Tennis
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Message from British Schools Tennis Association

The British Schools Tennis Association (BSTA) is dedicated to the development of tennis in schools, and as such is delighted to be involved in a project aimed at supporting the work of teachers in preparing students for public examinations in physical education.

The aim of this module is to present a resource which will provide guidelines and ideas to be applied within individual teaching styles, and to fulfil the demands of the examination syllabus the school has chosen to follow.

By its very nature the module can only provide the broadest guidelines, but, where relevant, reference is made to more extensive materials.

It is important to note that the approach to teaching tennis adopted by the author is contextual, i.e. with the game as the focal point. The emphasis is placed on understanding - of applying techniques and skills within the game and not acquiring them as ends in themselves.

In addition to the practical aspects of the game there is also a theoretical component which provides a brief background to the sport and applies the different aspects of sport studies within the context of tennis.

N.B. Throughout this text - where the term HE is used it is taken to mean the player, regardless of gender.

Introduction to the module

Module Objectives:

Students will:
- Be able to apply the techniques and skills relevant to their level of performance within the context of the game.
- Show an understanding of, and ability to play and officiate within the rules of tennis.
- Be aware of the structure and function of the sport nationally and internationally.
- Understand and apply the theoretical knowledge which underpins the game.

Method

Teachers should:
- Create a learning environment to assist the students to understand tennis by adopting a games based approach.
- Introduce the techniques and skills as they are required to improve game performance.
- Create an atmosphere which is enjoyable, stimulating and challenging.

The philosophy to this module is CO-OPERATION.

Remember in the initial stages of learning -
CONTROL + FRIENDSHIP (CO-OPERATION) = SUCCESS.
The beginning stage of learning Tennis is the exploratory phase, where the player is attempting to learn the correct sequence of movements of all the basic skills e.g. forehand, backhand, serve. Many errors may be made and often the skills may appear jerky, although improvement may be rapid to the next stage.

At the intermediate stage a player will be able to play most strokes, but not always the correct use in a game situation. The player will be more consistent, balanced and mobile.

At the advanced stage a player will execute all the skills automatically and will concentrate more on the placement of the shot, and how to vary and disguise shots. A player will be able to demonstrate a good tactical game plan and mental toughness.

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<td>Basic Skills</td>
<td>The groundstrokes, the volley, the service, the smash (pages 5-16).</td>
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<td>Game-play Skills</td>
<td>Attacking players may have: strong serve, good volley, good return of serve. Defensive players may have: good steady groundstrokes, reliable service, steady baseline play, topspin groundstrokes, two handed backhand (page 36).</td>
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<td>Tactical Skills</td>
<td>Singles: Achieving depth, width, angles; playing to strengths, and maintaining consistency; hitting the ball away from opponent, correct positioning and timing; “right” position, disguise and variety (pages 11 to 14). doubles: Covering the net together; winning service games, keeping the ball deep and opponent back; approaching the net and volleys; defending from the baseline and return to the attack; disguise and variety (pages 11 to 14).</td>
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<td>Training Skills</td>
<td>Mental toughness (page 21). Muscular endurance, power, flexibility, balance, speed, stamina and agility (pages 18-20).</td>
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UNIT 1
Introduction to the game

Basic Principles/Tactics/Skills
The aim of the game is to send and return the ball over the net into the court.

The ball is controlled by control of the racket face. Put simply, for basic strokes, the ball goes in which ever direction the strings of the racket are facing.

The aim of the player must therefore be to ensure the racket face meets the ball at the appropriate angle to send the ball over the net and into the court.

1. BASIC TACTICS

Exercise 1. Hit the ball over the net
Two pupils standing close to the net try to keep the ball going across the net to each other (see Figure 1.1).

Teaching tip - have pupils hand feed the ball to start the rally.

Variations
- Aim for highest number
- Aim for target number - change partners on achieving target, for example, each player moves one space to the left.

NB. Use the gap in between the courts if necessary to enable more pupils to play.

In the group teaching of tennis it is essential to maximise the use of space. Figure 1.1 illustrates how this may be achieved, and staff should use this as the basic guideline for the development of all other activities covered in this unit.

In the early stages staff should ensure that both the rules and court size are appropriate to the pupils' level of development.

Please note the position of the pupils relative to the net. Move the players progressively nearer the baseline as skills develop.

Exercise 2. Make the opponent play the ball on the groundstroke
- Keeping close to the net, all pupils try to keep the ball going with it bouncing once.
- Aim for target number of hits (e.g. 10) then try to move ball away from partner to win the rally.

NB. As pupils gain success with groundstrokes close to the net try to move them back gradually towards the baseline. As a general rule, the further away the pupils are from the net the more they have to swing.

Pupils may choose to hit the ball either after or before it bounces but try to co-operate with their partners.

Teaching tip - have pupils hand feed the ball to start the rally.

Variations
- Aim for highest number
- Aim for target number - change partners on achieving target, for example, each player moves one space to the left.

NB. Use the gap in between the courts if necessary to enable more pupils to play.

2. BASIC STROKES

The pupils have tried two ways of hitting the ball; groundstrokes and volleys.

(1) The Groundstrokes
The ball has bounced once.

Pupils should know:
- How to hit the ball over the net consistently
- How to hit the ball most effectively on the groundstrokes
- When to hit the ball in relation to its flight
- Where to strike the ball in relation to the body
- Where to hit the ball in relation to the opposition
- That groundstrokes are usually played from the back of the court.

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Exercise 3. When to hit the ball on the groundstrokes

Develop the exercise shown on the previous page with pupils close to the net in pairs.

Aim: To keep the rally going

Teaching Tip: If students are failing use one as a feeder and one as a hitter.

Don’t work with students too far from the net.

Allow the pupil to shorten the grip if necessary.

Discussion - When is it easiest to hit the ball?

Experiment - What are the possibilities?

• As comes up from the first bounce
• As it goes down again for the second bounce
• At the top of the bounce

Check that pupils realise that when they are learning it is easier to hit the ball later because they have more time and the ball is moving more slowly.

Exercise 4. Where to hit the ball on the groundstrokes in relation to the body.

As above, but pupils move back to service line.

Discussion and Experiment - Where (in relation to your body) is the best place to hit the ball?

• At the side of the body
• At about knee/waist height
• Slightly in front of the body.

Exercise 5. How to hit the ball over the net consistently

Pupils in pairs move further back, or, one player moves back and one feeds by hand.

Discussion and Experiment - How do pupils hit the ball over the net consistently?

Check that pupils realise that they should lift the ball over the net by swinging from low to high.

Exercise 6. How to hit the ball effectively on the groundstrokes.

Use format as in exercise 5.

Pupils in pairs move further back in court or one player moves back and one feeds from the net by hand.

Discussion and Experiment - How do pupils hit the ball over the net consistently?

Check that pupils realise that they should lift the ball over the net by swinging from low to high.

The Forehand grips

There are two most commonly accepted forehand grips in tennis, the Eastern and Semi-Western. However, while it is important that students should recognize and identify these for examination purposes, a more individual approach can be used where the pupil selects an angle of racket face to achieve the desired outcome which will, in turn dictate the way the racket is held.

Basic Groundstrokes

The correct use of the racket head, together with an appropriate grip will lead to sound stroke production. The following illustrations show the basic groundstrokes in sequence together with the teaching points. (see page 5)
Forehand Drive (Semi-Western grip) See Fig 1.2
Teaching Points: (Fig 1.4)
• Start from the ready position (1)
• Take racket back early (2)
• Make smooth connection between backswing and forward swing, stepping into the shot (3)
• Swing racket from low to high (4-5-6), through hitting area slightly forward of leading hip (4).
• Firm grip
• Return to ready position

As the players improve the above practices may be developed to increase:
(1) Distance between players
(2) Variety of stroke
(3) Variety of simple tactics
(4) Opportunity for competitive play

N.B. This does not necessarily mean the full game, but competition with self, cooperation with partner to compete against another “team”.

Discussion and Experiment
Check that pupils realise that they can vary:
• The width to which they hit the ball
• The length to which they hit it
• The height at which they hit it
• The speed at which they hit it

The backhand drive (for grip – see Fig 1.3 for coaching points see Forehand Drive and Fig 1.5)

(2) The Volley
The ball is hit before it bounces.
The volley will:
(a) Have been tried in the initial stages of trying to rally the ball
(b) Be a natural answer to a short ball

Pupils should know:
(c) Where to hit the ball in relation to themselves
(d) How to use the racket most effectively
(e) Where on the court to play the volley

Exercise 7: Where to hit the ball for the Volley (see Figure 1.6)

Teaching Points:
• Start from ready position (1)
• Prepare early
• Take short backswing (2)
• Contact ball level with foot (3) at a comfortable distance away from the body with arm slightly bent (3)
• Step into the shot
• Punch at ball - no follow-through (4)
• Firm grip
• Maintain balance
• Return to ready position (1)

Backhand Volley (Backhand Grip) See Fig 1.8
Teaching Points: (see points for Forehand Volley)
Staff should now develop practices which combine the use of groundstrokes and volleys.

