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EDITORIAL

Welcome to issue 81 of the ITF Coaching and Sport Science Review. During these troubling times, our foremost thoughts are with everyone who has been directly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and we send our condolences to those who have lost loved ones and those who are currently suffering. This issue is fully dedicated to share knowledge, insight and best practices related to the situation generated by the pandemic. Contributions have been received from all over the world and cover a wide range of topics such as education, promotion, marketing, legal, methodology, etc.

Since March we all have been living in uncertain and unprecedented times. This has had an impact on the overall tennis eco-system. During this period, the ITF, Tours and Grand Slams have provided financial and material assistance to players, member nations, officials and coaches which has been widely welcomed. Through this time that we have not been able to play tennis, the ITF has been in touch with our Members, the National Tennis Federations, keeping them updated on the issues and challenges we all face. Consulting with, and listening to all our stakeholders has been one of our primary focuses over the last two months so that we can fully understand the health and safety challenges we face as a sport.

The Return to Tennis is a very complex situation due to the various stages of Covid-19 around the world. We all face the challenge as we begin to prepare for the return to international events in August. The health and safety of all involved is our number one priority. It is critical for the sport of tennis that we return to the court but only if it is safe to do so. The ITF wants to once again thank the Member Nations for their continued direct feedback, which has enabled us to continue to work to restart tennis nationally, regionally and ultimately internationally, in a safe and mindful way and provide opportunity for players going forward. ITF will be producing Return to Tennis Guidance and Protocols which will provide you with a framework to move forward with tournaments.

The ITF Academy, the educational platform of the ITF, continues to be offered for free to all those interested. New interactive online courses have recently been added with 70 free courses currently available in English and a further 65 in Spanish and 40 in French. The Portuguese section has also been launched by offering 29 free courses. The courses cover a variety of subjects and are targeted not only to tennis coaches but also to parents, players, trainers, psychologists and fans. With more than 85,000 users and over 25,000 registered users, the top countries in registered users include India, Colombia, Argentina, Brazil and Great Britain.

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The video and article library of the ITF Academy contains more than 340 content pages, including videos, articles and scientific research papers, which have now also been made available for free on the ITF Academy.

The ITF Academy is an integral element of the “blended learning” methodology to be implemented in all ITF certification courses. All those who take part in any ITF coaching or education activity will have to be registered in the ITF Academy. Furthermore, the ITF Academy is an essential tool for continued professional development. Please click here to register for free now.

In addition to the courses and resources available on ITF Academy, the ITF ebooks app offers more than 150 publications in 13 languages. Many of these publications, such as the ITF Advanced Coaches Manual, are for free.

We are living in unprecedented times. The global uncertainty created by COVID-19 will continue to create a fluid and rapidly-changing environment that will impact multiple areas. Therefore, we all need to understand the main priority, which is creating a safe and appropriate environment for all players. It is also why we should remain flexible and adaptable, learning from our approach and listening to feedback from all stakeholders so that where modifications are needed, we can act.

This issue of ITF CSSR wishes to keep everyone updated on the issues and challenges during these times and the ways we are working to alleviate their concerns on return to tennis and playing opportunities. We would also like to encourage new submissions to the ITF CSSR, and full guidelines for acceptance and publication of articles can be found in the most recent issue page on the ITF Academy. Finally, we would like to thank all the authors for their contributions, as well as all of those who sent in proposals. We hope that you enjoy reading the 81st edition of the ITF Coaching and Sport Science Review.

The warrior within: Fortifying mental health in the COVID-19 pandemic

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ABSTRACT

There is growing evidence of the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of individuals throughout the world. Coaches are not immune from this risk as they continue to see their livelihoods affected with closures and restrictions. This paper examines what coaches can do to mitigate the mental health consequences of the COVID-19 crisis. A number of key strategies are put forward for coaches to consider in preparation of a 'new normal'.

Key words: COVID-19, mental, coach, health

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INTRODUCTION

"In the midst of chaos, there is also opportunity" (Sun Tsu).

2020 will long be remembered for the massive upheaval from the COVID-19 pandemic. Health, social and economic shocks of the pandemic continue to reverberate around the world with no immediate end in sight (World Health Organisation [WHO], 2020). As we try to comprehend the enormity of recent events, a striking feature about COVID-19 has been the speed and exponential nature of the pandemic that has crippled and enveloped world economies and communities (Hooper, 2020). The scale of the repercussions has been breath-taking and cautions us against believing that a reversion to 'what was' is possible.

Beyond the immediate physical health crisis, the upheaval caused by COVID-19 is having a profound effect on mental health (Holmes et al., 2020). Coaches are not immune from this psychological impact. It is therefore opportune to examine mental health as it relates to the COVID-19 crisis – what are the key issues and how might coaches best equip themselves to successfully transition to a 'new normal'?

For the purposes of this paper we adopt the definition of 'mental health' proposed by the WHO (2018) namely, "a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community". To highlight the critical importance of mental health, WHO contends that mental health is an integral and essential component of the broader concept of 'health', being "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being".

Effect of COVID-19 on mental health

Given the gravity of, and uncertainty surrounding, the COVID-19 pandemic it is natural for a range of intense negative emotions to exacerbate, such as fear and anxiety, anger, confusion and distress (Koh et al., 2020). These emotions are driven by a myriad of stressors (e.g., financial hardship; fear of infection, dying and losing family and loved ones; conflicting and negative reports about the virus; social isolation; loneliness) that were observed in previous viral outbreaks including SARS and MERS (Holmes et al., 2020; Koh et al., 2020; United Nations [UN], 2020).

The evidence to date from national surveys confirms widespread psychological distress in COVID-19 affected populations (UN, 2020). The concern here is that the adverse emotional responses to the pandemic are closely associated with depression, self-harm and suicide attempts across the lifespan (Holmes et al., 2020). In the short term, individuals may resort to negative ways of coping including use of drugs, alcohol and online gaming



(UN, 2020). In summary, COVID-19 is emotionally challenging for everyone, especially for individuals who are already at risk (e.g., those suffering from depression). Dealing with additional uncertainty, volatility, ambiguity, disruption and potential danger than previously can take a heavy toll.

Unique circumstances of COVID-19

To further appreciate the emotional responses to COVID-19 reported above, it may be helpful to reflect on the current gaps in scientific knowledge about the virus. Whilst much has been discovered about the virus since it was first reported in the media in January 2020, much remains unknown and needs to be understood to minimise the mystery, fear and uncertainty that fuel mental health issues for many.

Worries and uncertainties about a pandemic are common however COVID-19 is proving unique and extremely challenging. Calling for a collective global response, the New York Times (2020) recently identified what we do not yet know about the virus: how many people have been infected; the amount of time it takes to make you sick; why some people get so much sicker than others; the role of children in spreading the virus; when or where it started spreading and how long you will be immune after infection. At the same time as these questions challenge the scientific communities, so too does the global race for the development of a safe and effective vaccine.

What coaches can do to mitigate the mental health consequences of COVID-19

Coaches can take a pro-active approach to get to the other side of the COVID-19 crisis, equipped with enhanced or new capabilities to enjoy and embrace the 'new world' that undoubtedly will follow. To do so, coaches might consider adopting some of the

strategies that were recently reported to build, and strengthen, resilience (Young, 2014). In the prevailing pandemic, coaches may find these strategies helpful to effectively adapt to the adversity and disconcerting changes surrounding COVID-19.

In addition, coaches might consider the following strategies that address the stressors of mental health cited above. These strategies are adapted from Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) research on happiness and the COVID-19 literature from leading international organisations (e.g., UN, 2020; WHO, 2020). The key here is for coaches to select and adopt strategies that meet their individual needs and circumstances. Strategies for consideration include:

Commit to a meaningful purpose of your choice

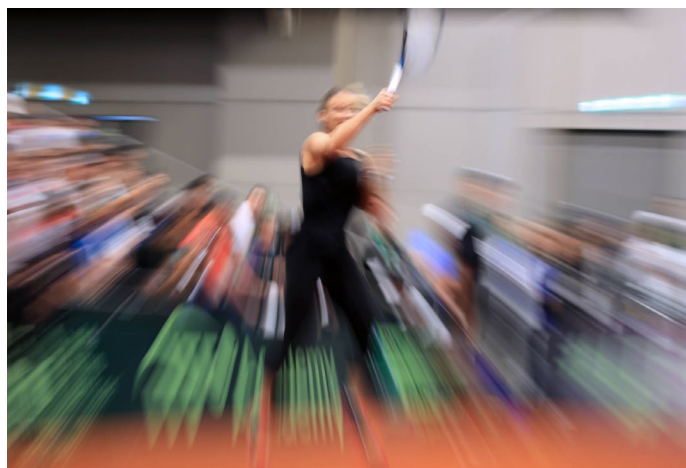
We have to know there is a desired destination to successfully weather the tumultuous buffering many of us have experienced/are experiencing. With a clear and meaningful purpose, we can get up again to face the next inevitable setback, challenge or difficulty, knowing there is a bright light on the other side of the pandemic. Having such a purpose gives us energy and resolve to keep going even when things look most daunting.

To start this process, you should create a realistic goal that is critically important to you; one which will motivate and excite you. Your goal might be related to your work, family or personal fitness and well-being. An example of a work-related goal might be to retain, and then grow, the number of children in your coaching sessions prior to the COVID-19 pandemic by 20% before the end of 2021.

With an overall destination guiding you, it is then easier to ensure that, in some way, each day is a step forward and progress is being made. Keep to a structure to your day and week and go one day at a time. For example, given the goal cited above, contacting players, identifying new players, researching, updating and creating safe and inclusive lesson plans and activities can all contribute to successfully reaching your final chosen destination.

Be flexible in the avalanche of change

The COVID-19 upheaval reminds us that we can never be quite sure what is around the corner so we need to be flexible, nimble and ready to adapt. Now is a good time to audit your coaching practices and procedures. Can they be readily adapted when circumstances call for it? Are you willing, and able, to embrace new ways of doing business? Flexibility is clearly essential to navigate the ebbs and flow of the on-going COVID-19 disruptions. So, take your time to pause, reflect, deliberate, consider and evaluate possibilities and then choose wisely. Know you may need to follow this process often given the ever-changing events of this year.



