides.



## Drill No 34 – Racket in each hand rally

This drill helps the players develop dexterity while also having to concentrate on deciding what the next appropriate shot should be. Tennis is a two-sided sport so we must develop coordination on both sides of the body.

1. The players indicated as red stars must have a racket in each hand.
2. The objective is to rally the ball and try to hit a target which is indicated in green.
3. To start with, the player can decide which racket they use to hit the ball with.
4. The next stage is for them to alternate hands on each shot they hit back.
5. To advance the drill further, the player must balance a ball on one racket while hitting the ball back with the other racket.
6. To make this exercise competitive, at any stage the players can play points



For John Cavill's profile see the 'Unity of coaches' article on page 22.

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When British stars, Jo Durie and Alan Jones, have been fitted in front of the cameras while presenting their invaluable insight into becoming a tennis player. Filmed in October 2009, this professional series has three special discs for watching through the 5 Steps to becoming a tennis player. As one reached a career high of number 5 in the world ranking with his coach Alan Jones, who has produced the most successful players in Britain. The internationally renowned duo are the ultimate coaching and this DVD is for all at all of the experience you require when watching your players.

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## UNITY OF COACHES

**John Cavill**

An interesting observation I have made from my years of coaching in the UK and visiting places abroad is the varying levels of unity between coaches and clubs and how this has an impact on the tennis environment.

For all those that know me, I am a very keen networker as I believe I can learn something from everyone. One of the main goals of Tennis Works is to bring people together and share experiences, knowledge and understanding for the good of tennis development, so this area of unity is of great importance to me. The dictionary definition of 'unity' is the state of being undivided or unbroken and like with a family that has great unity, there are many psychological and environmental benefits of being united with others.

Through my coaching and life journey so far, I have attracted some of the best people I could ever wish for, but I don't believe this has been by

coincidence but by visiting different places, speaking with lots of people and never turning down an opportunity to do something or go somewhere new. I think that my parents have enabled me to develop these skills as they were very supportive although they allowed me to have a lot of freedom of choice.

I think that people in the UK are very cautious of others and protective over what they have. This is probably a cultural thing but developing trust without thinking that people have ulterior motives seems to be a common observation I have. Philosophically I believe the more you give the more you get...although you may have to do a lot of giving before you get any returns, but I also believe that it is better to try and fail rather than not try at all. This leads me onto my next observation and that is this 'fear' culture. In the modern world we are so wrapped up in media and fast access to lots of information that our own

Thoughts and opinions can be externally influenced more than ever before. You have to say that most of the news is about bad things happening to people or countries, so people develop insecurities about things that are very unlikely to happen to them.

So what has this all got to do with the greater world of tennis? There are many clubs and coaches trying to develop big coaching programmes, produce great players and earn lots of money, which I very much welcome as long as they are enhancing the game and environment. The problem is when people 'poach' others from their club, make open negative judgements on people and make money a far greater priority than development. I believe that if you do your job well then people will naturally gravitate to you and the financial rewards will come, but to hold onto a player for monetary reward or to sell an unrealistic dream or promise to keep people is a short term tactic that always

ends badly.

For me as a coach and a person I feel it is very important to have a close network or unity

amongst others who I trust and help me while in turn I can help them. I have a great bunch of friends through tennis who have an unbelievable amount of knowledge and experience that they impart with



me. I am very grateful for their support and in turn I try and impart my knowledge and experiences with them to help in their journey. It's quite funny when I think about it but I have had some fantastic conversations with my close friends who have developed numerous national champions through to world number ones but when we talk about the business of tennis, they ask me many questions as this is an area that I have developed over the years as it essential to have in place to support the on court work.

Through uniting with others, there is so much that can be achieved, from creating simple inter club matches right through to calling in other coaches for their assistance with your player. This is something the Spanish do very well and many of the coaches I have met are not afraid to let someone else look at their player. I believe I won't see everything and in many situations where I am struggling, I like to ask for opinion from others I trust before making my decision. I feel you don't



need to know everything but you need to know who to ask!

By having this open outlook, you attract people of similar ilk, so the unity numbers increase and the network becomes stronger. If you don't put yourself out there, give without expecting and look at things without tunnel vision, you may be

hindering your development and more importantly hindering the development of your players.

Having unity amongst coaches is so much fun and it's always nice to share your journey with the ones closest to you.



***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 [tennisworks.net](#).***



## THE NEED FOR PROTEIN

An extract from the Sports Nutrition series

**Melvyn Jones**

Protein is a fundamental building block that you need to incorporate into your diet in the right manner in order to succeed at building your body into an energy producing machine so you can win at your game, whatever that is.