For further information please see the book list.

Figure 1.6
Forehand Volley front view
(a) Comfortable distance away (arm’s length)

Figure 1.7
Forehand Volley side view
(b) Comfortable distance forwards (in front of the body)

Figure 1.8

Forehand Volley (Eastern Grip) See Fig 1.7
Teaching Points:
• Start from ready position (1)
• Prepare early
• Take short backswing (2)
• Contact ball level with front foot (3) at a comfortable distance away from the body with arm slightly bent (3)
• Step into the shot
• Punch at ball - no follow-through (4)
• Firm grip
• Maintain balance
• Return to ready position (1)

Figure 1.9
Backhand Volley (Backhand Grip) See Fig 1.8
Teaching Points: (see points for Forehand Volley)
Staff should now develop practices which combine the use of groundstrokes and volleys.

For further information please see the book list.
The Service

1 Racket and ball the start together (see Figure 1.9) The essential principles of serve are:-

- The ball must be hit by the server before it touches the ground.
- The ball must land in a specific area - the service box - and be hit from a specific place - behind the baseline.

There are two ways of hitting the serve:-

(i) Underarm - but the ball has to be hit up and is therefore slow, and easy for opponent to return.

(ii) Overarm - the ball can then be hit down into the service box.

The overarm serve needs to be taught - it is very unlikely that pupils can serve properly without help. The initial demonstration of the serve should concentrate on:

- Hitting the ball as high above the head as possible.
- Starting the racket and ball together; separating them by the ball being placed in front of the body and the racket moving back behind the body so that it can be thrown at the ball.

At this stage the important factors are action and rhythm, placement of the ball is less vital.

2 Racket arm moves down and back, ball arm moves up

3 Racket and ball meet, racket being thrown at ball (See Fig 1.10)
Exercise 10: Basic Service Action

Pupils try action of overarm serve.

If necessary the teacher should introduce ‘counting’ or words such as “down, round, throw” to help get the rhythm.

Once the basic action is established then the correct position of the ball must be identified.

(a) It should land in front of the baseline if it is not hit.

(b) It should be on the racket side until it is hit. (Except in topspin serve variation).

Discussion and Experiment
Check that pupils appreciate the benefits to the power of the serve gained from a throwing action.

The throwing action needs either the Eastern forehand grip of the Continental (Chopper). See Figure 1.2.

The use of the Eastern grip is possible but the most effective service grip is the Continental.

Pupils need:-
(1) to learn the scoring system (see Unit 3)
(2) to combine the three basic strokes in a rally
(3) to combine the strokes and the basic tactics.

Discussion and Experiment
Check that as a result of playing the game the pupils will realise that they have to be in specific places on the court at certain times. For example, they must be in the right place to:-
• serve or receive.
• to return the ball during a rally.

In addition, they must be in a position where they are alert and ready to return the ball.

Exercise 11: Basic court positions

The basic positions for playing singles should be practised as part of the game.

Figure 1.11: Basic positions for playing singles

- The server’s position - as close to the centre as possible to cover returns to either side.
- The receiver’s position - on or just behind the baseline so that they can cover either forehand or backhand side.
- The rallying position taken up as soon as the serve and return are completed.
  - ‘X1’ the groundstroke rally position - largely defensive since you are at the back of the court.
  - ‘X2’ the volley position - the attacking position.

Discussion and Experiment - Singles Positions
Check that pupils realise that the fundamental principle of all court positions is to be in the best position to hit the next ball, so the movement back to a basic position is after the ball is hit, and not as the next ball is approaching. A basic position must be central to allow you to play either a forehand or backhand return and cover the largest area of court possible.

The basic positions for playing doubles will also be practised as part of the game (see Fig 2.1).

Figure 1.12: Basic Positions for Doubles

- The server’s position ‘X1’ - further towards the side line to cover wide returns.
- The server’s partner ‘X2’ - in the attacking position and covering the straight line return (down the “tramlines”)
- The receiver ‘Y1’ basically as in singles.
- The receiver’s partner ‘Y2’ - on the service line, ready to move to attack or defence, depending on the receiver’s return.

Appropriate rallying positions are taken up as soon as the serve and return of serve are completed.
Both partners should get alongside each other as soon as possible

Either

‘X1’ groundstroke rallying position on or behind the baseline (defensive positions)

or in the:

‘X2’ volleying position (attacking positions)

Discussion and Experiment - Doubles Positions

The doubles positions take a little time for most pupils to understand and will need practise and reinforcement. Like singles positions, there is a tactical reason for doubles positions.

If partners are alongside each other they can play as a team and reduce the gaps between themselves, into which opponents might hit.

The Ready Position (Fig 1.15)

In addition to being in the right place on the court players need to be ready for the shot they need to make. Teachers need to show pupils how to be ready.

(a) have the racket in a central position ready to move either the forehand or backhand side.

(b) feet shoulder width apart, weight slightly forward ready to move in either direction.

(c) eyes watching the ball all the time to judge its flight and bounce.
 Once players understand and can apply the basic tactics and basic strokes they are ready to progress. For example they may use additional tactics and develop responses to the demands imposed upon them by their opponent(s), the environment and their own limitations (Physical and Mental - see Units 4 & 5).

The analysis of tactical understanding is based on four key questions:

**What** are the tactical demands of any given situation?

**How** are they implemented?

**Why** did they select the chosen tactic?

**Which** progression or development should follow?

These will be presented as a balance between staff directed and student generated activity in terms of discussion and experimentation.

All tactics are based on selection. Selecting the most appropriate response from the player’s “bank of skills” to maximize his strengths and exploit his opponent’s weaknesses. Two major methods used to increase the effectiveness of tactics are to hit with spin and use stroke variations.

**Additional tactics**

It is not possible within this text to cover these areas fully and, therefore, examples are provided which should be used as models on which to base future work.

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### DOUBLES

**Example 2**

**TACTIC:** Getting to the net as a team.

**What?** The adoption of an attacking strategy which will cut down the opponents' response time and give the net players opportunities to use additional angles and “put the ball away”!

**How?**

1. Opponents at baseline - hit deep
2. Opponents at net - hit overhead to force them back

**TASK** - Working as two opposing teams. Players rally with the objective of being the first team to obtain the net position.

**Condition:** only score on points won from net position or 2 points for a winning volley.

**Why and which?**

Group discussion and experiment on the following points:

- Are the weaknesses always where you expect? (Perhaps the backhand.)
- Are the weaknesses always a stroke? Might they be poor tactics, for example; an opponent may not recover to a central position on court between shots in a rally.
- Are the weaknesses caused by a certain style of play? For example: opponents with a two-handed backhand may experience difficulty in reaching a wide ball. Opponents using a western forehand grip find it difficult to hit low bouncing balls.
- How can you overcome personal weaknesses?
- How do you make it easier to attack the opponent’s weaknesses?

### SINGLES

**Example 1**

**TACTIC:** Exploit the opponent’s weaknesses.

**What?**

Where is their major weakness and how may this be exploited?

**How?**

By using a variety of ball placements to search out the weak spot(s).

**TASK** - Working in two’s using groundstrokes and volleys:

1. find opponent’s weaknesses.
2. how many points can be won by exploiting these weaknesses?
3. how many points do you lose when your weaknesses are exploited?

**Why and which?**

Group discussion and experiment on the following points:

- Are the weaknesses always where you expect? (Perhaps the backhand.)
- Are the weaknesses always a stroke? Might they be poor tactics, for example; an opponent may not recover to a central position on court between shots in a rally.
- Are the weaknesses caused by a certain style of play? For example: opponents with a two-handed backhand may experience difficulty in reaching a wide ball. Opponents using a western forehand grip find it difficult to hit low bouncing balls.
- How can you overcome personal weaknesses?
- How do you make it easier to attack the opponent’s weaknesses?
Figure 2.1: Keeping Double Opponents at The Baseline and Covering The Net Position.

The tactics of both the singles and doubles games can be developed using the above models and applying the following tactics:

- Exploit different areas of the court: depth, width, angles.
- Playing to personal strengths:
  - Serve and volley
  - Baseline consistency

Specific to doubles:
- Covering the net together
- Winning service games

Tactics are the same whether played by Henman and Hingis or two school players - the difference is quality.

Henman and Hingis:
- Think quicker
- Move quicker
- Have more inherent skill
- Have a wealth of experience both of their own and their opponents play

But tactically, the principles are the same.