Prioritise fitness, Fun activities and social connections

If you are going to reach your destination (as described above) you need to be in peak mental and physical condition. A good starting point is to acknowledge the COVID-19 crisis for what it is (e.g., alarming) and it is normal to feel anxious and stressed. Remind yourself that, rather than really being 'isolated', we are all in this together! The crisis is temporary and solutions will be found.

In the meantime, you can take good care of yourself, ensuring that you engage in pleasurable activities (e.g., painting, cooking) in your free-time and allow your brain to disconnect and recharge. Go for a daily walk or run. Find time to reconnect with nature observing the trees, weather or clouds for example as this can have considerable restorative benefits. Complementing an exercise regime, attend to your eating, drinking and sleep. Now is the perfect time to pamper yourself with a new or revised fun fitness/activity regime.

Social connections are still important, and perhaps more so, in times of physical distancing and isolation at home. Staying in touch is relatively easy to do through phone calls, text messages, video chat and social media. Keep checking in with friends, family, other coaches and support persons. Staying connected will help keep your spirits up, as will knowing you may be supporting others who might be struggling.

Take control of personal hygiene to best protect you and others

It is useless to worry about things you cannot change. What you can, and should, control is protecting yourself and others from the virus as best you can. This involves adopting personal protective practices of hand-washing, not touching the T-zone of the face and social or physical distancing. This definitely requires mindful attention to what one previously unconsciously might have done (e.g., freely touching surfaces around the court and training facilities).

Importantly, you have a duty of care to those who you coach and attend your sessions to protect their health and well-being. Safe practices, and communication of these, are key so let everyone know how you will be running sessions, activities and competitions to comply with best health practices and regulations. For example, how many players will be on the court at any time; should players bring their own drink bottles rather than use the drink fountain etc). Your National Association and the International Tennis Federation (<https://www.itftennis.com/media/3446/return-to-tennis-guidelines-eng.pdf>) can provide you with ideas and resources to provide safe sessions during these extraordinary times. Do not hesitate to stay connected with these organisations.

Get facts to avoid the dangers of coronavirus 'infodemic'

Misinformation can spread fear, anxiety and panic, so get the facts about COVID-19. This is especially important if you are a coach with staff who report to you. Talk to your team regularly to make sure that they have appropriate, accurate, clear and up-to-date information. To keep informed with credible facts you may wish to access the WHO (<https://www.who.int>), UN (<https://www.un.org/en>), the International Federation of the Red Cross (<https://www.ifrc.org>) or UNICEF (<https://www.unicef.org>) websites and your country's national authority on health.

In this context it is most beneficial to focus on the 'positive' versus more distressing facts. A sense of hope needs to replace a narrative of fear and helplessness. This is aided if, for example, you focus on the number of recoveries (versus deaths) and avoid stigmatising language in your communications that attaches ethnicity or region to the virus or blaming persons for transmission.

Find 'silver linings'

As difficult as it may sound, there are 'silver linings' to every catastrophe. Whilst these 'silver linings' are likely to be extremely thin compared with the scale of devastation of COVID-19, try to find them. Has COVID-19 given you renewed appreciation of family, friends, health, nature and coaching for example? Has it been a time for reflection, personal growth, creativity and learning new skills? Be grateful for these positives that may well have remained undiscovered had it not been for the COVID-19 upheaval.

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 is an unprecedented medical, human and economic crisis. The psychological impact on individuals worldwide is not to be under-estimated in these times of uncertainty, volatility and potential danger. Coaches around the world have had their livelihoods 'turned up-side-down' with work terminated, reduced, put on hold or modified to comply with new health guidelines and regulations. There is a call to action for coaches to rise to these challenges and take check of their mental health. It is hoped that this paper assists in the process so that, when coaches exit the crisis, they do so with enhanced or new capabilities to embrace and thrive in what will be a new beginning. Most importantly, coaches should not hesitate to get professional help if required along this journey.

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RECOMMENDED ITF TENNIS COACH CONTENT (CLICK BELOW)



Something new? Innovation post COVID-19. A must for tennis

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ABSTRACT

Innovation in sports has been defined as the adoption and use of a novel idea or behaviour by an organisation (Winand & Hoerber, 2017). This idea should be brought into use and be new to the adopter (Winand & Anagnostopoulos, 2017). It is a very important process because it is associated to the strategic management of the organisation. Furthermore, it is considered crucial for taking advantage and growing in a competitive eco-system by meeting the expectations of the stakeholders, increasing their satisfaction, and adding value to their users through improved quality, efficiency and effectiveness of their experience.

Key words: Management, strategy, COVID-19, innovation

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INTRODUCTION

Innovation in sports has been defined as the adoption and use of a novel idea or behaviour by an organisation (Winand & Hoerber, 2017). This idea should be brought into use and be new to the adopter (Winand & Anagnostopoulos, 2017). It is a very important process because it is associated to the strategic management of the organisation. Furthermore, it is considered crucial for taking advantage and growing in a competitive eco-system by meeting the expectations of the stakeholders, increasing their satisfaction, and adding value to their users through improved quality, efficiency and effectiveness of their experience.

In the sports sector, the impact of innovation can be appreciated by considering the influence of the application of adequate strategies in how sport can be organised, played, consumed and enjoyed in such a way that it is enhanced, refined and improved.

Innovation in sport in general, and in tennis in particular, has been used to improve access, grow user interest, maximise performance, regulate the practice, increase funding, enhance consumer experience, etc. It has been applied to all levels of the game; from grassroots and participation to elite and high-performance (Ringuet-Riot, & James, 2013). Innovation is closely related to entrepreneurship since both involve change, enable progress, anticipate future trends and foster proactivity (Ratten & Ferreira, 2017).

A considerable body of research has studied the importance and characteristics of innovation in sport in general (see Tjonndal, 2016 for a review). As per the case of tennis, technology innovations have received most of the attention from the researchers (Kim & Pennings, 2009; Laudone, Liguori, Muldoon, & Bendickson, 2015; Luitzen, Bollerman, & Delheye, 2015; Sheridan, 2006).

The COVID-19 has created an unprecedented situation worldwide. It has affected all aspects of human existence, and sports among them. As IOC President Thomas Bach stated "With the global COVID-19 pandemic, we are all living in much uncertainty. At this point in time, this uncertainty is far from subsiding [...]. This new situation will need all our solidarity, creativity, determination and flexibility. We shall all need to make sacrifices and compromises. Extraordinary circumstances call for extraordinary measures. This situation requires every one of us to do our part, and this applies to all of us, including the IOC" (Bach, 2020).

The tennis community is also facing considerable challenges and risks as our sport is disrupted by Covid-19. Using innovation as the main competitive strategy tool, tennis should be positioned as one of the, if not the safest sport to play in the current climate.



This paper aims to reflect on the opportunities for innovation that the pandemic has created for tennis. It presents the different basic types of tennis organisations and their various approaches to innovation. It suggests possible initiatives that can be implemented by the stakeholders and it discusses alternatives to adapt to the new scenario.

TYPES OF TENNIS ORGANISATIONS AND APPROACHES TO INNOVATION

Two types of tennis organisations can be distinguished in tennis according to the distribution of their income: profit and non-profit. Private companies operating in the tennis sector are usually profit organisations. Federations, associations and clubs are usually non-profit institutions or entities.

Authors such as Newell & Swan (1995) consider that the importance, need and ability to innovate is equally relevant for both types of organisations due to the gradual increase in professionalisation and commercialisation of the business. However, it has also been indicated that both types of organisations need to implement different approaches to innovation.

Innovations can be driven and implemented following a top-down or a bottom-up approach depending on who is developing the process, at upper level (top) or at local/individual level (bottom) (Winand & Anagnostopoulos, 2017).

Several types of innovations have been identified in sport (Hipp & Grupp, 2005; Walker, 2008):

- **Technical:** linked to the core activity of the organisation. Products, services, projects and technologies. Types:
 - New sports products: equipment, devices, technologies.

- New sports services: new acts or processes. training programmes for coaches, players or officials. Subtypes include: total (new services provided to new users), expansionary (existing services provided to new users) and evolutionary (existing services provided to new users).
- **Administrative:** related to non-sport activities of the organisation. Structural, administrative and managerial practices, aspects, policies, systems or processes. Examples: new registration system for players, new competition structure, etc.

Other authors also identify social, user, organisational and institutional innovations (Tjonndal, 2016).

Service and administrative innovations are more common in tennis non-profit organisations. Four dimensions have been identified which affect their innovation capability (Winand & Hoerber, 2017):

- Strategic: environment, competitors, market, stakeholders.
- User: expectations and involvement in the process.
- Financial: monetary resources, sponsors, funding institutions.
- Human: staff, volunteers, fans.

SUGGESTIONS ON SPECIFIC INNOVATIONS

It is therefore crucial to put together the different means, skills and competences available both individually and from the organisations in order to be able to generate new knowledge, to attract new resources, to grow and to differentiate from our competitors (Winand & Anagnostopoulos, 2017).

Innovation in tennis needs to be introduced in the market as solutions to the existing challenges or needs. The needs analysis and assessment will identify the performance gaps that should be addressed. These ideas or behaviours will assist in changing the way we relate to and enjoy tennis (Ringuet-Riot & James, 2013).

Several suggestions to this end include the following (Buttfield & Polglaze, 2017):

- Change your mindset: the continuously changing scenario makes it impossible for long-term planning. All tennis activities need to be reviewed and, if needed, adjusted to the new realities.
- Adapt your philosophy: whether is your business, coaching or training principles and values, consider the possibility of adapting and refining them to the new situation.
- Be positive towards newness: all involved should show a positive attitude towards innovation by accepting the competitive pressure for performance as a business.
- Identify the needs: understanding your players, the parents, club and board members better and knowing what do you need to implement to adequately fulfil their demands is an extremely relevant phase of this process.
- Inform your audience: people need information on the initiatives that you are going to implement. A clear, direct, honest and timely communication strategy is crucial.
- Make tennis feasible: all those involved need to establish the adequate priorities and appropriate management strategies that will help to make tennis feasible and successful.
- Create a safe environment: this should be the first priority.



The health of all participants is the most important. Everyone should follow at all times the advice of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the local authorities.