Protein is a necessary element in your diet but you do not need to go on an all protein diet by any means. In fact, too much protein can be detrimental to your actual results. However, with insufficient protein, your body will have a difficult time building up to the endurance level that it needs and will be unable to build muscle tissue so that your workouts are meaningful.

### **What is protein?**

Proteins are large molecules made up of long chains of amino acid subunits. Some of these amino acids are nutritionally essential as they cannot be made or stored within the body and so must come from foods in our daily diet. When the proteins that we consume in our food are broken down through digestion into individual amino acids, these are then absorbed and reform in order to create new proteins that are then

used by the body.

There are 22 types of amino acid, divided into two groups: essential and non-essential. There are 14 non-essential, termed this, as they can be manufactured by the body and do not have to be derived from food.

The body, on the other hand, cannot produce the remaining 8 essential amino acids itself, and therefore they must be derived from the food that we eat.

Non-essential, are just as important as essential, amino acids, as without the other, new proteins that are needed by the body cannot be properly formed. It is therefore vital that a variety of foods are eaten in order to provide the body with all of the amino acids required.

Proteins are what give your body the necessary abilities to build new tissue, to repair damaged tissues and to maintain fluids throughout your body. This is the essential aspect that an athlete needs to understand.

However protein is a major component of all muscles,

tissues and organs and is vital for practically every process that occurs within the body such as metabolism, digestion and the transportation of nutrients and oxygen in the blood. It is also necessary for the production of antibodies, which fight against infection and illness, and is the main nutrient that keeps our hair shiny and healthy, our nails strong, our skin fresh and glowing and our bones strong and healthy.

What is important to note about protein is the body's inability to store excess amounts of it. Unlike that of the carbohydrate, it cannot store it up to use when needed. The body will use protein for its needs and then it will burn it for energy. If it does not need to use it for this matter, then it will convert the protein into fat and pack it onto your thighs, stomach and everywhere else for that matter.

Therefore, balancing the right amount of protein in your diet is essential to the athlete competing to win.

### **What foods contain protein?**

These fall into three groups:

- Meat, poultry, fish, shellfish and eggs
- Pulses, nuts and seeds
- Soya products and vegetable protein foods

Although all animal and plant cells contain some protein, the amount and quality of this protein can vary widely. Protein from animal sources contains the full range of essential amino acids needed for an adult's diet. But red meat, in particular, should be eaten in

limited amounts due to the high level of saturated fat it contains, which may raise blood levels of 'unhealthy' LDL cholesterol. A high intake of saturated fat can lead to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease and other related disorders.

As an alternative source of animal protein, choose poultry, fish and shellfish. Fish is a good source of animal protein. Oil-rich fish such as salmon, mackerel, herring, tuna, trout and sardines are all rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which help to reduce the risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Shellfish is also a good source of protein and is low in fat.

Eggs contain all eight essential amino acids, making them a perfect source of protein. However, you'd have to eat *at least eight eggs a day* to get all the protein you need. Be sensible; include them as part of a balanced and varied diet!

Vegans and vegetarians need to take care to ensure they digest sufficient protein. Plants don't contain the full range of essential amino acids and so are not as high in nutritional value as animal protein. Foods such as nuts, seeds, beans, pulses, vegetable protein foods and soya products all contain protein. There are also small amounts in grains and dairy products.

### **How much protein do I need?**

The amount of protein you eat will vary but it should be consumed at about 15 per cent of the total amount of calories that you take in, still a significant amount and right behind that of carbohydrates. While carbohydrates

will be used to provide your body with the energy it needs to go from one place to the next, protein is essential for building the body up so that it has the physical capabilities for that to happen.

There is slightly differing information between UK and the USA health nutritionists, although the USA Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) value is more specific.

UK health nutritionists suggest men should eat 55.5g protein a day and women 45g, whilst the US RDA for protein is 0.8 grammes per kilo of body weight.

In practical terms, eating a moderate amount of protein - in one or two meals every day – should give you all the protein you need. Most of us eat far more protein than we actually need. You should eat two to three servings of protein every day from both plant and animal sources. Here are some examples of one serving:

- 100g boneless meat (eg lean beef, lamb or pork)
- 100g boneless poultry (eg chicken or turkey breast)
- 100g fish (eg salmon, sardines or tuna)
- 2 medium eggs
- 3 tablespoons of seeds (eg sunflower or pumpkin seeds)
- 3 tablespoons of nuts (eg almonds or walnuts)

In general it is accepted that normal daily stresses do not demand an increase in protein requirement. Most sport nutrition experts now agree that training and intense exercise increase the need for protein. The

additional protein requirement for the sports person is dependent on the training or exercise intensity and duration as well as the fitness level and the nutritional status of the individual. For the player in intensive training the amount of protein taken is not only important but the timing of protein ingestion is of significance. Players involved in resistance training, in team practice and in regular games will likely require a protein intake of between 1.2 to 2.0 grammes per kilo of body weight. While there is debate as to a precise recommendation most nutritional experts agree that the requirement is roughly double that of the RDA.