There are two further tactical considerations which should be covered:

- Styles of play
- Environmental factors

Styles of Play
- Always play to your own strengths
- Adapt as necessary to cope with opponent’s strengths

Environmental Factors
- Court surface
- Weather

Teachers should create Conditioned Games and skill practices to simulate specific conditions - or should cover certain aspects in the form of discussion and/or written form.

Hitting with spin and the use of stroke variations

Basic Tennis strokes can be developed in two ways:

- By changing the way the racket face strikes the ball, thus importing spin, which makes the ball behave differently
- By changing the path of the racket swing, throw or punch to produce shots such as the lob, drop shot and smash

The Concept of Spin
Spin has two effects on the ball
- Changes the flight path
- Alters the bounce

Both of which make the receiver’s tasks more difficult.

It is essential that students understand the concept of spin, the different types of spin and can apply these in practical situations (see Figure 2.2).

Situations where spin is used:

Top Spin
- Serve
  - On the second serve

Backspin
- Serve
  - On first and second serve to take opponent out of court

Groundstrokes
- To keep the ball bouncing low
- In an approach shot to the net
- On a drop shot hit with back spin, just into the opponent’s court
- As a response to hard hit ball
- Hitting into the wind

Side Spin
Groundstrokes
- To keep the ball bouncing low and swerving away from the opponent
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**Figure 2.2a**
The Effect of Spin on groundstrokes

**TOP SPIN**

**SLICE**

**Figure 2.3a**
Discovering the feel of Topspin

(a) In pairs close to but on opposite sides of the net. Pupil feeds himself and with racket face square to the net moves racket vertically from low to high.

(b) Once the ‘feel’ of topspin is experienced encourage pupils to use a more vigorous movement from low to high to achieve more spin but not necessarily more speed. The racket should now finish high in front of the pupil.

(c) Pupil handfeeds gently to pupil hitting topspin. Encourage hitter to now hit up and forward.

(d) Encourage pupil to use slight body rotation and lift when hitting.

**Note 1:** As topspin is forward spin (the ball rotates forward on impact) the racket does not have to travel forward to propel the ball gently over the net.

**Figure 2.4** Slice backhand

**Note 2:** Some pupils will move the racket face forward only and will not achieve the desired spin.

**Note 3:** Some pupils will achieve and feel the spin but the ball will still finish in the bottom of the net.

**Remedy:** Either move the pupil closer to the net or encourage him, using the same action, to hit the ball over the head of his partner. It will then probably just clear the net!

**Figure 2.5** Effect of spin on the serve

**Spin on Serve** (see Figure 2.5)

To hit spin on the serve

(a) Pupils trying to hit slice (this is easier than topspin) by:

(i) placing the ball toss further out towards the side line, i.e. to the right for right handers.

(ii) throwing the racket head out, around the outside of the ball, finishing in normal position.

(iii) by encouraging players to use the chopper grip. Most pupils on switching from a frying pan grip will automatically serve with slice.

**Discussion and Experimentation**

How much backspin can pupils create on the ball?

How do they create more backspin?

Answer – by moving the racket face more vigorously.

(N.B. This is the beginning of the dropshot.)

(c) How can the pupils hit the ball from this situation deeper into the court cutting down the amount of backspin?

Answer – by closing the racket face slightly and taking a longer backswing and follow through. Start high and finish low – see Fig 2.4.
(b) Pupils trying to hit top spin by:

(i) placing the ball up and behind them (it should land just behind them and the baseline over their left shoulder for right handers).

(ii) bending the knees and bringing the racket sharply up and over the ball, to lift it up as it leaves server.

(iii) the racket should move up and out towards the sideline, initially finishing on the ‘wrong’ side (i.e. racket side). This can be modified to the normal follow through once the serve is established.

Discussion and Experiment
The ball should leave the racket moving upwards and forwards - a different flightpath than either the flat or slice serve. It should cross high over the net, drop and then kick up high after the bounce.

Variations on the Basic Strokes: In order to make improvements students need to increase their repertoire of strokes.

VARIATION OF STROKES:
Groundstrokes – Lobs and Drop shots
Volley – Stop Volley
Serve – Smash

The Lob
Students should know to:
• Open the face of the racket on the forward swing to lift the ball
• Have a high follow through
• Keep the weight moving forward
• Use disguise to deceive opponent(s)
• Hit to the baseline for greatest effect
• Move to the net following a successful lob
• Experiment with top spin (See Figure 2.7)

The Drop Shot
Students should know that:
• The drop shot removes pace from the ball.
• The ball should drop just over the net
• Disguise is essential
• Play the shot from service and not baseline to ensure opponent has not enough time to read the shot
(See Figure 2.8)

The Stop Volley
Students should know that:
• The stop volley has a similar effect to the drop shot

The Smash
Students should known that
• They will need to adjust their position until the ball is in the right place
• They should use the ball arm for balance
• They should hit the ball at full height
• The ball should be heavily angled to the baseline
• They should not lose control by smashing too vigorously (see Figure 2.9)

NB. You may be required to teach the topspin drive volley! This is an extremely difficult shot, one which Hingis or Henman would be reluctant to play.

If you must teach this shot:
• Apply the topspin to a shortened swing ground stroke
• Ensure students start by hitting the ball slowly
• Encourage them only to attempt to play the shot off a VERY SLOW ball well above net height.
• Wish them luck!!
Assessment of Tennis

Assessment of students is never easy and many teachers have difficulty in assessing their pupils on the tennis court.

The following is a very basic plan to help the teacher in the assessment of a group. The assumption will be made that the teacher does not know the group, but the same plan could be put into operation if this was not the case.

The assessment is divided into two parts:

1. A basic assessment of techniques and skills.
2. An advanced assessment of pupils' understanding of the game - tactics, stroke variation and use of court space etc.

In both these assessments boys and girls could play in mixed groups and afterwards a small adjustment made for girls e.g. between 8 and 10 marks. This may be necessary because a top 16 year old boy may be stronger than a top 16 year old girl. The mere fact that a boy’s wrist is stronger makes an enormous difference to his game. This difference is the same at all levels of ability.

ASSESSMENT IN HOMOGENEOUS GROUPS

Section 1

In order to ensure that players of like ability are matched, and where staff have little knowledge of the group, a game should be played which will divide up the group by results. For example:

4 players per court:-

Players play a half-court singles game (divide the court in half) counting points as they do in a tie-break – 1, 2, 3, etc. Play is started alternately, this takes any scoring difficulties out of the game and allows them to concentrate on play.

The winners move one way and the losers move the other way. Each time they move one half-court.

Movement of winners is always in the same direction once play has started.

If the score is equal when play is stopped the players play one more point to decide the winner.

Play stops when 2 players who started together meet up again.

If the group is too large to do this staff should attempt to make an ad hoc ability grouping.

By targeting the lower band of ability at the beginning of the assessment, the assessor can sort out the order of effectiveness. When players having moved arrive back to play the same person again it is time to change the task.

By gradually increasing the degree of difficulty e.g. by adding the serve, the better players will find their level. Now it is possible to set the pupils a series of tasks to aid the assessment procedure.

Task 1 – Keep the rally going in the service box.

Task 2 – Basic rally in the whole half-court.

It is important to note the players who are having difficulty in keeping the rally going. These players need careful assessment. Keep this basic task going for some time so that players settle. Regular movement up or down takes the tension out of the competitive play, and players feel they can recoup a bad game.

Task 3 – (4 per court) Include the serve (straight) and play out the points in the normal way. At this point the pupils are making their own decisions as to whether or not they approach the net.

Where there are only 4 players on court use the whole court. Ask them to use the whole singles court instead of the half court.

Players should play two points (one either side of the court) and then stand at the back of the court whilst the waiting players (Y’s) play their two points. As soon as these two points are played the X players should return with tennis balls ready to serve immediately so no time is lost.

(More than 4 per court) If 6 players use the same format as shown, players will have to wait a little longer to play their points. But it is important that they have the whole court to play on.

Task 4 – If during the rally a ball drops short the player playing that ball must follow it into the net, and volley the next ball. The point is lost if they fail to follow in.

NB In this practice lobs are NOT allowed.

POINTS TO LOOK FOR IN SINGLES PLAY

1. Consistency
2. Hitting ball away from opponent
3. Be in the right position at the right time
4. “Reading” the game

Section 2

This takes the form of doubles with the ordinary game scoring. If the players are grouped by the position they finished after the singles, the games will be fairly even. The assessor should do the grouping for the games. This part of the assessment should confirm the pupils earlier play, but it will also show their grasp of tactics particular to the doubles game.

Task 5 – Each pupil to play two service games - play 8 games in total. Whatever the score then play a tie-break against the same pair.