- Implement cost-saving measures: review budgets in order to decide the most convenient potential adaptations to the organisation of tennis activities.
- Use internal and external sources: involve the organisation's staff but also engage your customers, participants and stakeholders by asking their views.
- Look at partnerships: maybe now it is the right time to join forces with a gym if you own a tennis academy, or with a nearby school if you manage a club, or with another coach or programme if you work on your own. These partnerships may assist in gaining legitimacy and reducing uncertainty.
- Generate a strong competitive position: this has to be done by reducing the barriers of entry to the game. The costs of participating in tennis have to be lowered (i.e. reduce the class fee, offer free racquets, balls, set cheaper court rental depending on certain times of the day, etc.).
- Be sustainable: implement measures (i.e. balls or equipment rental) that will assist in reducing the environmental impact of the activities (i.e. reducing the use of throw-away plastic, introducing waste recycling policies, reducing water use, etc.).
- Think ahead: while looking back may help in the understanding of the causes that brought us to the current situation, at present it may be advisable to implement the new measures and think of possible actions in case the situation arises again.
- Use technology: think of implementing or improving services which are delivered through the use of technology (i.e. social media, mobile devices, wearables, etc.)
- Aim local: due to the travel restrictions, it is advised to start with local activities which do not require players to engage in long trips.
- Empower people: innovation should be driven not by technology, services or products, but by people. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to provide them with the tools to achieve this.

Above all, we should be able to position tennis as one of the preferred options for the return to physical activity. Due to its special characteristics as an individual non-contact sport and to the fact that it respects the social distance, it has to be presented as a safe way of exercising in these circumstances.

As lockdown restrictions are gradually eased in some parts of the

world, the identification of clusters of local players to increase localised playing opportunities should be done following the guidelines set by the local relevant authorities.

Even though industry reports indicate that March 2020 sales are down as compared to those of one year ago (TIA, 2020), there are reported examples of large increases in interest to play in many countries and manufacturers have indicated that sales of introduction level rackets and balls between March and June in 2020 are double that of 2019 (Wolken, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Innovation in tennis should be driven by the principle that we should not just return to the situation we had pre COVID-19, but to a better tennis eco-system that will be able to learn from what happened and to be more adequately prepared for future events whichever they may be.

Everyone that loves our game has the great responsibility to transform the postponement of tennis play caused by the pandemic into an amazing opportunity. During these unprecedented times, the tennis world can use innovation strategies to accept the challenge, to promote, adapt and improve our sport and to celebrate the hope, benefits and enjoyment of tennis play.

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RECOMMENDED ITF TENNIS COACH CONTENT (CLICK BELOW)



Let's go back to tennis!

Playing tennis safe for everyone's health

Diego García (ARG)

ITF Coaching and Sport Science Review 2020; 81 (28): 9-11

ABSTRACT

This article, which is based on contributions from coaches and specialists, shares some proposals and suggestions that will allow the return to tennis activity in the best possible way. The information provided is structured into prior considerations, considerations before entering the court, development of tennis sessions and the end of the activity. We hope that these proposals will make it easier for coaches to return to the tennis court.

Key words: COVID-19, security, training, trainers

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INTRODUCTION

The objective of this article is to collaborate with the coaches, players and also with the authorities of the different institutions and organisations prior to the return to the tennis. This paper is based on the e-book *Let's go back to tennis!* (García et al., 2020), which includes contributions from several Argentine coaches and specialists who agreed to share ideas that may be used in the weeks prior to returning to tennis, as well as exercises for private sessions for the first months after the opening of the quarantine. We can all do better if we help each other in this return to tennis. As we write this article, there are several countries already authorised to play tennis. The main principle that underpins this idea is to propose a return to the activity in a safe, responsible and professional way, and that we do not have to turn back. We also share suggestions included in different international protocols and we recommend consulting the pages of the respective National Associations, the International Tennis Federation and the Ministries or Organizations of International Health and Sport in the different countries (International Tennis Federation, 2020; World Organization of Health, 2020).

The information provided will be structured in four sections:

1. Previous considerations, which include some tips for retaining former players, some promotional work to reach new players, and a possible agreement between the coach and the players based on the new relationships that will be established.
2. Considerations before going back to the court, where some actions are suggested that will make players aware of the care and security necessary on their way and while staying on the court.
3. Development of the sessions, where a proposal of classification and some examples of exercises for the first months of adaptation during the quarantine are shown.
4. The end of the activity, where some considerations are proposed to consider in order to look after our health and that of our players at the end of the session.

PREVIOUS CONSIDERATIONS

Tips for the retention of our former players

It is very likely that we have all been in contact with our players in this quarantine, but the time is coming to play again. So, it's time to go back with more energy, and to engage all our players to continue playing. These are some suggestions proposed by Echegaray (2020) in order to achieve this goal:



1. Submit a video with a "back to tennis" psycho / physical / tennis preparation session routine.
2. Send them the Back to Tennis Protocol approved by the Ministry of Health of your Nation.
3. Send motivational messages via WhatsApp.
4. Send the players the plan of the first session including the exercise routines.
5. Share videos from other places in the world that are already playing tennis.
6. Send the players a list of sports movies, it is best if they are tennis movies, in order to promote participation.
7. Send the players a flyer with the authorisation of the venue where the tennis programme is delivered.
8. Ask a player, a former player or a celebrity known to all, to send a personalised message to our players.
9. Ask a player who started playing tennis to choose a "friend" and send him a video recommending taking tennis lessons.
10. Wait for the players with your cell phone, record them in those "previous steps" when entering the court. Then make a video with all the players that attended the practice during the week and send it to them.
11. We recommend to follow up and / or add to the sessions before or during their delivery, to an organisation theme group in "zoom".

Promotion tips that will allow us to reach future players

It is important to focus on the benefits of tennis to put in place an adequate promotion now (Crespo, 2020). In doing so, we will take advantage in relation to those sports that will be without activity at the start of the return to the activity. This can be done by sharing links to posts about the benefits of tennis as a safe, simple and achievable activity in these days. In addition, it is important to make yourself known on social networks, have a website, deliver sessions that everyone will be able to access, or offer free sessions to unconventional clients such as managers or administrators.

It is crucial to have a possible agreement between the player and the coach that contains all the points necessary for this new relationship.

Times have changed, the Covid-19 is still a threat. It is substantial to limit the obvious framework between what the player who is going to receive thinks and what we are going to deliver in this "new" tennis session. Therefore, it is relevant to have the necessary meetings with our players to explain them how we are going to deliver tennis sessions in these times of Covid-19. In order to do this, it is important to have a written summary of the protocol that will be followed in our sessions and that will have the health and care of all participants as the main goal. We have to send it to the players and parents for them to agree, by assuming their responsibility, with the conditions.

CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE GOING ON COURT

This section will share some important recommendations in order to ensure that our players are well prepared to participate in the tennis session which will ensure that they will continue hiring our services (and that they will continue taking sessions with good health).

Preparation of the body for the first session (Cristian Elsesser)

As preparation, a dynamic warm-up will be necessary before each session and more specifically, in the first session post-quarantine. We will try to carry out a comprehensive neuromuscular activation which will bring the body and mind in tune with the tasks that are to be performed afterwards. The strategy will be to engage players in a short activity, at medium intensity, agile and dynamic; where in 7 to 10 minutes we will seek to include actions that will activate each body segment as follows:

- 3/4 highly dynamic multi joint mobility exercises
- Mid zone activation exercises: Planks / lateral / spinal planks
- 1 upper body strength exercise (pole squats / lunges / bench climb)
- 1 upper body exercise
- 3 exercises of running technique over 8 to 10 meters

Management of anxiety to play again (Claudio Sosa)

This involuntary break has undoubtedly brought many anxiety disorders to the population. Therefore, our players and also, we as coaches, may feel a high dose of anxiety that should be managed in the best possible way (Young, 2014). We share the following suggestions that will help players and coaches alleviate that anxiety before the first session.

For the players:

- Before the session begins, take a minute, close your eyes, and imagine hitting the ball, then shadow the strokes just before you start hitting the ball with your coach.



- Be careful with the anxiety of willing to do everything perfect. It is crucial to have a goal related to what motivates you to play tennis.

- Exhale the air when hitting the ball will help you to play more relaxed, help the flow of your shot and avoid injuries.

- After each rally, focus on one or two deep breaths to oxygenate your brain and muscles.

- Work your positive self-talk. Reward yourself every time you hit the ball well.

For coaches:

- Prepare the sessions.

- Be careful with the anxiety of willing to transmit to your players lots of knowledge and all together.

- Plan a fun, agile session for the players to get active and enjoy.

CARE WITH THE COVID-19 BEFORE STARTING THE FIRST SESSION

The care that both players and coaches should have to avoid the spread of the Coronavirus is very important. Some general guidelines, which you can consider to add to the ones you may already implement as appropriate, are the following:

- By specifying the schedule of the session, the player and coach agree to express their good health.
- In case of symptoms, the appropriate protocols will be activated. It is recommended to keep a record of each player. If it is possible, consider removing the entrance doors to the courts or that they are only manipulated by the coach, after disinfecting them.
- The coach and player will have each one a space reserved for their belongings and a disinfection kit on one side of the court and the player on the other side, which will be disinfected before, during and after the session, according to the established protocols of disinfection.
- Both the player and the coach will use face masks until the moment each one is located on each side of the court.
- The use of a cap and glasses is recommended.
- In the session, only the coach will be in charge of manipulating his own racket, the 6 available tennis balls and the 4 cones.

- We recommend that the coach puts 6 balls in small waste bags, one for each session of the day, in order to avoid that these are shared by players. In their free time, coaches should sanitise those balls already used (Fernando Bertolini).
- Both the player and the coach will try not to touch their faces with their hands during the session.
- Before the first session of return to the activity, we recommend sending to the players the tutorials created by different National Associations such as the USTA and the French Tennis Federation.

Class development

The general format proposed for the sessions is as follows:

- Private sessions (coach +1 player) with preventive social distancing.
- The coach can only have at his disposal: 6 balls and 4 cones, which only he can manipulate.
- The player can only hit the balls sent by the coach. Keeping the social distance imposed by the Covid-19, the player will be able, if necessary, to reach the balls only with the racket, without touching them with the hands.