This additional protein requirement meets the greater demand placed on protein as an energy source during the latter stages of intense and prolonged exercise, the requirement for protein to repair cells following training and for above normal growth and development especially within the muscular system.

Therefore when it comes to protein, there are several things that you need to carefully consider. How much you need is varied depending on these characteristics:

- What type of exercising are you doing?
- What level of exercise are you doing in terms of intensity?
- How long will you be performing these exercises for?
- The total calories you are consuming also plays a role in how much protein you should intake.
- And, this also is dependent on the amount of carbohydrates that you are consuming.

Your level of fitness plays a role in the amount of

protein your body needs. If you are physically active, as most athletes are, your body will need more protein than if you were not active or were minimally so.

When you first begin your exercise program, you will need to increase the amount of protein calories you are taking in as well. This is because your body will be building muscles faster and toning them faster at this time. This need for additional protein calories will soon taper off when there is less muscle and tissue building taking place.

In your exercise type, your level of protein is very important. This is determined by how intense the exercise you are doing will be as well as the duration of the exercise as well. Those that need endurance for a longer period of time will in fact need more protein so that it can be used to burn as fuel when you do run out of carbohydrates. Those that are endurance runners, for example, need to have more protein in their diets than those that are short duration athletes. If you are a body builder or you will be doing strength building exercises in general, you need to increase the intake of protein that you have as well.

Calorie intake also makes a difference. If you eat the wrong amount of food, generally speaking, your body will resort to burning protein as fuel. If you do not eat enough calories in your diet, your body has to go to the protein to burn for energy. It burns more protein than so you will need to increase the protein you eat.

Carbohydrates that you take in also play a role in the

amount of protein that you need. If you do not eat enough carbohydrates, your body has to use protein to burn for energy. If you start a race with lower levels of glycogen, you will end up burning more protein than you would otherwise. In fact, you can burn up to 10 per cent more this way.

Of course, we said that you want your body to burn carbohydrates as opposed to burning proteins!

### **The truth about too much protein**

No, we are not talking about the high protein weight loss diets that has you only consuming protein, that's not a good diet to be on for anyone! What we are talking about is muscle building high protein diets. While an athlete that is working to build muscle mass does need to intake more protein calories, it is where you get these from that matter.

You are sure to have seen high protein meals and drinks on the market. These are used to target those that are looking to add additional grams of protein to the diet easily. In sports nutrition, it is not necessary for you to resort to those products unless you do not eat the right amounts of proteins from the start. It is commonly believed that eating high protein supplements like these is not necessary as long as you naturally increase the amount of protein calories that you take in.

To do this, add into your diet more low fat, high protein foods just as a natural addition to your diet. This may include eating more meats like poultry, beef, pork, fish and nuts to your diet.

Also, remember that high protein diets are only geared to those that are looking to build muscle mass.

- If you are just starting out in your exercise routine, you will need additional calories coming from protein.
- If you are looking to build muscle mass, such as with body building, you too will need to increase the amount of protein you intake in a high protein diet.

The standard athlete does not have to eat more protein than the 15 percent of total calorie intake previously mentioned.

In addition to this, it is important to note that many high protein diet supplements and foods can do more harm than they are worth and a too high a protein diet can lead to problems.

There is a significant risk of high cholesterol, due to the high amount of saturated fats in certain foods, which could in turn lead to heart disease and stroke.

Too much protein also puts a strain on the liver and kidneys. Foods that contain protein have high levels of nitrogen, which are harmful to the body and must be eliminated. The role of the kidneys is to filter out waste products and therefore an excess of protein will force the kidneys to work harder to remove the nitrogen waste from the body. This stress could ultimately lead to kidney disorders or damage to the body's filtering capacities.

Due to the inability of the body to store excess protein,

any surplus protein that is consumed is then converted into glucose in the liver and either used up as energy or stored as fat.

Some protein-rich foods are high in nucleic acids, which when broken down, are converted into uric acid. Consequently, too much uric acid in the blood can lead to gout, an extremely uncomfortable condition that causes a person's joints to become inflamed, tender and agonisingly painful to move.

Finally, too much protein in the diet could also lead to osteoporosis (thinning of the bones), as an excess of protein promotes the loss of calcium in the bones through urine.

Maintaining the amount of protein that you put into your diet is, as you can see, essential!