Task 6 – Winners move in winners’ direction on court and losers in opposite direction and play another tie-break. This should be repeated as time allows, or as is needed to accomplish an accurate assessment.
THE MARKING SCHEME
Level of mark related to the task given

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK</th>
<th>Marks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 only</td>
<td>Under 25 marks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 only</td>
<td>Under 40 marks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 only</td>
<td>Under 55 marks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 only</td>
<td>Under 70 marks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The grades from this point are going to be settled by the way the players show their understanding of the game.

DANGERS
This system of assessment will only be successful if the assessor knows when to stop the progression. If none or few of the players can accomplish the task then the assessment should be levelled out at that point. If this happens early they should be given the task of a simple doubles game, without the complication of a tie-break.

Determining the position of exceptional players
Representative players at county and regional level lie above the normal scale and would start scoring at 100 marks. A county player would be between 100 and 130. National players around 150 mark.

Those players in the 70-plus bracket are most likely to play for the school and at the upper limit for a club.

Final note
It is hoped that these notes will help a teacher to assess the sport of tennis. Too often teachers shy away from tennis, thinking that they do not have sufficient knowledge of the sport.

Remember not to mark harshly where a child’s style (i.e. interpretation of technique) is not of text-book standard. If a teacher is teaching tennis from an “understanding” perspective then the important criteria for assessment must be where a child hits the ball as opposed to how a child hits the ball - i.e. concentrate on tactical appreciation and their understanding of the game.

You should also mark positively on intentions when the outcome is unsuccessful, i.e. if a pupil makes the correct decision in doubles to intercept on the volley but puts the ball in the net, the fact that they made the correct ‘game decision’ should be credited.

The graph indicates approximately what marks players would get if they are successful at the 5 levels of difficulty, e.g. the ability to approach the net and volley is approximately 70 marks. Task well done over 70%, done badly under 70%.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA RELATED TO MARK

Skills and Understanding

- Under 25: Little idea or effort. Has failed to grasp basics.
- Under 70: Able to play most strokes but not always the correct use in a game situation. Consistent, mobile and balanced.
- Under 100: Good tactical use of all strokes.
- + 100: Excellent.

Remember not to mark harshly where a child’s style (i.e. interpretation of technique) is not of text-book standard. If a teacher is teaching tennis from an “understanding” perspective then the important criteria for assessment must be where a child hits the ball as opposed to how a child hits the ball - i.e. concentrate on tactical appreciation and their understanding of the game.

You should also mark positively on intentions when the outcome is unsuccessful, i.e. if a pupil makes the correct decision in doubles to intercept on the volley but puts the ball in the net, the fact that they made the correct ‘game decision’ should be credited.
THE GAME

Tennis can be played as an individual contest between two players or a team game between two pairs of players. Each match is composed of a series of points which form a game; a number of games that form a set; and finally a number of sets which form a match. Major men’s championships are played on a best of five sets basis;... virtually all ladies matches are the best of three set basis.

Equipment

Other than the court, the dimensions of which are laid down by the International Tennis Federation (ITF), all other equipment is elective, ie. the individual or school selects according to personal taste, style and budget. Whatever equipment is chosen it must be suited for the purpose. It must comply with safety standards and should enhance the players ability to perform in the game. It must, therefore, meet their individual needs. All equipment is produced by commercial companies and marketed and sold in a competitive environment. It is, therefore, very easy to be taken in by slick marketing and lured into buying equipment which is totally unsuited to the player’s needs. Unless you are absolutely confident in your own knowledge and understanding of rackets, balls, footwear and sports clothing – SEEK advice. Contact BSTA. (For address see end of module).

Whites

The tradition of predominantly white clothing is still the general rule at most clubs, but schools, sports and leisure clubs often permit play in other, suitable, garments irrespective of the colour.

Figure 3.2: The Scoring System

Points  Points: love – zero

Game

(Tie-break)

Set

Match

Tie-break – first player to 7 points or 2 points ahead after 6 all
Set – first player to 6 games or 2 games ahead after 5 all. Tie-breaker is played at 6 games all.

Example of match score Smith beats Jones 6-1, 6-7 (tie-break 8-10), 7-5.
UNIT 4
Physical Conditioning

Fitness – The way to better tennis

The 3 elements that combine to produce the most effective tennis player are summarised in a pie-chart (Figure 4.1).

To achieve his/her full potential a player needs to be aware of all three requirements. The complete player needs all three because:

• Without skill they cannot play.
• Without fitness they cannot last or cover the court to reach all the opponent’s shots.
• Without mental toughness they cannot win.

It was not so long ago that most professional players prepared for tournaments only by playing tennis. Most now realise that physical fitness and eating a well-balanced diet can enable them to reach their full potential. Today, this is reflected throughout the game at county, regional and national training of the most promising juniors, where physical and mental training programmes play an important part in their tennis education. Likewise, the school team should also be working on their mental and physical preparation, as well as hitting tennis balls!

CLEARLY, CONDITIONING CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WINNING AND LOSING.

Physical conditioning and the tennis player

Be Tennis Specific! As with all other sports, fitness for tennis should be specific to the nature of the game, a tennis player’s fitness or training programme will be radically different to that of a cross-country runner. (Tennis specific components – see Figure 4.3.)

Why? Because tennis requires short explosive bursts of speed with many changes of direction. The average length of a rally in school team tennis is approximately 10 seconds but all rallies are usually followed by a 25 second recovery period between points. On the other hand cross-country competitors run at a relatively slow constant speed over a length of time with no rest periods. Significant changes of direction are of course not required.

Study the following match statistics (Fig 4.2)

**Match: Ivan Lendl V. Mats Wilander**

U.S. Open Final 1988

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Court Surface</th>
<th>Dec-0-turf</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Length of Match</td>
<td>4 hours, 54 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Length of Points</td>
<td>12 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Rest Between Points</td>
<td>28.3 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Rest Between First Serve</td>
<td>12 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Changeover Time</td>
<td>1 minute, 28 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work to Rest Ratio (minutes)</td>
<td>1:2.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Match Result: Wilander bt Lendl 6-4, 4-6, 6-3, 5-7, 6-4

**Time Points Analysis**

60% of points lasted for less than 10 seconds
30% of points lasted between 10-20 seconds
10% of points lasted longer than 20 seconds

**The question all tennis players must ask themselves is, does their fitness training programme reflect the nature of the game?** For example, do they have the endurance qualities to last through a long match? Do they have the speed, power and agility to get to drop shots? Can they repeat twelve second bursts of activity with rest periods over a 2 hour time span?

Fitness components for the complete tennis player

The training of tennis specific components are illustrated below.
Fitness Components For The Complete Tennis Player

**COMPONENT** | **GAME REQUIREMENTS** | **TRAINING TIPS** | **TRAINING PHASE**
---|---|---|---
Muscular endurance | Repeated use of arm and shoulder muscles in a long service game. | Circuit training, resistance work using light weights and high reps. | Preparation and pre-competition
Muscular strength | Used when punching the ball in serve, volley or smash. | Resistance work with higher weights and lower reps. | Preparation and pre-competition
Flexibility | Twisting, turning, bending to retrieve and hit difficult balls. | A daily or twice daily routine of flexibility work. Beware: Do not stretch a cold body. Do not force it and Do not bounce. | Daily throughout the year
Cardiovascular endurance (stamina) | Players need to repeat anaerobic bursts over the duration of the match. | Running Swimming Cycling | Preparation
Agility – ability to start/stop change direction efficiently | Must be very agile to adjust and respond to the run of play eg. in mens’ tennis in a 5.2 second rally there are an average of 4 changes of direction. | Short shuttles Court drills Skipping | Pre-competition, and may be used in pre-court match warm-up
Speed – very largely genetic – you are born with it. But, practice “grooves in” responses and makes them smooth. | Speed of decision making in shot selection. Speed reaction to fast moving balls. Speed of response. Speed of movement around the court. | Shuttles and short sprint work particularly on court and carrying racket. | Pre-competition and competition Keep up your sharpness
Balance | Required to execute shots – to effect changes of direction – to add to timing and accuracy of stroke. | Build it into agility work Work on it in skill training Work on it in MENTAL training | Build it into training throughout the year. There is a high mental component in balance and it can be part of both mental and physical training.

**Periodization – Planning Ahead with Purpose**

Periodization is the planning of an athlete’s programme of training and competition over a given period. Professional players have to carefully plan their training and the number of tournaments they play. They could easily find themselves over-tired – by too much play, or, badly prepared – by insufficient or unspecific training. Figure 4.4 below gives a sample 12 weeks example of periodization for the school team!