Leo Alonso proposes a classification that will help organise the exercises according to the objectives of the coach:

- 1. Systematic:** they are repetition exercises to mechanise the shot or movement technique. They are usually closed since the only objective is the conscious repetition of the "new" mechanics that only, when it is repeated enough times, will replace the previous habit.
- 2. Resolutive:** those exercises in which a game situation should be solved. They involve reading the ball received and choosing the answer to that situation. The mental process that dominates these types of drills is tactical (the first thing you do is to "read" the ball that comes and then choose the appropriate response). It is ideal to conduct them using live ball drills.
- 3. Competitive:** they are exercises in which the players play points with one objective: to win. Therefore, it is very important that the coach does not provide technical instructions but guides the player on how to be efficient, competitively speaking, in order to win.

The e-book *We return to tennis!* includes examples of more than 40 exercises.

The end of the activity

- It is important to consider the following recommendations at the end of the session to continue with the care of our health and that of the players:
- The final greeting will be made respecting the preventive social distancing.

- The payment of the sessions will be attempted by electronic means. In case of receiving physical money, it is recommended to sanitise it following the established protocols (i.e. spray it with 70% alcohol)
- We propose sessions to be scheduled with a 15 minutes break between them (i.e. If one session ends at 9, the other session begins at 9:15). This avoids contact between the player who leaves and the one who comes to the session, as well as allowing us to sanitise ourselves, sanitise the materials and plan the next session.
- Once the session is over, the coach should sanitise:
 - (a) the area that corresponds to the coach
 - (b) the area that corresponds to the player
 - (c) the entrance gate to the court
 - (d) the belt and the net posts
 - (e) any element that is likely to spread the virus

It is essential that the coach finishes the activity of the day having sanitised all the balls, the cones and the clothes used. This action will prevent the circulation of the virus.

CONCLUSIONS

First of all, we are immensely grateful to each and every one of the colleagues who shared their knowledge, and collaborated with their exercises and time, in these moments of pandemic. These are times of immense change in our relationships with those we love, and our players are part of our lives and affections. From our resilience, imprint and adaptation, the best will come. Definitely!

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RECOMMENDED ITF TENNIS COACH CONTENT (CLICK BELOW)



Return to tennis guidelines

International Tennis Federation

ITF Coaching and Sport Science Review 2020; 81 (28): 12-14

ABSTRACT

The global COVID-19 outbreak has had a significant impact on tennis. Movement restrictions imposed by governments have resulted in the suspension of the international tennis calendar. Once these restrictions have been relaxed, it may be possible to organise sporting competitions again with or, most likely in the short term at least, without spectators. The primary aim of this document is to set guidelines for minimum and recommended standards for the organisation of tennis competitions. This document has been developed in accordance with the WHO guidelines on the organisation of sports events and with input from the Chair of the ITF Sport Science & Medicine Commission. It is intended to supplement the existing organisational requirements for ITF events, rather than a substitute for them.

Key words: COVID-19, return, competition

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THE ORGANISATION OF TENNIS COMPETITIONS

General

Due to the elevated risk posed by COVID-19 to older people and those with underlying health conditions, the ITF does not recommend the organisation of competitions for age groups 60 and above and we advise that any player with a medical condition that may elevate the risk of serious COVID-19 symptoms should be encouraged to avoid participation. The ITF also recognises the threats to integrity associated with a return to tennis, and is working with the Tennis Anti-Doping Programme and the Tennis Integrity Unit to implement appropriate mitigation.

When should competitions not be organised?

If movement restrictions or other national measures that preclude the organisation of competitions have been imposed (or re-imposed) in a country, then these should be followed and no tennis competitions should be organised. These measures take precedence over the guidance in this document.

Organisation competitions

National Associations should be in regular contact with their respective local, regional or national authorities to establish whether tennis can be organised within the existing movement constraints. Tennis can be played with social distancing measures in place, so it is likely to be one of the first sports for which competitions can be organised. Competitions may not include competitors from other nations until such time as international travel restrictions are lifted.

Minimum and recommended standards

The tables below set out the minimum and recommended standards for the organisation of tennis competitions. These guidelines can only mitigate the risk of COVID-19 infections – they cannot eliminate it. Any return to competition and implementation of this guidance should be established in conjunction with the relevant national authorities.



MINIMUM STANDARDS	
Actions	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Implement social distancing; Modify changeovers.- Keep on-court officials and players separate.- Eliminate handshake and other forms of physical contact.- Players use separate sets of balls. Implement the ITF Towel policy.- Players should arrive at the venue close to their allotted starting time and in playing kit and depart immediately after (no showers).- No sharing of equipment;- Play behind closed doors or with limited/separated spectators.- Physical separation at locations where people tend to gather.- Establish hygiene standards: Daily cleaning and disinfecting of all shared areas frequently.- Ball kids wear latex gloves on court. Officials, staff and ball kids wear masks off- court.- Provide hygiene notices for players, officials and spectators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Players go around opposite sides of the net.- Separate players from the Chair Umpire and (doubles) each other.- Identify and mark different balls for each player. Provide a container for all disposable items.- Individual food and water bottles.- Put all spectators (where permitted) at least 2 metres apart.- Mark separation distances for, e.g., food/drink and toilets.

Table 1. Minimum standards.

SAFETY DURING TENNIS COMPETITION PLAYERS AND OFFICIALS

Pre-competition:

- Reduce injury risk through conditioning prior;
- Consider playing recreationally against members of your household if possible, to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19;
- Do not play if you or members of your household have any COVID-19 symptoms, have been in contact with anyone who has COVID-19 symptoms, are self-isolating or are 'at-risk'.

Implement social distancing during competition at all times, including:

- Arrive at the venue dressed for your match shortly before your allotted start time and depart the venue immediately after the match. Do not use the locker rooms or showers;
- Wear gloves (officials);
- Wear masks while off-court;
- Players and officials should maintain at least 2 metres between each other;
- Do not shake hands with players/opponents or have any other physical/close contact before, during or after a match;
- Each player should use his/her own set of (separately numbered) balls. Balls should be used for one match only;
- Implement the revised ITF 'towel policy';
- At changeovers, go around opposite sides of the net;
- Do not sign autographs or take selfies with fans.
- Do not share any equipment or other items (racket, water bottles, food) with team-mates or opponents;

Observe good hygiene:

- Avoid touching surfaces where possible;
- Wash/sanitise your hands regularly, including before and after bathroom use, and after touching surfaces;
- Cough into a tissue and discard it immediately; o Don't touch your face.

If you have COVID-19 symptoms within 14 days of a competition, inform the Tournament Director and the ITF at (covid19@itftennis.com).

SAFETY DURING TENNIS COMPETITION SPECTATORS

Spectators (notices to be posted in prominent locations)

Implement social distancing:

- Ensure that all government restrictions are followed. This may mean limiting the number of spectators or playing 'behind closed doors';
- Require spectators to wear masks in accordance with local guidance or requirements;
- Maintain 2 metres from other spectators in seating areas. If this is impractical, play 'behind closed doors';
- Maintain physical separation when using toilets and purchasing items (separation distances could be marked to encourage compliance);

RECOMMENDED STANDARDS	
Actions	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All minimum standards, plus: Play outdoors. Play singles only. - Provide to players: tissues; plastic bags; masks; alcohol-based hand wipes; disposable drinking cups; thermometer; sanitiser. - Provide access to an on-site/on-call doctor. - Conduct daily health checks of players, officials and staff. - Maintain contact details of all staff, officials and players. - Devise a business continuity protocol (in case of infection). - Establish protocols if COVID-19 symptoms are developed on-site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Isolation room; emergency contact person; evacuation procedure. - Daily testing and self-certification of being symptom-free. Trace contacts in case on-site infection found. - Build redundancy into staffing, e.g. split officiating teams into 2.

Table 2. Recommended standards.

GUIDANCE FOR NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

In order to facilitate a fast and safe return to tennis, National Associations should maintain a proactive approach to promoting a return to competition. The following suggestions will help to make that return happen as soon as possible.

- Maintain regular contact with local, regional and national authorities (as appropriate and at a personal level if possible) to:
 - Ensure that the latest information on movement restrictions, particularly in relation to the organisation of sports competitions is obtained;
 - Ensure compliance with all official advice;
 - Promote tennis as a sport that can be played with social distancing and should be among the first sports permitted when movement restrictions are relaxed;
- Issue guidance for safe participation to:
 - Players;
 - Officials;
 - Clubs and event organisers;
 - Spectators;
 - Tournament staff, including medical personnel.
- Display notices clearly around venues, including at entry/exit points, gathering points and around every court.
- Display notices and advice clearly on organisation and tournament websites.
- Advise 'at-risk' groups to not participate or attend venues.
- Advise those with COVID-19 symptoms and those who have come into contact with anyone with COVID-19 symptoms to not attend venues.
- Inform the ITF when movement restrictions are relaxed and tennis can be played, whether at recreational or competition levels.
- Inform the ITF (covid19@itftennis.com) of all national-level events that are organised in your nation.

- Encourage spectators to depart the venue immediately following completion of the match(es) they are interested in.

Observe good hygiene:

- Discourage touching surfaces where possible;
- Encourage washing/sanitising of hands regularly, including pre- and post-bathroom use, and after touching shared surfaces;
- Advise coughing into tissue and discarding them immediately; o Advise not touching their own faces.

In case any spectator experiences COVID-19 symptoms while on-site:

- The Tournament Director must be informed;
- The person must be taken to an isolation room and examined by the Tournament Doctor.
- If the Tournament Doctor suspects COVID-19, then an evacuation procedure should be implemented to ensure the safe transport of the spectator off the site and to the appropriate location;
- Any spectator(s) seated close (within 3 metres) of that spectator should be located and informed of the suspected case and asked to leave the venue and monitor their health;
- Relevant parts of the venue should be disinfected prior to further use.

Advise all spectators who have COVID-19 symptoms within 14 days of attending a tournament to inform the Tournament Director for appropriate follow-up.

Event organisers

Assess the risks of organising competitions in your location. Only organise events when permitted by local or national authorities.

