

PICKLEBALL CAMP OUTLINE

1. Introduction and Grouping of Skill Levels:

- a. Beginning
- b. Intermediate
- c. Advanced

2. Lesson #1:

- a. Stretching and warm-ups
- b. Equipment
- c. The Court
- d. The Game -- Demonstrate a game (for Beginners)
- e. Rules – Hand out one page summary sheet; do not discuss in depth
- f. The Grip
- g. Ball Control and Drills:
 - i. Individual bounce ball in air and off ground
 - ii. Partners then hit ball across from net at non-volley zone, both bounce and in air

3. Lesson #2: Volley

- a. Ready position – at net
 - i. Knees bent
 - ii. On balls of feet
 - iii. Paddle up and ready
 - iv. Demo how the backhand grip at the net can cover 80% of all shots hit to student
 - v. Stress “clearing the table” and “pop” the volley back, not winding up or hitting down on top of the ball
 - vi. Target is down the middle
- b. Volley drills:
 - i. Instructor on one side on net, with one student on other side
 - ii. Hit 10 volleys to student’s forehand
 - iii. Hit 10 volleys to student’s backhand
 - iv. Hit 10 volleys alternating to student’s backhand/forehand
 - v. Next student
 - vi. When individual instruction is done, then have four students, two on each side hit volleys, first with one ball, and then as they make progress, then introduce two balls, one for each pair of students across the net
 - vii. If more than 4 students, have 4 students play “volley game”, where they exit if ball hits into net or out-of-bounds, to be rotated in by one of the other students, etc.

4. Lesson #3: Dink

- a. Ready position (same as Volley)
- b. Demo the dink and stress a firm wrist and a “lifting” action over the net, like an elevator going up/down
- c. Stress patience to keep dink going; unless it is too high then it can be smashed
- d. Drill #1: Have students line-up opposite each other across the net, that can safely fit on the court; each partner pair is given a ball; see how many consecutive times ball can be dinked, with a goal of 30 times
- e. Drill #2: Have two students on each side with one ball dink diagonally/crosscourt; then introduce a second ball to have both going at once
- f. Drill #3: Dink game, similar to volley game, but 4 students must hit ball on bounce; if ball hits net and doesn’t go over, or hit a volley or out-of-bounds shot, then next student rotates in

5. Lesson #4: Serve and Scoring

- a. Scoring only occurs when serving; otherwise it is “side out”
- b. Serve position and rules
 - i. Both feet behind baseline
 - ii. Hit in air not on bounce
 - iii. Only one serve
 - iv. Sideline and middle line extend to infinity
 - v. Serve must land in opposite quadrant beyond the non-volley line
 - vi. Middle, side and baselines when hit during serve are good
 - vii. Non-volley line when hit during serve is a fault
 - viii. Serve underhand
 1. Strike ball below the level of the waist
 2. Paddle head below level of wrist at impact
- c. Demonstrate basic deep serve with one student receiving
- d. Drill #1: Students line up to practice 10 serves from right side; then 10 from left side
- e. Drill #2: Two students on baseline, each with a ball, and two on other baseline and practice cross court serves with goal of each student hitting a minimum of 10 consecutive good serves
- f. Demonstrate illegal serves, asking students to determine if legal or illegal and why
- g. Demonstrate the lob serve
- h. Demonstrate the short angle serve
- i. Emphasize taking your time to serve, as it is the only stroke you have complete control of from beginning to end
- j. Cover scoring/next server from a doubles game view

6. Lesson #5: Return of Serve

- a. Position
 - i. Behind the baseline
 - ii. Paddle in ready position to hit forehand, backhand or middle return
 - iii. Ball must bounce before you hit it back
 - iv. Goal is to return ball deep to keep opponent off the net
 - v. Move to the net as soon as possible, as partner will already be up there
- b. Drills for Serving and Return of Serve
 - i. Four students—doubles game setup
 - ii. Using one ball, first server (A) serves, with returner (B) hitting cross court, then original server (A) hits ball to opponent's net partner (D) who volleys across net to opponent's partner (C)>> STOP and REPEAT 5 times and do not switch positions. Now rotate, with each student serving 5 times from the server (A) position
 - iii. Now play a game to 11 with students putting into practice every stroke learned so far
 - iv. While students are playing a game, keep instruction to a minimum, you might mention "move-up" to the net and be single item focused, i.e., **don't** give students more than one thing to think and execute about at a time
 - v. After the game, take each individual student and work on one or two things that need repetition/improvement