**Figure 4.4: 12 Week Programme. School team preparation for British Schools Competitions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weeks</th>
<th>Type of Training</th>
<th>Weeks</th>
<th>Type of Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 – 6, squad works on:</td>
<td>(a) aerobic training, 4 or 5 days (b) anaerobic training, 1 day a week (c) strength training (according to age) (d) technique and mental training (e) flexibility (f) some match play</td>
<td>10 – 12, squad works on:</td>
<td>(a) anaerobic training specific to tennis 2 days a week (b) match play (c) flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 10, squad works on:</td>
<td>(a) aerobic training, 2 or 3 days a week reducing as competition nears (b) anaerobic training specific to tennis 2 or 3 days a week (c) strength training (reducing as competition nears) (d) technique, mental training, match play (eg. Nestle Ladder) (e) flexibility</td>
<td>During competitive phase:</td>
<td>(a) limited anaerobic training specific to tennis (b) flexibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TRAINING AND THE TENNIS PLAYER

Major Considerations (see Figure 4.5)

To meet the demands of playing tennis, players need to train to reach a good level of fitness. A player’s goal should be to become a TENNIS ATHLETE rather than just an ordinary player. No matter the ability of a player, his/her standard of play should improve as he/she becomes fitter.

THE NEED FOR PERIODIZATION

One training programme of 12 weeks duration is not enough for the serious player. They must plan for the whole year, changing type, amount, rate of work according to their needs at that time. This is called periodization and the diagram below illustrates a top player’s year. (Figure 4.6)

Conclusion

As the year progresses the player will experience different levels of fitness relative to the training and competition load. It is important to keep checking this. Fitness should be monitored by repeating a set of tests at three month intervals. Keep a record of any results as a measure of improvement or fall off. Keep a training diary or log and record all relevant data.

Periodization is the planning of an athlete’s training schedule designed for him/her to reach peak performance levels at certain times – eg. in this case 4 times a year.

Peak Performance is a phase in training when performance is brought to maximum levels. In international tennis this may be possible only 4 or 5 times a year.

It Revolves around the F.I.T.T. Principle

F = Frequency
I = Intensity
T = Time (or duration)
T = Type

Periodization Reduces Risk of Poor Performance, burn out, staleness, fatigue, over-use and injury.

The Four Phases of Periodization

1. Preparation – When an athlete develops, eg. works on technique, aerobic and anaerobic fitness.
2. Pre-competitive – When an athlete is building to a tennis specific situation – a match e.g. Works on playing points, mental preparation, anaerobic fitness.
3. Competitive – Peak performance e.g. in this case for the 4 Grand Slam Tournaments.
4. Transition – Active rest e.g. holiday!
UNIT 5
Mental Preparation

Playing good tennis is a combination of three different skills:

• Physical skills such as timing, balance and fitness.
• Technical skills such as groundstrokes, serving and volleying.
• Mental skills such as concentration, coping with worry and anxiety, and visualisation.

Usually people describe mental skills in terms of mental toughness. Successful players like Boris Becker, Ivan Lendl, Steffi Graf and Monica Seles are often described as mentally tough. This often means they respond to pressure by playing some of their best tennis. However, mental toughness is the result of many different mental skills – the ability to concentrate under pressure and to cope with worry and anxiety are just some of the ingredients of mental toughness.

CONCENTRATION AND ATTENTION

Concentration is the act of focusing attention. It means keeping your mind here and now.

It is possible to focus attention internally – on thoughts and feelings and externally – on things happening in the world around. Concentration also determines whether attention is broad, i.e. take in the wider picture of what is happening around us, or narrow, i.e. we concentrate on just one part of the picture. Therefore, attention has both direction and width.

Attentional Style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>USE IN TENNIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broad-Internal</td>
<td>Use in pre-event tactical planning and post-event analysis of results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrow-Internal</td>
<td>Focus of thoughts – feelings – emotions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrow-External</td>
<td>Focus on ball – react to a situation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANXIETY

Anxiety is caused by anticipation of a threatening event – fear of failure, of looking bad, or of not living up to expectations may all cause a player to feel anxious. The sensations of anxiety include:

• Rapid heart rate
• Feeling sick
• Stomach ache
• Irritability
• Loss of appetite
• Tiredness
• Muscular tension

Research using Olympic athletes has shown that although all the performers were anxious before competing, the more successful athletes were able to “use” their anxiety to assist performance.

Some players prepare themselves for a major tournament, and begin to use anxiety constructively, by using a mental skill called stress inoculation. The idea behind this technique is that a player is “injected” or gradually exposed to the threat of playing in the tournament under conditions where he or she feels in total control. The feelings of anxiety gradually wane as the player becomes used to the idea of competing in the forthcoming matches.

In order to control anxiety, focus attention on relevant cues and maintain concentration the player must train and learn the different techniques which have been developed to help them do this.
Developing a Ritual
Tennis is a sport where the activity of playing is “interrupted”. Between points and between games there are constant challenges to your skills of concentration. Many top players develop a ritual to help focus their attention. A ritual is a set-routine which a player follows before re-commencing play.

Relaxation
The aim of relaxation is to decrease tension in the muscles of the body. Relaxation does not mean falling asleep. It is important to feel some tension on court. However, if the muscles of the body are either too relaxed or too tense this will affect performance.

Breath Control
We breathe differently when anxious or nervous than when we are calm and confident. Fear and tension causes shallow, jerky breathing. The more relaxed and calm you feel the easier it is to breathe in a deep, rhythmic manner. Breathing out is one of the body’s natural ways of relaxing. By exhaling in a controlled, continuous manner it is more likely that a player can hit a controlled stroke. The goal is to breathe in rhythm with the ball – in the ball approaches, out as it goes away.

Visualisation
Visualisation is the ability to create an imaginary picture in your mind. Visualisation is thinking in pictures. Sometimes the image players produce is so clear their heart and muscles behave in the same way as they would if the situation were real.

Learning mental skills is just like learning tennis skills. They need guidance and practice. Not all of them will work for everyone. Experiment to find the one(s) which work for you and build them into your training schedule.
UNIT 6
Injuries in Tennis

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE!
There are four main causes of injuries in tennis.

(i) Improper facilities and equipment
   - Racket – too heavy?
   - Wrong grip size?
   - Shoes – poor fit?
   - Court surface?

(ii) Improper Teaching
Poor technique will lead to injuries, such as tennis elbow and muscle strains.

(iii) Poor Fitness
Players should get fit for tennis not play tennis to get fit! A good level of fitness will considerably reduce the chance of injury. At the very least all players should ensure they stretch before and after a playing or training session.

(iv) Striving For Excellence
No matter the level of fitness there will be times when injuries occur. Even top players such as Ivan Lendl and Steffi Graf will push themselves over their limits during play and incur muscle strains and tears for example.

The risk of injury will be limited if players:
A – Use good facilities and correct equipment
B – Develop good technique
C – Get fit for tennis

First Aid
Accidents will happen and in sport there is a greater likelihood of accidents and injuries occurring. It is, therefore, very important that teachers and players know how to treat simple injuries and understand how to cope with any severe injuries.

NB. Any serious injury must receive immediate medical treatment.

TEACHERS SHOULD ONLY ACT WITHIN THE HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES LAID DOWN BY THEIR SCHOOL, LEA OR THE LTA.
UNIT 7
The History of Tennis

The modern game of tennis is little over 100 years old, although the forerunner of the game, Real or Royal Tennis has a much longer history.

The Development of the Game
February 1875 The All England Croquet Club set aside an area of ground specifically for tennis. In the same year a code of rules was drawn up by the M.C.C. who were then the governing body for Real Tennis and Racquets.

1877 The name of the All England Croquet Club was changed to include tennis and became the All England Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club (Wimbledon).

1877 The first official tournament was held at Wimbledon and the game expanded rapidly both in England and America.

1888 The Lawn Tennis Association was founded.

1890 The first Davis Cup competition took place.

By 1890 Tennis was being played in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, USSR, South Africa, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

By 1913 The International Lawn Tennis Federation was founded. (Now the word ‘Lawn’ has been dropped from the title.)

Since 1913 the game has grown throughout the world and is now played by 50 million people in 150 countries.

The Rise of Professionalism
It was as late as 1968 before players were permitted under the rules to earn a living from playing tennis, ie. the game became Open. Prior to this time players had been paid travel expenses, but no fees. Some players did turn professional, but this disbarred them from playing in official tournaments and they made their money from exhibitions and coaching. In 1968 the ITF, under pressure from the LTA abolished the distinction between amateur and professional and the first open tournament was held at Bournemouth. The winners were Rod Laver and Billie Jean King and the total prize money was £26,150. By comparison the prize money at Wimbledon in 1995 was £6,025,550.
UNIT 8
The Structure of the Sport

The Global Position of the LTA
As with any National Governing Body of Sport (NGBS) the LTA is part of a
global sport network, having links both with other National Tennis
Associations and sports agencies in general. See Figure 8.1.

The National Position of the LTA
Within the United Kingdom the LTA works with and through the major
sports organizations, see Figure 8.2.