- If necessary, play 'behind closed doors' or with limited spectators to comply with restrictions on mass gatherings.
- Do not permit players, officials, staff or spectators who have had COVID-19 symptoms, or who have been in contact with someone who has had COVID-19 in the last 14 days to attend the venue.
- Advise 'at-risk' groups to not participate or attend venues;
- Plan for staff absences. Maintain all staff contact details for contact tracing.
- Split officials into two teams, each working separate days (if a member of one team is infected, then the other team works for the remainder of the event).
- Keep office windows open where possible.
- Implement social distancing:
 - Organise singles competitions only;
 - Mark out separation distances in toilets, at food outlets and other locations where people gather, including tournament offices;
 - Ensure players arrive shortly before their matches, dressed to play, and depart immediately afterwards. Do not use locker rooms or showers;
 - Separate on-court chairs by 2 metres;
 - Separate all spectators by 2 metres where possible;

- Facilitate good hygiene:
 - Clean the venue daily; regularly disinfect high-touch surfaces;
 - Provide sanitising gel at all entry/exit points;
 - Provide all players, officials and staff with masks and latex gloves;
 - Provide containers to dispose of contaminated items, tissues and used personal protective equipment. Dispose of these safely.
- Provide medical support:
 - Ensure that the on-site doctor has adequate supplies of Personal Protective Equipment, and an infra-red thermometer;
 - Provide an isolation room for suspected COVID-19 cases;
 - Check the temperature of all players, officials and staff daily; establish a procedure for dealing with on-site COVID-19 cases (isolation location; medical screening; communication flow; transport from site);
 - Report all suspected COVID-19 cases to the ITF at (covid19@itftennis.com).

TOURNAMENT STAFF (INCLUDING MEDICAL PERSONNEL)

- Implement social distancing, including:
 - Maintain 2 metres from other staff members at all times (indoors and outdoors).
- Observe good hygiene:
 - Wear masks at all times;
 - Wash/sanitise your hands regularly, including before and after bathroom use, and after touching surfaces;
 - Avoid touching surfaces where possible;
 - Disinfect your desk area regularly, including telephone and computer keyboard; o Cough into a tissue and discard it immediately;
 - Don't touch your face;
 - Do not share any personal items.
- Do not attend the venue if you experience COVID-19 symptoms, or if you come into contact with anyone who has symptoms. Inform the Tournament Director and seek medical advice, as appropriate.
- Medical staff:
 - Prepare isolation room for suspected COVID-19 cases;
 - Maintain adequate supplies of Personal Protective Equipment, and an infra-red thermometer;
 - Establish a procedure for dealing with on-site COVID-19 cases, to include isolation, medical screening, communication flow, transport from site;
 - Report all suspected COVID-19 cases to the ITF at (covid19@itftennis.com).

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about this guidance, please contact the ITF at: covid19@itftennis.com

For further information, the ITF Return to Tennis Protocols for tournament hosts were published on July 23 and can be accessed [here](#).

RECOMMENDED ITF TENNIS COACH CONTENT (CLICK BELOW)



Glimpsing new opportunities

César Kist (BRA)

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ABSTRACT

As they say, times of crisis are times of opportunity. This is undoubtedly one of the most difficult times that the world in general, and tennis coaches in particular, have lived through. Despite the seriousness of the situation, it is very important that the coaches try to find opportunities to grow in this complicated situation. This article proposes some ideas of how coaches can take advantage of new opportunities related to the new world after COVID-19, training, teamwork and the values associated with tennis. Maintaining a positive attitude, the coaches will be able to come out stronger and make tennis do it the same way.

Key words: COVID-19, coaches, education

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INTRODUCTION

In this time that we are living, although it may be extremely difficult, we must try to glimpse the opportunities that this pandemic offers. It is evident that this situation has brought with it extremely serious consequences that cannot be ignored, but, even so, one must try to perceive small indicators or signs of opportunities that allow growth both professionally and personally.

This article will provide some ideas, in different areas of action of the tennis coach, that may allow the coach to emerge stronger from this serious situation. To do this, we will discuss the new opportunities that arise, of how the world could be after the COVID-19, of the importance of vocational training, of the need for teamwork and of the values associated with tennis.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Prior to sharing some examples of opportunities that coaches can take advantage of, it is important to keep in mind that it is crucial to have a positive mindset and a proactive attitude. If you adopt a posture of negativity, with continuous complaints about the situation, it will be very difficult to have a broad, positive and creative vision of this moment.

If you achieve this positive and proactive attitude, you can take advantage of real opportunities such as the examples shown below:

- Tennis is a sport that has an advantage over team sports, since the training sessions and the tournaments will start earlier. Therefore, in the short term, it is a good time to try to involve the maximum number of players in tennis.
- Following this period of closure, people will appreciate further the practice of sport and physical activity, therefore, it is also a good time for people who did not practice sport to join tennis.
- The parents will also give more value to the importance of sport and physical activity for their children wellbeing. It will be a good opportunity to bring back those players who left tennis and went on to practice other sports.
- The companies will also assess the health of their workers. Therefore, it is important to create programmes that are compatible with the schedules and needs of this group.
- The social aspect will acquire an even greater value. Taking this into account is essential to develop programmes that promote the social value of tennis.

As we can notice in the previous examples, there are a wealth of new opportunities that can be explored, but in all of them



communication and promotion are going to be fundamental aspects for the programmes to be successful. It is then important that coaches effectively communicate that tennis is a safe (ITF, 2020), healthy (Pluim, 2007; Fernández-Fernández et al., 2009) and social (Legg et al., 2017) sport.

THE WORLD AFTER COVID-19

It seems clear that the world will no longer be exactly the same after the pandemic. It is important that tennis coaches accept this as soon as possible in order to, by doing so, adapt the game to the changes created by this situation. This time is a great opportunity (almost an obligation) to reinvent yourself, so it is crucial to have a broad vision of the different paths that tennis provides.

Therefore, as suggested in the previous examples, the tennis coach has a variety of options to carry out programmes aimed at different groups of the population, such as sessions for adults, tennis in schools, coaching of junior, high performance and professional tennis players, organisation of tournaments and events, and a long etcetera. If the opportunity arises, it may be a good time to launch tennis programmes or events that have not been previously considered.

On the other hand, whatever tennis programme is being implemented, there is one aspect that is especially fundamental: creativity. From now on, changes will be experienced in communication with students, in the promotion of programmes, in the routines of lessons and training sessions and, above all, in the use of technologies, where online tools are going to stay for the future. Therefore, those coaches who are creative and adapt better to these changes, by proposing new alternatives and being more efficient in this new context, will have a great advantage.

Professional training and education

These weeks of confinement are possibly one of the best times for professional growth. It is important that the coaches take advantage to study, take courses, or learn languages. Coaches who take advantage of confinement to educate themselves will be better prepared for the future. As with the preseason, where players improve their technical fundamentals or physical aspects, these pandemic weeks have to be the coaches' preseason, where they improve their knowledge and preparation.

On the other hand, it is important to note that new technologies are already practically essential in training and education (Novak et al., 2017). Many of the training and education activities are being carried out online, so, in addition to facilitating access for all coaches, technology is forcing those coaches who had been reluctant to the use of technology for their training, to face these tools and, therefore, in addition to improving their skills in specific aspects of tennis, they are improving their skills related to the use of new technologies.

Teamwork

In tennis, despite being an individual sport, teamwork is crucial during the training process. This pandemic has meant that a large number of coaches and organisations have shared information and resources through conferences, courses, e- books, articles, etc. This has been an unprecedented situation, so it would be very good to take advantage of this inertia and continue working as a team to achieve better training and education opportunities for all coaches, and to establish powerful professional networks that will allow improvement in all areas of tennis coaching.

Values associated with tennis

Tennis has always been characterised by being a sport that allows the sharing of many positive values. Now is a good time to promote that tennis is a powerful product that allows you to share values such as education, discipline or improvement. Many of these values are being necessary to overcome the current situation, making people much more sensitive and aware of the importance of developing these values for life. Therefore, if coaches are able to convey the association between tennis and these aspects, it is very likely that many parents will choose tennis as the sport for their sons and daughters.

CONCLUSIONS

By maintaining a good attitude and being focused on what is really important, despite the seriousness of the situation, it will be possible for the coaches to manage to grow professionally, reaching levels that today are not so easy to glimpse. During the most complicated weeks of confinement, examples have been seen such as webinars with a large attendance of coaches or record numbers in the number of subscriptions to courses and education activities. This would have seemed incredible just a few weeks ago. Therefore, if in the most difficult moments the coaches have shown such positive and surprising behaviours, it is foreseeable that as the situation improves, we will witness a new stage with new and better programmes, more committed and educated coaches, more players and, ultimately, better tennis.

We have a very valuable product to offer. Tennis is a tool for sharing values, health and welfare. These are aspects that people are looking for, since they are highly valued and necessary, especially these days and after COVID-19. If we catch a glimpse of these aspects, we are effective in promoting and communicating, and we know how to take advantage of our product, we will have very good possibilities of professional growth.

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RECOMMENDED ITF TENNIS ICOACH CONTENT (CLICK BELOW)



Supervening impossibility of the provision of sports training and coaching due to the 'coronavirus'

Alejandro Valiño (ESP)

ITF Coaching and Sport Science Review 2020; 81 (28): 17-18

ABSTRACT

The paper analyses the situation of the contracts to provide services that persons or sport organisations agree with their students in the context of expanded health crisis worldwide caused by the coronavirus. Given the diverse background of the readers, reference to specific national or local regulations will be avoided. Instead, general principles of the service contract contained in some studies that have dealt with the transnational harmonisation of private law are considered.

Key words: Covid-19, Provision of services, Supervening impossibility, DCFR, European Contract Code

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INTRODUCTION

The provision of tennis coaching and training services is included in one of the most traditional contracts in any national legal system¹. The most common names are 'service leasing'², 'service location'³ or 'provision of services'⁴, defined as "contract under which one party, the service provider, undertakes to supply a service to the other party, the client, in exchange for a price"⁵.

As per the people that take part we can distinguish, on the one hand, the offeror or supplier of the service, who, depending on the situation may be a self-employed coach or a sports club, which has a staff which delivers the organisation, management and execution of sports training and coaching programmes in their facilities. It is even possible that, in a certain sports organisation, both options coexist in harmony: one, organised by the entity, consisting of group training lessons for players of all ages and playing levels by coaches related to it through the so-called 'work contract', characterised by its dependency and foreignness⁶; and another, in which a group of coaches, related or not to the organisation as members, provides their free services to the users of the facility, usually in the format of individual lessons.

