

SQUASH GURUS

Questions answered, analysis, comment, coaching, training and tips

TALKING TACTICS

Camille Serme (below left) has got this just right and so Omneya Abdel Kawy has a problem. Abdel Kawy, moving from the left court (looking from behind), has played a weak shot into the middle of the court and Serme has dispatched it as she should do.

If your opponent plays a good shot, what do you say? "Great shot"? Possibly, but it is more important to say to yourself "Where did she play that from? Don't hit it there." Recognising that in a match, changing it without frustration or anger, is good matchplay.

Again, though, we come to the old adage 'Don't hit the ball into the middle of the court'.

If you want to analyse your game, you can divide the court into three parts: front quarter, middle half (from the front quarter to the back of the service box) and back quarter. Work out what shots you would like to hit into each area. A video and a little plotting will provide the data.

Remember, there are two conditions required before you attack. You want an easy ball and you want your opponent out of position, so this is a good opportunity for Serme to attack.

We can't really see, but it does look as if Serme has used a 'margin for error' (above the tin). She is hitting the ball away from her opponent and she is using one of the combinations we discussed in Issue SP163. Those are good tactics!



Tactical Tips

1. Ask yourself: "Where did my opponent play that shot from?"
2. Don't hit the ball into the middle of the court.
3. Attack when you have two conditions: an easy ball and an opponent out of position.
4. Hit the ball away from your opponent.
5. Use basic combinations: straight drop a short crosscourt from behind.
6. Use a margin for error on attacking shots.

Q&A?

Q. In an earlier issue you covered squats (Issue SP161), suggesting 15-20 reps for endurance. When would you do this? How many sets would you do? Wouldn't it be better to just go for a run?

A. The squat is often referred to as the 'king of exercises' and for good reason. Done properly, the squat actively engages almost all of the major muscles within the legs and a number in the upper body.

Three sessions a week of 3-5 sets (separated by 60-second rest periods) is a great way to mobilise, strengthen and build endurance in the legs in a way that you don't get through a standard cardio workout, such as jogging.

These squat sessions can be 'bolted on' to the end of your usual squash games/training and should take no longer than five minutes to complete.

Gary Nisbet

Q. In Issue SP163 physiotherapist Phil Newton explained how to manage bone-on-bone knee problems. He said that a programme of loaded exercises, building up from a low workload, was important and talked about an 'anti-gravity' treadmill. What is this and how does it work?

A. The AlterG treadmill was developed out of NASA research into ways of countering the negative effects of zero gravity on the skeletons of astronauts. The NASA treadmill pulled the users down onto the treadmill, using air pressure, but AlterG technology reversed what the NASA scientists were trying to do. The AlterG treadmill is encased in an air-tight compartment that comes up to the user's waist. Sensors in the treadmill are linked to the AlterG computer and make it possible to reduce the downward force of walking and running by applying an upward push through increased air pressure. AlterG treadmills can be used when rehabilitating many lower-limb problems, which benefit from careful load management. These include fractures and joint surface injuries.

Phil Newton

HOW TO ASK QUESTIONS

Questions for Squash Gurus can be sent to the Editor: editor@squashplayer.co.uk