The Structure of the LTA
The LTA is divided into operating divisions each one of which is headed
by an Executive who manages professional staff who work in the area
concerned, and report to the appropriate committee, see (Figure 8.3). In
addition to this the LTA Trust (see Figure 8.4) which along with the British
Schools Lawn Tennis Association (BSLTA) (see Figure 8.5) has young
players as a specific concern.

Areas of Responsibility
As the NGB, the LTA has many roles concerned with management,
administration, promotion and development of tennis in England. Below
are three examples of its work:

1) Competitions
The LTA organises competitions for international and national level
for both teams and individuals.

International
- The Davis Cup (Mens' teams)
- The Federation Cup (Womens’ teams)
- The Maureen Connolly Cup (U.S. vs U.K. – U21
  women)

National
- The National Championships – held each Autumn
- The Junior National Championships – held during
  the Summer.

County
- Competition is organised at both senior and junior
  level. Team events for Counties include:
  - (1) Winter Indoor Championships
  - (2) County Week – held in July

Competitions specifically for Juniors are best explained in diagrammatic
form (see Figure 8.6) and extend from Short Tennis to International level.

Figure 8.1
The Global Political Structure of Tennis
A Simplified Overview

Governing Body in Each Country
e.g: The Lawn Tennis Association – Great Britain
Federation Française de Tennis – France
United States Tennis Association – USA

Liaising with

Related Organisations in Each Country
e.g: in Great Britain –
- The International Olympic Committee (IOC)
- The British Olympic Association (BOA)
- The Sports Council

International Tennis Federation (ITF)
- Grand Slam Tournaments
- International Competitions
e.g: Davis Cup
  Federation Cup
  Olympic Games

Women’s International Tournaments
administered by the Women’s Tennis
Association (WTA)

Men’s International Tournaments
administered by the Association of
Tennis Professionals (ATP)
The LTA and BTF have a network of links between other tennis agencies and the major sport agencies nationally and worldwide.

Figure 8.2
LTA Links Nationally

Figure 8.3
The Structure of the LTA

Figure 8.4
British Tennis Foundation

Figure 8.5
The Structure of BSTA
2) The Indoor Tennis Initiative (ITI)

In 1986 the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, the LTA and the Sports Council agreed a five year indoor tennis facility development programme. Each body paying £500,000 per annum to be allocated as grant and to Local Authorities who wish to develop indoor facilities under the ITI.

To date, the ITI programme has opened 38 centres across Great Britain. Facilities range from temporary airhalls operating for six months of the year to extensive multi-sport facilities covering major conurbations such as Birmingham, Glasgow, Liverpool and London.

The ITI has achieved a good geographical spread of facilities encouraging tennis development in England, Scotland and Wales.

By the end of 1995 it is expected that the ITI programme will have created over 200 indoor pay + play courts.

Each centre runs a comprehensive tennis development programme. For more details contact the Facilities or Development Departments of the LTA.

3) Ratings

ANYONE, even a beginner can apply for a Rating. It is simply a means by which you can measure your standard and ensure you get maximum enjoyment from your game by playing against players of a similar LEVEL OF PLAY.

With a Rating you can enter any of the 1000 LTA tournaments for all levels of player, held around Britain throughout the year. You will find a full list in “Your Guide to Events and Tournaments” which is published annually by the LTA.

For further details contact: The Ratings Department, LTA.
UNIT 9
Current Issues

A. DRUG ABUSE IN TENNIS

To date there has not been a positive drug test recorded against a tennis player in competition. This does not mean that tennis is free from drug abuse. As in any other sport there are bound to be abusers.

Drug abuse in sport is defined as:

... the misuse of drugs to enhance performance ...

Tennis complies with Rule 29 of the 1987 Olympic Charter, and in addition has imposed its own legislation in Rule 30. Both these rules unequivocally ban the use of drugs to improve sport performance.

Reasons for drug abuse in Tennis

Tennis is very big business, the successful player is capable of earning large amounts of money both from playing and marketing.

Improved = Competitive = Financial = TEMPTATION
Performance = Success = Gain

How can drugs enhance performance in tennis?

Unlike the weight lifter who looks for absolute strength and the sprinter who wants absolute power, any games player always needs to combine pure physical qualities with judgement, skill and emotional control. However, a tennis player could benefit from drug use in the following ways:

• Drugs decrease recovery time meaning a player can train and play harder and longer with minimum time “lost” in having to rest.
• Decrease reaction time, a critical factor in decision making in fast ball games.
• Calm anxiety, relieve stress, relax tension.
• Block pain and therefore allows the player to play through injury.

All of the above factors would help a tennis player to maintain and improve performance.

The table below gives some examples of drugs which might benefit a tennis player, plus some limitations their use might impose.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drug Type</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Deficit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stimulants</td>
<td>Caffeine</td>
<td>Increased alertness</td>
<td>Increased heart rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narotics</td>
<td>Amphetamine</td>
<td>Reduced fatigue</td>
<td>Raised blood pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>Powerful pain killer</td>
<td>Increased irritability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anabolic Steroids</td>
<td>Stanazolol</td>
<td>Stimulates muscle growth</td>
<td>Reduces the warning effect of pain and can lead to permanent injury if player continuously overrides pain signals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Testosterone</td>
<td>Increases competitiveness.</td>
<td>Liver damage. Over aggressive behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Long term effects on sexual function.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The question of drugs in sport is contentious, and is one which has received much media, medical and political coverage. A list of useful references are to be found at the end of this module.
B. TENNIS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Increasing numbers of people with physical and learning disabilities are participating in sport. This is as a result of a change in society's attitude towards disabled people, and as a consequence the presentation of increased opportunities.

The message is that sport is truly for all, and that those with disabilities do not just spectate – they participate.

The British Tennis Foundation has taken a very positive approach in providing support for such participants including a competitive structure. This is based on three categories:

* Players who are ambulant – e.g. deaf
* Players using a wheelchair
* Players with learning disabilities

In addition to competition, coaching is available and LTA coaches have attended a Disabled Awareness Course for tennis coaches who wish to coach people with disabilities.

There are also competitive schemes for each category. For example, The British Deaf Sport Council (BDSC) and Friends of the Young Deaf (FYD) both organise tournaments and events up to international level, and in 1991 the Dresse and Maere Cups (Davis and Federation Cups for Deaf) was held in England. Wheelchair tennis is booming and the British Open has taken place in Nottingham. Tennis is also now included in the Special Olympics. This is an aspect of the LTA Trust’s work which is expanding through recreational play, integration and to competitive international level.

For further information please contact:

The Disabilities Co-ordinator
The British Tennis Foundation
The Queen’s Club
West Kensington
London
W14 9EG

C. THE MEDIA AND TENNIS

The Importance of the Media in Tennis

If there was no sport, sportswriters and broadcasters would not exist. And were it not for public interest, professional sport would disappear.

More people are involved in sport through the press and broadcasting than in any other way. It follows therefore that the media – press, T.V. and radio are vital to the well-being and promotion of any sport, and tennis is no exception.

For two weeks every year in late June and early July media sport is dominated by the Wimbledon Championships. Live television and radio coverage of tennis abounds and the newspapers are filled with reports, results, pictures and stories of the world’s top tournament. Consequently, the U.K’s 34,000 tennis courts become fully utilised, potential new sponsors show an avid interest in the sport and all types of commercial enterprises associated with tennis report a boom in business.

Yet less than a week after the event interest begins to fade and once again tennis has to compete with the other major sports, football, cricket, rugby and horse racing, for the nation’s attention.

This attention is vital for four particular interest groups.

(1) The Players – The players livelihood depends on public interest generated by the media. Without spectators or sponsors tournaments cannot run.

(2) The Sponsor – The Sponsor supports an event largely because of the exposure the company receives through the media, with television being the most sought after and powerful medium.
3. The Promoter – The promoter has to ensure that the media cover an event or activity to make it attractive to spectators, in the case of a tournament, and provide significant exposure for the sponsor.

4. The LTA – The LTA’s Press and PR office aims to ensure that British players and all LTA events and activities are sufficiently publicised to ensure maximum public interest and exposure for each sponsor. This will lead to increases in:
   a. Public awareness
   b. Participation
   c. Sponsorship

The importance of the media to tennis should not be underestimated. For example:
• Top players are fined if they fail to attend press conferences after their match.
• Sponsors will not contribute if they cannot be guaranteed media exposure.

2. The Demands of Television Coverage on Tennis
Power, agility, strength, speed, exciting personalities, spectacular play – these are some of the characteristics that make tennis such an attractive television sport.

Over the years the demands of television have brought about radical changes to the sport. For example, the introduction of tie-breaks to limit the length of matches and slot them more easily into television schedules.