7. Lesson #6: Groundstrokes—Forehand and Backhand

- a. Demonstrate ready position
- b. On balls of feet, paddle ready
- c. Stress preparation and foot work as keys to great groundstrokes
 - i. Forehand stroke:
 1. Shoulder turned facing to net
 2. Short steps
 3. Firm wrist
 4. Paddle back
 5. Hit ball hit front of front foot
 6. Follow through, concentrating on seeing ball leave the paddle
 7. Should try to hit cross court
 - ii. Backhand stroke: same as above except on backhand side
 1. Stress that backhand should mechanically be an "easier" stroke, as you are not overcoming resistance across your body
 2. Also stress the "swordsmen" visual approach for having your paddle back, and then follow through low to high

- iii. Drill #1:
 - 1. One student at baseline, middle of court
 - 2. Instructor hit 10 balls to student's forehand
 - 3. Instructor hit 10 balls to student's backhand
 - 4. Instructor hit 10 balls and mix them up
 - 5. Next student

- iv. Drill #2:
 - 1. Four students, two on each side behind baseline
 - 2. Using one ball to start
 - 3. Player (A) in deuce court hits cross court forehand to Player (B) who hits up the line to Player (C) who hits cross court to Player (D) who hits up the line to Player (A); Player (A) then begins process again by hitting cross court to Player (B) without stopping, etc. See how long rallies will last. After sometime has passed, have players rotate, but still use just one ball and same drill.

- v. Drill #3:
 - 1. Four students, two on each side behind baseline
 - 2. Using two balls
 - 3. Player (A) and (C), partners, both hit a ball cross court to Players (B) and (D) respectively; Players (B) and (D), partners, both hit up the line shots to Players (A) and (C) who start the drill without stopping by hitting cross court to Players (B) and (D). After sometime, have players rotate.

- vi. Drill #4:
 - 1. Play doubles games with students putting practice every stroke learned so far
 - 2. Observe and instruct

8. Lesson #7: Groundstrokes—Lob and Smash/Overhead

- a. Use lob primarily for a defensive weapon to push opponents back off the net
- b. Demonstrate lob;
 - i. Paddle hits under the ball
 - ii. Lift high in the air, like up the elevator shaft
 - iii. Height is more important than depth
- c. Drill #1:
 - i. Four students, two at baseline, two at net:
 - 1. To start, have each student at baseline have a ball
 - 2. Have baseline students drop ball in front of them and then hit lob
 - 3. Lob should be high enough over students at net, that they can not hit an easy overhead
 - 4. Keep doing drill until students can lob, then switch with net players dropping back and conduct drill with them
- d. Drill #2:
 - i. Four students, two at baseline, two at net:
 - 1. Similar to Drill #1, except players at net each have a ball, and hit an easy ground stroke to students on baseline
 - 2. Baseline students then hit lob
 - 3. Net students return ground stroke for baseline students to lob
 - 4. Rotate baseline students to net and vice versa-continue drill
- e. Use smash/overhead primarily near the net to score points:
- f. Demonstrate smash;
 - i. Short quick steps if necessary to get in position
 - ii. Paddle back, near base of neck
 - iii. Don't exaggerate back swing, that is wasted motion
 - iv. Follow through when striking ball at point of arm outstretched
 - v. Watch ball come off your paddle
 - vi. Target is middle of court or at opponent's feet
- g. Drill #1:
 - i. Four students, two at baseline, two at net:
 - 1. To start, have each student at baseline have a ball
 - 2. Have baseline students drop ball in front of them and then hit short lob; students can also throw ball high over the net
 - 3. Net students then hit smash
 - 4. Repeat, switch students
- h. Drill #2:
 - i. Four students, doubles position, play game to 11:
 - 1. Students use all stokes learned so far
 - 2. Observe and instruct

9. Lesson #8: Strategy/Positioning/Communication

- a. Basic strategy in doubles is to hit down the middle to your opponent, and cover the middle on your side
- b. Don't try for winners most of the time; best to get ball over and let opponent make mistake
- c. Reduce unforced errors and make opponent work for every point
- d. Demonstrate doubles position at net, where 90% of points are won:
 - i. Equal coverage, no "Cinderella" balls
 - ii. Forehand closest to middle will usually return the volley
 - iii. Hit up middle or up the "doubt" line
 - iv. "Shadow or mirror" when partner pulled out of position
 - v. Communicate such as "yours" "go" "bounce it"
 - vi. If opponent hits a lob, determine if a "switch" is best strategy and call it out

10. Lesson #7: Thought for the Camp

CONSISTENCY IS WHAT COUNTS.
YOU HAVE TO DO THINGS OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

Hank Aaron, "The Mind Games," Page 18