In addition to the provider of the service, we cannot forget the user, recipient of the service or simply client, who is the player or student that participates in any coaching or training programme and pays a fee or sum of money (negotiated between the parties or included in an offer directed to the public), either in advance, either at the end of each session, or even later after a period of time or number of sessions⁷.

¹ As an exponent of the academic consensus in Europe on the legal regime of this contract, I must mention the 'Draft Common Framework of Reference for European Private Law (DCFR), jointly prepared by two teams of jurists of notable prestige (the Study Group on a European Civil Code and the Research Group on the Existing EC Private Law, called 'Acquis Group'). I will also mention the regulation proposed for the service contract by the Academy of European Professionals of Pavia, author of the 'European Contract Code'(CEC).

² Arts. 142, 1544 and 1583 of the Spanish Civil Code.

³ Derived from the Latin term *locatio*, it is a rare cultism in Spanish, but very widespread in Italian and French ('locazione', art. 2222 of the Codice Civile and 'louage', art. 1780 of the Civil Code).

⁴ Arts. 1154 et seq. of the Portuguese Civil Code, such as 'prestação de serviço', and § 611 et seq. of the German Civil Code, such as 'Dienstvertrag'.

⁵ Art. IV.C. – 1:101 (a) of the DCFR. Vid. DE BARRÓN ARNICHES, P. (2008), 12 ss. and BELUCHE RINCÓN, I. (2015), 76.

⁶ CRESPO, C., VALIÑO, A., CRESPO, M. (2016), 37.

⁷ Art. IV.C. – 2:101: "where the service provider is a business, a price is payable unless the circumstances indicate otherwise"; and art. 243.2 del CEC: "il committente, se è stata eseguita la prestazione dovuta, ossia se (...) è avvenuto il compimento dell'attività prevista, (...) è tenuto (...) a pagare (...) il corrispettivo dell'ammontare convenuto (...)".

The peculiarity of this contract lies in the fact that, even though it arises from the time the parties reach an agreement (or the client shows his willingness to adhere to the offer), the collection of the rent is closely linked to the effective provision of the service under the conditions agreed. Therefore, when the person compelled to provide the service fails to do so (i.e. does not provide the service) or does it poorly (it does not fulfil the conditions agreed or offered, for example, the type of court in which the practice should have been delivered; or unilaterally substitutes the agreed coach, when this appointment was decisive to contract the service)⁸, the client, who always can terminate a contract of this type⁹, may also claim compensation for the damages suffered¹⁰.

EFFECTS ON THE CONTRACT OF THE TEMPORARY IMPOSSIBILITY OF THE PROVISION

However, there are extraordinary situations, beyond the will and control of the service provider, that determine the unexpected impossibility of complying, definitively or temporarily, with what has been agreed¹¹. One of them is precisely the Covid-19

⁸ Art. IV.C. – 2:104(1) del DCFR: "the service provider may subcontract the performance of the service in whole or in part without the client's consent, unless personal performance is required by the contract"; and art. 245.b) del CEC: "il cooperante è tenuto (...) ad eseguire la prestazione dovuta con la massima cura e puntualità (...), evitando di farsi sostituire da estranei senza il consenso del committente, salvo che ciò (...) sia necessario per la natura della prestazione, o sia conforme agli usi". In tal caso, puede apartarse del contrato al desaparecer el presupuesto de la "calidad de la persona ('intuitus personae') o dell'impresa dell'altro contraente, in quanto elemento determinante dell'avvenuto consenso, risultante dell'accordo o dalla natura del rapporto" (art. 246.5 del CEC).

⁹ Art. IV.C. – 2:111(1): "the client may terminate the contractual relationship at any time by giving notice to the service provider"; (3): "when the client was justified in terminating the relationship no damages are payable for so doing"; (4) "when the client was not justified in terminating the relationship, the termination is nevertheless effective, but the service provider has a right to damages (...)"; y el art. 246.5 del CEC: "il committente ha il diritto di recedere dal contratto in qualsiasi momento (...), dandone comunicazione al cooperante con un ragionevole preavviso (...), ma deve risarcirgli i danni provocatigli da un recesso anticipato, a meno che sussista una giusta causa (...)".

¹⁰ Art. 315.6 del CEC: "il prestatore risponde verso il committente della mancata o imperfetta esecuzione (...) se non dimostra che esse sono dovute a fatto del committente".

¹¹ Art. 97.2 del CEC, versión original: "si après la conclusion du contrat la prestation devient objectivement impossible, pour des raisons dont le débiteur ne doit répondre, il n'y a pas inexécution de l'obligation (...)". Art. III. – 3:703 del DCFR: "the debtor in an obligation which arises from a contract (...) is liable only for loss which the debtor foresaw or could reasonably be expected to have foreseen at the time when the obligation was incurred as a likely result of the non-performance, unless the non-performance was intentional, reckless or grossly negligent".

pandemic. Its rapid spread has forced many States to impose confinement on their citizens on their homes and the indefinite closure of all kinds of establishments, including sports facilities.

In this way, the coaching and training programmes have been temporarily suspended (except for those physical activities that could have been continued using e-learning modes), which has triggered not a little uncertainty, given the time of interruption of the service. The situations have also been heterogeneous, since the forms of payment for these services are certainly variable: there are cases in which the service for an entire season is paid in advance, with the result that the temporary impossibility of continuing to receive the coaching has caused an economic imbalance to the customer.

In any case, the unexpected impossibility of the provision may cause different effects on the contract, depending, above all, on its duration. The coaching and training services are successive, since the programme is usually divided into a number of sessions during several days a week over several months within the same or successive seasons. For this reason, the principle of conservation of the contracts makes it difficult to terminate them in situations of temporal impossibility of the provision when the service was agreed for a long time, so that calamities like the pandemic of the Covid-19 just cause the suspension of the delivery of the services agreed in the contract, which will resume only when the government measures that make impossible their compliance on time will be risen. As soon as the conditions for the practice of sport have been re-established, the parties will proceed to comply with what is incumbent upon them, recomposing, by means of negotiation, the provision imbalance eventually produced. Thus, if the student had prepaid the service for an entire season, the imbalance could be corrected by reimbursing the price corresponding to that part of the service not provided or, alternatively, by issuing bonds or other formulas of equivalent value that they suppose for the client a reasonable compensation, so that he himself or the person designated by him could receive classes or training outside the hours or periods of ordinary provision of the service.

A fundamental element in bilateral contracts such as services is that of contractual good faith¹². In accordance with it and in view of the supervening impossibility of the provision due to causes beyond the control of the contracting parties, it is essential that the parties show an interest to reach a benefit rebalancing agreement, so that fierce positions, be on the part of the provider, determined to bear on the recipient of the service all the consequences derived from the impossibility of its provision, either by the client, obstinate in rejecting the formulas that the offeror may propose, would openly violate that requirement of good faith in the contract.

¹² Art. 241.1 del CEC: "le parti (...) hanno il dovere di comportarsi secondo buona fede, senza alcuna reticenza e con spirito di reciproca e leale cooperazione, al fine di consentire il raggiungimento di tutti i risultati che ciascuna parte intende conseguire (...)". El art. I.- 1:103 (1) del DCFR la define como "standard of conduct characterised by honesty, openness and consideration for the interests of the other party to the transaction or relationship in question".



CONCLUSION

The unsuccessful impossibility of providing sports coaching and training services implies, in principle, a mere suspension in the provision of the services agreed, as it is a successive contract, so that, as soon as the government measures that made sports impossible were disappeared, the parties must renegotiate the contract with the purpose of restoring the provision balance in those cases in which, according to what has been agreed, such situation has occurred.

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[RECOMMENDED ITF TENNIS COACH CONTENT \(CLICK BELOW\)](#)



COVID-19 and its Impact on players' mental health

E. Paul Roetert, Lydia Bell & Brian Hainline (USA)

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ABSTRACT

In the United States, collegiate sport is intimately tied to American Higher Education. In other words, National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) student-athletes are first and foremost students, and the NCAA governance is interwoven with higher education governance. While the structure of typical student life may evolve over time, and while student-athletes, like other students who are pursuing passions beyond the traditional classroom and invest intensely in the development of their unique skills, being a student is and will continue to be an essential function of being a student-athlete.

Key words: COVID-19, mental, health, players

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INTRODUCTION

COVID-19, a disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, has been classified as a pandemic by the World Health Organization-WHO (2020). As you are reading this article, NCAA members have begun preparing plans to resume college sports and return college athletes and staff to campus, as local and state governments and public health officials relax stay-at-home orders. In fact, the NCAA Sport Science Institute, in collaboration with an NCAA COVID-19 Advisory Panel composed of leading medical, public health and epidemiology experts has released specific action plan considerations to help colleges and universities mitigate risks of COVID-19 spread as staff and student-athletes return. Due to the size of the United States, every community can be very different, and schools may return to campus at different times. But each will have to balance the need to return with the top priority of protecting student-athlete health and well-being. Until there is a vaccine in place, medical experts recommend adopting specific practices, including hand sanitizing, cough/respiratory etiquette, physical distancing, universal masking when possible, testing and management plans mitigating spread if or when staff or students test positive for the coronavirus. In addition to the physical aspects of dealing with the pandemic, student-athletes also have had to adapt psychologically and emotionally to the stresses of new or different living and training conditions as well as re-socializing back in the schools setting. In fact, in preparation of returning to the school setting, the NCAA surveyed over 37,000 student-athletes, of which 1436 were tennis players, asking questions related to their well-being status (NCAA, 2020).

WELL-BEING SURVEY

The survey revealed that a majority of student-athletes surveyed reported experiencing high rates of mental distress since the

outset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over a third reported experiencing sleep difficulties, more than a quarter reported feeling sadness and a sense of loss, and 1 in 12 reported feeling so depressed it has been difficult to function, "constantly" or "most every day".

	Men	Women
Felt overwhelmed by all you had to do	31%	50%
Experienced sleep difficulties	31%	42%
Felt mentally exhausted	26%	39%
Felt very lonely	22%	33%
Felt a sense of loss	21%	31%
Felt sad	17%	31%
Felt overwhelming anxiety	14%	27%
Felt overwhelming anger	11%	11%
Felt things were hopeless	11%	16%
Felt so depressed that it was difficult to function	7%	9%

Table 1. Mental Health Concerns During COVID-19 Pandemic (Percent of Participants Who Endorsed "Constantly" or "Most Every Day").