Television Coverage has had Adverse Effects on the Sport:

1. Player Discipline
Many people have observed offensive behaviour by some of the top players on television. It can be argued that these aggressive outbursts are only tolerated because of the pressures from television and sponsors. It would be very difficult for a tournament referee to disqualify a top name at the risk of jeopardising a sponsorship deal and allow a lesser player to appear on television at a peak time.

2. Scheduling of Matches
Wimbledon allows players (weather permitting) a day’s rest between the singles semi-final and final matches. Due to the demand of the television schedules the U.S. Open semi-finals are played the day before the final. In 1986 Miloslav Mecir played a five set marathon semi-final against Boris Becker late into the evening. Mecir finished exhausted and it was no wonder that with only a few hours recovery time he could master only 6 games in 3 sets against Ivan Lendl in the final.

Nevertheless media, and in particular television is as important to tennis as any other sport and for this reason the LTA will continue to foster and develop positive links with the media.

D. SPONSORSHIP IN TENNIS

1. Definition
Sponsorship in sport is the support of a sport, sports event, sports organisation or competitor by an outside body or person for the mutual benefit of both parties.

2. Why Sponsorship is Vital for Tennis
In international events, it is estimated that $300,000 is required to stage a $150,000 tournament. The $150,000 only refers to the total prize money available. Prize money is always paid to players in US dollars worldwide (see table below), with the exception of Wimbledon.

3. Sponsorship in Great Britain
In British tennis sponsors are sought by the LTA at all levels of the game in an effort to introduce the game to players of all ages, with particular emphasis on young players. Examples of the variety of sponsored activities and events can be found in table 9.2.

4. Endorsement of Products
It is in the top ranks of professional tennis where individual endorsement contracts enable many of the top players to earn double or even treble their on-court earnings.

Figures 9.3 and 9.4 illustrate the “money-pulling power” of the top tennis stars. Imagine earning $100,000 a year simply for wearing a shoulder patch on your tennis shirt!

5. The Dangers of Sponsorship
There is a danger that in the race for prize money and endorsement contracts, standards of behaviour and sportsmanship will deteriorate. Indeed, some top players are infamous for their on-court demeanour.

An increasing problem is also the consideration of whether a sport should accept sponsorship from products that are regarded in many quarters as anti-social (eg. tobacco, alcohol).

---

| PRIZE MONEY $150,000 |
| PERSONNEL $37,000 |
| COURTS AND STADIUM RENTAL $33,000 |
| CATERING $13,000 |
| ADVERTISING $12,000 |
| ACCOMMODATION $7,000 |
| HOSPITALITY $6,000 |
| SUNDRIES $4,000 |
| PRINTING $1,400 |
| EQUIPMENT $1,400 |
| FEES $1,000 |

Figure 9.1: The distribution of money required to stage a $150,000 tournament.
### Sponsorship in Tennis

**Figure 9.2: Sponsorship Considerations (Great Britain)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims of the sponsor</th>
<th>Example of sponsors and types of event</th>
<th>Facts about British tennis to be considered by the sponsor</th>
<th>Why select tennis sponsorship?</th>
<th>Promoting the sponsors name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| In return for sponsoring an event or activity, a sponsor might be looking to promote the company’s: | • Schools Tennis Team Competitions  
• National Schools Championships  
• Nestlé Tennis Schools Ladder Competition  
• Yoplant Tennis Badge Award Scheme | • Bright, clean and exciting image  
• Nearly 3 million UK participants  
• Tennis is a major TV sport. 176 hours of tennis on TV in 1988†  
• TV viewers. Of adults watching sport on TV 30.5% watch tennis. This is higher than both golf and cricket; † Also 52% of adults who watch tennis are ABC1*†  
• There are 2491 affiliated tennis clubs in the UK with approx. 150,000 senior and 90,000 junior members†  
• There are over 34,000 tennis courts in the UK†  
• Tennis is played by people of virtually all ages | • Tennis is a modern expanding sport with a good image and a broad appeal  
• There are sponsorship opportunities to cater to a wide range of marketing and promotional aims  
• Tennis is played by people of all ages with 60% having ABC1 incomes*  
• Tennis has a full time core of national journalists  
• There is great interest in the discovery of a British Wimbledon Champion  
• Tennis has a strong British tradition, being invented in England and with Wimbledon the home of the World’s leading Tournament | • Name association with event/activity eg: LTA/ Yoplant Badge Award scheme  
• Advertising boards at court side  
• Advertising on posters, programmes, players’ and officials’ clothing  
• TV and Newspaper coverage  
• Advertisements and editorial coverage in tennis and sports magazines |

#### Considerations by the sponsor: (1)

If a sponsor is to spend a large sum of money supporting an event they will need to consider the following questions:

- What level of interest will a sponsorship opportunity generate among the Media? Will the event generate TV coverage for example?
- How will it appeal among the defined target markets? Will potential customers see the company’s involvement?
- How cost effective is it? etc. etc.

---

**Key**

# Sportscan Analysis † BRMB Statistic

* ABC1 – A social classification used by researchers; it describes people with a higher than average income – usually the sponsor’s target group

(1) “Sponsorship: An Effective Communications Medium?” Ken Parker, Derek Etherington; Market Research Society 1989 Conference Papers (5) Sponsorship Effectiveness.
In Grand Slam events, particularly the French and US Opens, television coverage is dominated by men’s matches.

Where both sexes are competing in an event such as Wimbledon, space given over to the reporting of male matches and issues far outweighs space given to females.

Whilst all the top women players earn large sums from endorsing commercial products, it is often the most physically attractive women, rather than the highest ranked, that attract most finance.

Physical differences between men and women can affect sporting performances. Although these physical differences stop women competing effectively against men (except in mixed doubles) it does not prevent them from competing against each other. The court size and net height remain the same for men and women. The only difference is the tactical nature of the game, where rallies are often longer with a reliance more on placement of the ball in the court, rather than the power used by so many of the top men players.

Whilst women’s participation in sport has increased in recent years, the proportion of women in coaching and other leadership roles has declined. It is vital that tennis and all other sports encourage the development of more women coaches because

1. Sport for all must include a significant input from women.
2. Women coaches are needed as role models for young women and girls who are, or might become, involved in sport.
3. Women coaches are more likely to have empathy with sportswomen and understand the particular problems and issues that affect girls’ and women’s involvement.

Tennis is a popular sport amongst both men and women. In Great Britain, The Lawn Tennis Association is the Governing Body for both men’s and women’s tennis. There are almost 2500 affiliated clubs and almost all have female and male members with teams for both sexes. There are also mixed matches and mixed doubles which are particularly popular events not just in the club and park, but also at Wimbledon.

At the highest levels of the sport, women have won the battle for equal pay. They now have their own circuit with no shortage of lucrative sponsorship to make players such as Martina Navratilova and Steffi Graf very rich indeed. However, in other areas things are not quite so equal.
UNIT 10
LTA Award Schemes

A. The LTA training of coaches scheme

There are three grades of LTA Coaches – each one qualifying for membership of the Professional Tennis Coaches Association (PTCA).

LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION TRAINING OF COACHES SCHEME

LTA Performance Coach
(Award Course = 27 days)
Qualified to coach all players up to junior and senior national standard

LTA Club Coach
(Award Course = 112 hrs)
Qualified to coach all players up to junior county and adult club team standard

LTA Development Coach
(Award Course = 112 hrs)
Qualified to coach all players of any age from beginner to improver standard

LTA Starter Tennis Course
Trained to assist with beginners

LTA Tennis Teacher
(Course = 7 hrs)
In-service training specifically for school teachers and student teachers

Figure 10.1 shows the overall structure of tennis coaching in the U.K. The Training of Coaches Scheme incorporates coaching process, planning, technique, tactics, physical and mental preparation and many other issues vital to the development of quality coaching including business skills.

The growth of tennis, and the more professional approach to the training of coaches is creating more opportunities for full-time careers in coaching.

The Career Structure – outlined in Figure 10.1 – shows the level of qualification available.

Coaches

Employment opportunities exist:
• Within the 2500 LTA affiliated clubs
• Within ITI’s and commercial centres
• Within Local Authorities in schools, parks and leisure centres
• As coach to a county programme including both development and performance
• As tutors training other coaches

Tennis Development Officers

Are employed by: Local Authorities
The Indoor Tennis Initiative (ITI)
County Tennis Associations

Tennis in Higher Education

For the exceptionally talented there are tennis scholarships available at colleges in the United States and at universities in the UK.

To find out more send a large S.A.E. to: LTA, Queens Club, West Kensington, London. W14 9EG.
UNIT 11
The Game of Tennis

The aim: to win the point by getting the ball over the net once more than your opponent.