*The next extract from our Sports Nutrition Series – 'The story with Fats', will be in our June edition.*

*Melvyn Jones is Co-founder and Business Director at Tennis Works Ltd. Although holding no qualifications in nutrition, Melvyn's health issues of recent years prompted him to strive for knowledge on the subject and it is this which he imparts in the Sports Nutrition Series which is available in full at [tennisworks.net](http://tennisworks.net).*

*Melvyn has had a full and varied career. Graduating in Geology from Liverpool University in 1980 he worked within the oil industry travelling and living overseas in various environments over a ten year period. He spent a decade within the Post Office Group culminating in becoming Head of UK Operations. He has worked within the world of private education and established a business improvement and development company.*

*Melvyn has had a love for tennis all his life and although health issues have put paid to his playing days his passion for the sport is still evident in his involvement in it.*



### 'JOSH'S TENNIS DIARY'

Hi, I'm back again for another update on my diary. This has been a big month for me as I have changed training centre and now working at the National Tennis Centre (NTC) in Roehampton with Greg Rusedski.

I have been feeling that I need a change in direction to help me improve to the next level and at the same time the LTA were able to offer a package to help me. With long and lengthy chats with my parents, they have supported my decision. As you can all imagine, when you have been at a centre for quite a while, sometimes you need a change and I am very grateful for all the support and commitment that Letchworth Tennis Club has given me over the past 5 years. My coach Neil Claxton, who I still class as my coach even though I will spend the majority of my time in London, has been one of the most instrumental people in allowing me to get to where I have got to. He has known me since I was 3 years old, so the past 13 years has been a great journey and he will still be a big part of my life. Obviously I won't be spending many hours with him on court, but there is no other coach that knows me better than Neil, so even to have him at the end of a phone is invaluable.

I have only just started training at the centre this week as I have had a few niggles which meant that I join the NTC a week early so they could start helping me. The weekly schedule is that I travel to London on a Sunday, train from Monday to Thursday, come home on Thursday night, do school on the Friday and then

## TENNIS WORKS NEWSLETTER - Vol. 2 Issue 7

competitions or rest at the weekends. My new coach at the centre is Greg Rusedski and he is supported by a team of coaches and physical trainers.



Obviously living away in the week is different but I'm used to being away for periods at a time. There are mainly senior players living in at the centre although Kyle Edmund, Luke Bambridge and Oli Golding are all here but I am the youngest. On a daily basis, I am starting to do 2 and a half hours of tennis and 1 and a half hours of fitness in the morning and in the afternoon. I will do another hour and a half on court followed by half an hour of fitness. It's all very exciting and I am looking forward to pushing my tennis on.

At the start of the month I competed in a British Tour event in Corby. I made the second round of qualifying and lost narrowly to a giant 28 year old Frenchman. Because he was French he didn't have a very good British rating, hence he was in qualifying but he was pretty strong. The result was 7-6, 4-6, 7-6 after 3 and a half hours. I was returning the ball very well and broke him numerous times but my serve was letting me down so this needs some work on.



## TENNIS WORKS NEWSLETTER - Vol. 2 Issue 7

*I also represented Bedfordshire as one of 4 players in the team at Corby in the 18&U 16-Counties Cup. I did pretty well playing at number 1 player, winning all 3 of my matches against Sussex, Norfolk and Leicestershire.*

*I'm not sure when I will be competing next as my new programme has to be discussed but hopefully this will all be organised very soon.*

*I think that is all for now and I look forward to updating you on my progress over the next month.*

*Take care and I'll see you all again soon.*

*Forty love,*

*Josh Sapwell— 29th February 2012*



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## Forthcoming events

### Last call for 5th March Seminar

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**'So you want to create a Pro Player'**

**Guest presenters**  
**Alan Jones & Jo Durie**

*Live Seminar in Milton Keynes, UK*

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012**  
**Open to all Coaches**

Enjoy an interactive learning experience with Alan and Jo as they discuss the various elements required to produce a top player.

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**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012:** Join us in Milton Keynes at this rare opportunity to see this internationally recognised duo. Alan and Jo 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 question 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.



"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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A TENNIS WORKS Forum Presentation...  
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## The 5 Steps to becoming a tennis player.

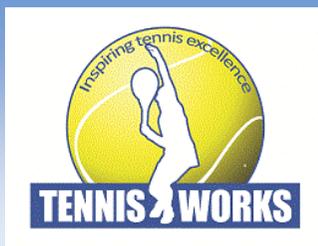
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**Presented by... John Cavill & Melvyn Jones of Tennis Works**  
**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2011, 20.00–21.30 BST**  
**Click here to register**

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**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2012:** Join John and Melvyn as they introduced the changes to tennisworks.net; hear about the new, increased value membership packages; be introduced to the initial joint venture partners, their resources and services; as well as hear about the new Tennis Works services and how you can become a part of it.

[More information here.](#)



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