In most instances, the rates of mental health concerns were 150% to 250% higher than that historically reported by NCAA student-athletes in a previous survey (American College Health Association, 2018). Communication during the pandemic has been key to supporting student-athletes' mental and physical well-being. The data clearly indicated that many of the student-athletes felt significant mental stress in a variety of ways; however, 82% of respondents reported feeling positive or very positive about the support they have received from their coaches.

Coaching Tip: Based on the above findings, coaches need to be keenly aware of students' reliance on their support, particularly in these difficult times. If in-person interaction is not possible, consider social media check-ins on a regular basis when communicating remotely.

ACADEMICS

As a result of the pandemic, 99% of respondents said their coursework had shifted online. In the open-ended comment section, some student-athletes indicated they were struggling with the online format, others lacked the technology to be able to connect to their courses remotely, some shared that faculty had increased their assignment load as a result of moving online, and others reported struggling to connect with faculty, learning specialists or tutors when they had questions about course material.



Over 70% of participants indicated feeling positive about their ability to pass their spring courses, with a quarter feeling somewhat positive or somewhat negative and less than 5% feeling negative. However, fewer student-athlete respondents indicated feeling positive about their ability to keep up with classes (51%). This needs to be considered as student-athletes showed strong interest in receiving a range of educational resources during the pandemic.

Coaching Tip: As it becomes increasingly likely that some, if not all, academic instruction in the U.S. will be online in 2020-21, coaches may want to help students identify academic support personnel at the school year or semester's outset. Assessing internet connectivity and pointing students to technology resources (e.g. hotspot or laptop rental, discounted broadband, etc.) may help ameliorate academically related stresses later in the school year.

LIVING ENVIRONMENT

About 80% of student-athletes surveyed said they were living away from campus and with parents, family or a significant other. Nine percent were living with teammates or other friends, 4% were living alone and 3% remained in campus housing.

Nine of 10 student-athletes reported being in a stable housing situation and having access to enough food to meet their daily needs. While 80% reported knowing how to access a medical provider for physical health needs, 60% of men and 55% of women said they know how to access mental health support in their area. Those students living alone reported lower levels of agreement on all items.

Coaching Tip: Get to know your athletes and consider asking about their living situation, knowing that all are not the same. Some of these questions may be sensitive and student-athletes may not feel comfortable disclosing needs or concerns in a team setting, so check-ins both one and one as well as in a group setting may be helpful.

TRAINING

Of the athletes surveyed, 4 in 5 cited local regulations and a lack of access to appropriate facilities as barriers to their athletics training. In terms of resources specific to their training and physical well-being, respondents generally would look to coaches as their primary source of information. They also would turn to coaches to help maintain social connections.

Barriers to Training	
Local regulations regarding travel, facility closures and public gatherings	83%
Lack of access to appropriate facilities	79%
Lack of access to appropriate equipment	72%
Lack of access to training partners	69%
Lack of access to coaches	50%
Fear of exposure to COVID-19	43%
Lack of motivation to train	40%
Family/personal responsibilities	30%
Too stressed or anxious to train	21%
Too sad or depressed to train	13%

Table 2. Barriers to Training (Percent who "Agree" or "Strongly Agree," All Participants).

In addition to structural barriers, participants also indicated that emotional barriers were impacting their ability to train, including a fear of exposure to COVID-19 (43%), lack of motivation (40%),

feelings of stress or anxiety (21%), and sadness or depression (13%).

Coaching Tip: While access to athletics facilities will likely become more available, coaches may want to assess athletes' other concerns about returning to practice and competition. Bringing in a mental health professional may assist players in developing strategies to address stress and anxiety. More education about the virus, how it spreads and how other coaches and administrators are addressing key means of transmission of COVID-19 may be helpful.

RESOCIALIZATION STATUS

As rates of new infection begin to plateau and even decline in some countries, there is mounting enthusiasm for a resurrection of sport (Baggish et al, 2020). NCAA members have also begun preparing plans to resume college sports and return college athletes and staff to campus, as local and state governments and public health officials relax stay-at-home orders.

It is important to recognize that every community is different, and schools may return to campus at different times. But each will have to balance the need to return with the top priority of protecting student-athlete health and well-being. Until there is a vaccine in place, medical experts recommend adopting specific practices, including testing, masking and physical distancing when possible and having plans in place for stopping spread if and when staff or students test positive for the coronavirus.

Coaching Tip: Until a vaccine is in place, or until there is effective treatment, the most effective strategy to mitigate COVID-19 spread during resocialization includes the following: Physical distancing; universal masking when physical distancing is not possible; hand hygiene, especially after touching frequently used items or surfaces; using a tissue, or the inside of your elbow, to sneeze or cough into; not touching your face; disinfecting frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible; staying home if you feel sick and following the advice of your health care provider (NCAAb, 2020).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact athletes in multiple ways, but each athlete's living conditions and social context results in a unique experience. Health care providers have an important role in addressing the outcomes of the pandemic response (Pfefferbaum & North, 2020). As a coach, this is very important to recognize since it is certainly possible, even likely, that the virus will again force facility closures, move coursework online, and upend the routines of many players in the coming year. Also, these interruptions will be localized and their timing unpredictable. As we deal with the various COVID-19 related issues, coaches play an important role in the physical, psychological and emotional recovery of the players they coach. Getting to know athletes on and off the court and build trust early may make it easier to pinpoint their needs and connect them with resources should in-person contact with you, as a coach, as well as teammates again be prohibited. Finally, historically underrepresented or socially marginalized populations have been found to experience higher risks of infection and death, so you want to take that into account when working to understand your players' mindset in terms of return to play.

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RECOMMENDED ITF TENNIS COACH CONTENT (CLICK BELOW)



Workplace learning and development in tennis coaching

Caio Cortela, Cesar Kist, Hugo Daibert,
Alexandre Tozetto & Michel Milistetd (BRA)

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ABSTRACT

Technology is becoming constantly present in coaches' development around the world. Among the core coaching competences, planning, conducting and evaluating are inherent to coaches' daily practice. In this article, we share the results of an online experience for the development of coaching assessment competence.

Key words: professional development; sport coaching; e-learning.

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INTRODUCTION

Moments of crisis like the ones we are experiencing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, can be favourable for significant advances, in a short period of time. This seems to be the scenario of sports coaches, who have been reviewing their professional intervention to meet the new demands and strategies employed in their development. However, in this moment the main source of coaches' learning, which is personal connections with other professionals, is not available (Stoszowski & Collins, 2016).

For the Brazilian tennis coaches, the current phase has contributed to a movement of approximation between the professionals and to the engagement in different learning opportunities. The number of coaches at the ITF Academy has grown significantly, taking the country to fourth place in absolute values of registered professionals. The lives, video conferences and thematic meetings, in virtual environments such as Instagram, ZOOM and Google Meet, created a movement never seen before in the country, bringing together well-known actors of Brazilian tennis to debate the national context and present their point of view on topics related to the modality.

In the beginning, this movement was accompanied by an expressive number of spectators who felt "anxious" (FOMO addiction) due to not being able to follow all the actions published on social networks. Almost three months later, even with the social distance maintained in most of the country, the situation seemed to have changed, with a substantial reduction in these actions and in the participation of coaches. This change or demotivation of professionals reveals the coaches' perception that learning does not occur simply by accumulating information (Trudel et al., 2013). The professional learning process depends on elements such as the possibilities of trying new ideas, implementing them in coaches' work routine and having support to reflect on the results of the applied strategies.

Considering the benefits of the platforms of social interaction, this experience report describes the work done for the development of a competence considered central to coaches', the evaluation of the training session, in a project that aims to provide continuous professional development of coaches within their work context.

THE SCENARIO

The project takes place at Fly Sports, a reference company in the process of training tennis players in Brazil, with three headquarters in the city of Belo Horizonte. At the beginning of the work, the company had approximately 400 tennis players (n=320 participation and n=80 performance) and 18 coaches with 18.7±12.3 years of professional experience.

THE PROGRAM

The objective of this program was to contribute coaches' ongoing learning, based on the workplace learning perspective (Rynne et al., 2010). Previously, the action plan was planned to take place primarily in person, through monthly visits to the company units. With the COVID-19, it was necessary to restructure the strategies, aiming to take advantage of the moment of interruption of activities to advance the work with the coaches, with all the actions being carried out in a virtual environment. Figure 1 presents the summary of the steps completed prior to the evaluation cycle.

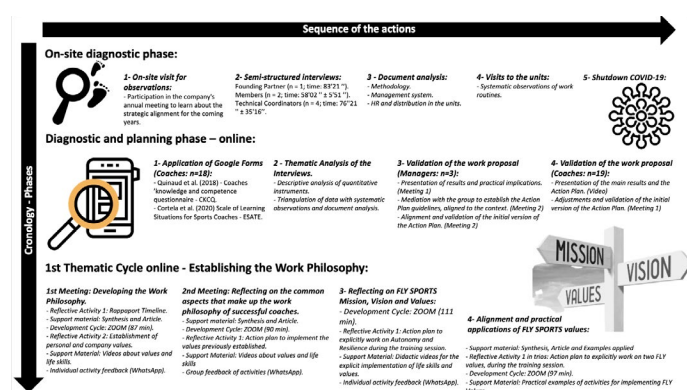


Figure 1: General overview of the steps taken in the program.

The program started in a diagnosis phase through meetings with club stakeholders. As a result of the diagnosis phase, the company's work philosophy, Mission, Vision and Values were reviewed and adjusted. In possession of this information, the first moment of formation of the program addressed the construction of a work philosophy. The coaches were encouraged to make their values explicitly, to identify the points of approach with the company's philosophy and to transform these values into practical actions in their coaching.

DEVELOPING THE COMPETENCE TO EVALUATE THE TRAINING SESSION

The second point of attention identified in the diagnosis phase was the lower self-perception of knowledge and skills related to the evaluation of the training session. Even as they attribute great importance to the evaluation process, tennis coaches demonstrate difficulties in implementing this competence, which is considered fundamental for success in their activity (Cortela et al. 2020a).

In this way, actions were taken to improve the coaches' evaluation capacity. Five thematic meetings were held, with each of these moments being composed of two cycles, shown in Figure 2.