The means: the successful application of the basic hitting types:
- The groundstrokes
- The volley
- The serve and smash

The method: there are three key points to remember with regard to all strokes: WHEN WHERE HOW

STROKE ANALYSIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STROKE/GRIp</th>
<th>WHEN</th>
<th>WHERE</th>
<th>HOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Groundstrokes</td>
<td>Between top of bounce and</td>
<td>Comfortable distance from the body.</td>
<td>Use the appropriate SWING to achieve the distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>second bounce.</td>
<td>Height- between the knee and the</td>
<td>desired.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>waist. Position – slightly ahead</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>of body.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volley</td>
<td>As high above the net as possible.</td>
<td>Comfortable distance from the body.</td>
<td>Punch at the ball – use open racket face.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In front of the leading foot.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve</td>
<td>At the coincidence of ball</td>
<td>The ball is in reach of a full arm</td>
<td>Throw the racket at the ball.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>placement and full arm racket</td>
<td>racket extension above the head</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>extension.</td>
<td>and slightly forward (except in the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>case of the top spin serve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>variation).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DEVELOPING YOUR GAME

When you can apply the basic skills and tactics try to develop your game by applying:
- Disguise – e.g. groundstroke into a lob.
- Variety – e.g. dropshot.

Disguise may be achieved by hitting with SPIN.

There are three types of spin: Topspin Slice Slicespin/Side spin

They all have the same components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>SPIN OF BALL</th>
<th>FLIGHT</th>
<th>BOUNCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top Spin</td>
<td>Forward</td>
<td>High with a steep fall</td>
<td>Kicks up high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slice</td>
<td>Backward</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low – ball checks before moving forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidespin</td>
<td>Sideways and forward</td>
<td>Low with swerve</td>
<td>Low as ball moves sideways</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spin can be used with both Groundstrokes and Service.
**GROUNDSTROKES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF SPIN</th>
<th>PLACEMENT OF RACKET HEAD</th>
<th>USE OF STRINGS/RACKET FACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top Spin</td>
<td>Starts – below ball</td>
<td>1) Brought up the back and over the top of the ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finishes – high in front of the body</td>
<td>2) Close to ground throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slice</td>
<td>Starts – above ball</td>
<td>Move down under the ball and are open throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finishes – low in front of the body</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Side Spin</td>
<td>The racket head moves across the back of the ball, causing it to swerve as it travels</td>
<td>Move down and across the ball</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SERVICE**

In service spin is usually applied on the second serve in an attempt to get the ball in, while keeping some power.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF SPIN</th>
<th>PLACEMENT OF RACKET HEAD</th>
<th>USE OF STRINGS/RACKET FACE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slice</td>
<td>Throw the racket head round the outside of the ball.</td>
<td>Racket face strikes across the right hand face of the ball (for right hander).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Spin</td>
<td>Throw the racket head from below the height of the ball, and up and out towards the side. Use a vigorous action.</td>
<td>This serve requires a vigorous action with the strings brushing up on the ball.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Basic Tactics**

The understanding and application and appropriate tactics is vital if you are to achieve success at tennis. One important point is the KISS principle, ie. Keep It Simple, Stupid! Do not complicate your approach to the game, and do not forget that the tennis “greats” use the same tactics as you, the only difference is one of quality. Work hard to make your game a quality game.

**THE BASIC TACTICS OF TENNIS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keep the ball in play and sustain rally.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Force an error from your opponent. They may be inconsistent, they may tire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make opponent run by using width – height – length.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain positional advantage in Serve/Receive Baseline rally Coming to net (volley) Ready position/alertness Recovery</td>
<td>Create and sustain tactical advantage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outwitting your opponent</td>
<td>Create opening to play winner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Increased range of tactics**

- Play on your opponent(s) weaknesses
- Win your service game
- Get to the net in doubles
- Play in the correct court in doubles – analyse your teams strengths and weaknesses to decide which player plays in which court.
Playing different Players

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPONENT’S STRENGTHS</th>
<th>POSSIBLE COUNTERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Attacking Players</strong> may have</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strong serve</td>
<td>Return serve deep or low to incoming volleyer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good volleys</td>
<td>Topspin return to feet of incoming player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good return of serve</td>
<td>Maintain service variety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 Defensive Players</strong> may have</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good steady groundstrokes</td>
<td>Attack the net and volley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reliable service</td>
<td>Vary length, pace and angles of return</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Steady baseline play</td>
<td>Play drop shots and stop volleys to pull them to net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Topspin groundstrokes</td>
<td>Use slice to keep ball low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Two-handed backhand</td>
<td>Use width to expose lack of reach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Environmental Conditions** – Both court surface and weather will influence play, try not to let them become distractions. Learn to love the wind and the rain!

**Surfaces**
FAST – (Wood/Grass) – makes ball stay low – accelerates off surface
FAST COURTS SUIT ATTACKING PLAYERS
SLOW – (Shale/Hard Courts) make the ball – bounce high – play more slowly
SLOW COURTS SUIT BASELINE PLAYERS

**Weather**
Sun makes: • serving and smashing more difficult
  • the lob an effective shot to play
  • the ball lighter and travel faster

Wind makes: • sidespin an effective shot if wind is cross court
  • topspin if wind is with you
  • slice if wind is against you

Rain makes: • ball heavy and difficult to hit

**Remember** knowing this is not enough, you must put it into practice by playing and practising as frequently as possible.

**DO NOT FORGET**
Playing doubles is a team game. *Play as a team.*
Skills and tactics alone are meaningless – they must be used to play the game. Once you are into the game – move on to the next stage...
To improve your game you must add variety.

**Variety** – the greater your range of available strokes the more problems you will create for your opponent(s).
It is possible to *change* strokes, so that having shaped up to play one – you execute another.
Examples of Changes

GROUNDSTROKES – changed to LOB or DROP SHOT
VOLLEY – changed to DROP VOLLEY
SERVE – used as SMASH

Notes on Stroke Production

In a work of this size it is not possible to analyse each stroke in depth. The following notes are guidelines only.

The Lob – may be ATTACKING to lift the ball over the volleyer and push them back. DEFENSIVE – to create time to re-position.

The Drop Shot – has the intention of surprising an opponent who is playing a baseline game.

The Volley – the variation of the volley is the STOP VOLLEY – it also has the intention of surprise by dropping the ball very close to the net when the opponent is on the baseline or expecting a normal deep hit volley.

The Smash – is a variation on the serve. It may be used to “kill” or put away an opponent’s poor lob.

Final Thoughts

To develop your game further you may consider the following:

(1) Increasing the range of tactics used
(2) Playing against, and coping with different styles of play
(3) Playing, and coping with different weather conditions
(4) Increasing or maintaining your fitness

PLAYING IN TOURNAMENTS

There are different kinds of tournaments in modern tennis.

(1) Knock-out tournaments. Players are paired together and the winner of their match progresses to the next round whilst the loser takes no further part as he/she has been “knocked-out”.

In a knock-out tournament the competitors’ names are drawn at random. However, it is often felt desirable to ensure the best players do not meet until the later rounds, and so seeds are decided. To be certain that the draw will eventually produce semi-finalists and finalists, it is necessary to group players in a list of four or eight, or sixteen or thirty-two, etc. This way only be achieved by the use of BYES.

(2) Ratings Tournaments – nowadays players are given a rating (i.e. an indication of their current standard) which is regularly updated to take recent results into consideration. By organising a tournament so that players with a similar rating play each other it is possible to avoid very one-sided matches.

(3) Round Robin Tournaments – Players are placed into groups or “boxes” and a player will play a match against every other person in the box. Boxes usually comprise four players but there is no limitation on size. The player who has been most successful in the box is the winner and will proceed to the next stage, usually a knock-out event between the box winners.
THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The behaviour of players in a tournament is governed by the official LTA Code of Conduct. It is, however, difficult to impose the Code unless court officials are available (umpires, etc.). Under the Code, three penalties can be enforced.

(1) Warning
(2) Penalty point – the next point to be played is awarded to the offender’s opponent.
(3) Default – on the third offence, the match will be awarded to the offender’s opponent.

TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS

The officials most prominent in a high-level tournament are the referee, the umpires and the linesmen. There may also be a Tournament Director. However, in most lower level tournaments there are few if any umpires but there must be a referee. Players decide for themselves whether a ball is in or out. This is an important part of the tradition of tennis and there is seldom the slightest dispute.

(1) The Referee is the senior official at any tournament and has the final authority on the rules, regulations and on play.
(2) Where umpires are used, they will sit in the umpire’s chair, keep the score and legislate on all matters of fact (e.g. was the ball in or out?).
(3) Other umpires not in the chair will act as linesmen to help.
(4) Tournament Director – the major tournaments will have a Tournament Director who will negotiate the hire of courts and the entry of professional players.

Figure 11.2: Location of match officials and court dimensions
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For further information on any topic covered in this module contact:
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Queen’s Club
West Kensington
London W14 9EG
Telephone number: (020) 7381 7000