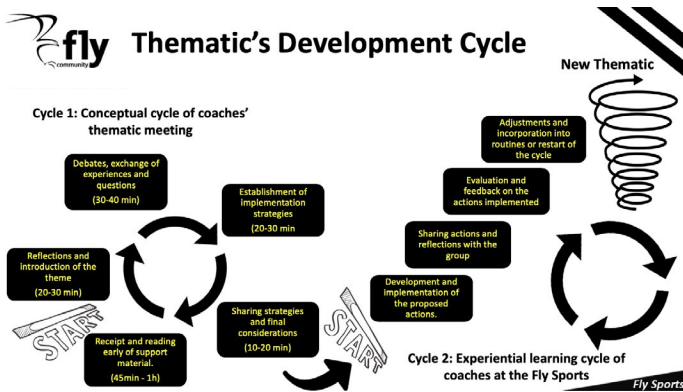


Figure 2: Basic structure of the Theme Development Cycle.

The first cycle is intended to deepen the discussions on the targeted competence, combining different learning situations (mediated, non-mediated and internal). This strategy was adopted based on the results and suggestions described by Cortela et al. (2020b) and after the identification of a distinct trend of attribution of importance to the sources of learning by the coaches of the different units, who presented varied profiles of experience and context of performance.

The second cycle aims to provide opportunities for coaches to put into practice, during work routines, the competence in development. The need to experience and have support for reflection is fundamental so that information can be transformed into deeper levels of learning (Trudel et al. 2013).

All actions related to the development of the evaluation competence of the training session took place in a virtual environment. The total meeting time was approximately seven hours. It is noteworthy that four days before each meeting, the coaches received support material (articles, summaries and / or infographics), in order to foster the ability to debate the topic to be addressed.

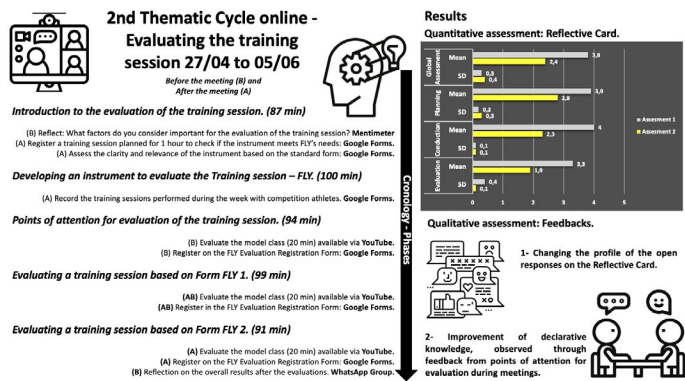


Figure 3: Basic structure of the implemented actions and preliminary results.

After each Conceptual Cycle, coaches were “challenged” to implement practices and reflect on them. The lack of opportunities for face-to-face interaction and real situations on the court, where the assessment could be carried out, was overcome through the use of short video lessons (20 min), provided by the Coach Developer, with common situations in the training sessions.

In parallel to the meetings (Figure 4), a tool was developed for recording and evaluating the training, in line with the literature and the methodology and terminology adopted by the company. In the company's routine, the technical coordinators have to plan the sessions of the week and share them with the coaches, who are responsible for implementing them on the court. However, it was not identified in the process the record of the coaches'

feedback regarding the fulfilment of the planned activities / times, nor about the qualitative aspects of the training. This piece of information that is often undervalued by the coaches has pivotal importance for the improvement of the planning, conduction and evaluation process of coaching. The absence of this information makes planning obsolete, since the actions placed on paper may not reflect the work on the court and causing subsequent planning to deviate from the real needs of tennis players (Coelho, 2016).

Construction of the instrument:

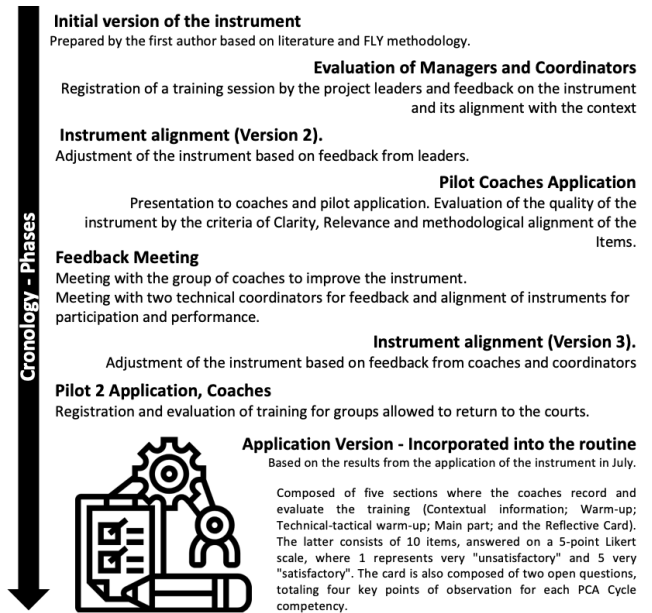


Figure 4: Process of instrument construction.

Before the last two Thematic's Development Cycles the coaches had to evaluate the training sessions through videos. During the meetings they watched the videos again but segmented by sections of analysis. After each block they were able to share their perceptions and were asked by the Coach Developer to reflect and debate key points of the coach's intervention, which were presented in the scene. These meetings ended with the coaches accessing the individual preliminary assessment and the results presented by the general group, and being invited to review their notes made on the Reflective Card.

The preliminary results suggested that the strategies implemented were effective for improving the coaches' assessment capacity (Figure 3). By analysing at least twice of each selected videos and receiving support (support materials and Coach Developer's special help) during the process, the coaches changed their perception of key points related to the quality of the training.

The responses of the Reflective Card (Figure 3) indicated a greater critical capacity of the coaches when evaluating the second video, which presented similar situations to those found in the first. In the same direction, there was greater clarity and a change in the profile of the qualitative training assessment open responses, aimed at identifying the points of attention for the planning of the next sessions, with a focus on the technical aspects of the tennis players who participated of the session (ex: improving control with change of direction; improving the timing; technical aspects of movement), for the didactic-pedagogical aspects of the training and the coach's intervention (present objective at the beginning of the session and end the training by doing the connection with the training objective, greater consistency in the connection between the exercises that were not aligned with each other and with the main objective).

CONCLUSION

The use of technology, through simulated training videos, combined with deliberate reflection, proved to be a viable possibility for the development of the evaluation competence of tennis coaches. Studies using this combination have shown positive results with different coach profiles, indicating an improvement in self-awareness about the training philosophy on professional intervention.

The scenario of COVID-19 brought to the fore the recognition of the importance of the use of technologies for coaches' development, and this is a trend that should be increasingly observed in the daily lives of these professionals. However, it seems urgent to move forward in order to give meaning to the use of this important tool.

If, on the one hand, technological advances allow us to be connected and access an immeasurable amount of data, on the other hand we are challenged that this information has quality and can be accommodated and converted into knowledge.

Thematic chats and meetings are important and can serve as a trigger for learning. However, in order to move to deeper levels and favour the process of accommodating this information as knowledge, other premises must be fulfilled, such as: the recognition of the contextual needs of the coaches as a starting point for learning; engaging in deliberate learning routines for continuous improvement; openness to the new and the possibility of experimentation; and support for the implementation and reflection on new routines.

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[RECOMMENDED ITF TENNIS ICOACH CONTENT \(CLICK BELOW\)](#)



Reopening of tennis clubs and solutions for changing consumer habits in the COVID-19 era

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ABSTRACT

This article offers a general overview of the drastic effects so far on sports industries of the Covid-19 pandemic and the attempts to contain its spread. It seeks specifically to give a framework that can support tennis clubs in their strategies for reopening, by utilizing a SWOT analysis as a basis to map clearly their current moment. It argues that all sports industries will emerge from this period radically transformed, that sports facilities such as tennis clubs need to alter their approach for this new era, and offers practical suggestions for how that might be achieved successfully.

Key words: COVID-19, re-opening, clubs, consumers

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INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic is the defining global health crisis of our time, and it may be considered the most significant global challenge since World War Two. The pandemic has triggered the most severe economic recession in nearly a century, which may prove worse than the financial and economic crisis of 2008-09. The fast and dramatic changes due to Covid-19 are far from over, with great uncertainty still about the future. The degree to which individuals, organisations and institutions can adapt will determine whether societies manage to succeed in managing this crisis or continue to have more problems with adverse long-term effects. But what is undoubtedly clear is that the post-pandemic world will be different socially, economically, and health-wise. Health is guaranteed to be a dominating issue over the next few years, with experts anticipating significant shifts in the viewpoints and behaviour of individuals and organisations. Societies can expect significant changes in the following areas: trade, education, information technologies, tourism, social networks, faith, and international order (Sharfuddin, 2020). On the economic side, international financial institutions estimate an overall fall in global GDP between 2.4 to 2.8% this year (CNBC, 2020). As a result of the pandemic's economic impact, consumer income and expenditure are expected to decrease soon. However, increased spending is reported in some areas, with shifts in consumer behaviour towards new preferences expected to continue.

To fight with Covid-19, governments all around the world adopted a wide range of strict protective measures. These measures have included the closing of educational institutions, cancellation of mass social gatherings, national and international travel bans, restrictions on cultural and sporting events and finally, the imposition of lockdown condition on vast populations (Parnell et al., 2020). Of course, sports clubs and exercise facilities are among the organisations greatly affected. As contemporary sports consumption is highly dependent on live sporting events, these closures and cancellations have had broad disruptive effects. The Covid-19 crisis is somewhat different from previous global crises and has had real and tangible impacts on the sports industry. Some consolations might be that in certain countries where lockdowns and closures have seen a degree of normalisation, consumer interest in sports and exercise activities has been growing. The Covid-19 pandemic period has seen a move away from indoor sports facilities towards outdoor facilities, trails and other recreational areas. Similarly, online sports applications and also physical and mental awareness training sessions have all witnessed an increase in demand.

This article attempts to identify and discuss various effects of Covid-19 on tennis clubs and provide strategic suggestions to minimise the negative impacts of the virus on these enterprises.



DISCUSSING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SPORT IN DIFFERENT ASPECTS

Recently, sports organisations, including tennis clubs in many countries, have opened their doors and started with their operations under new normal regulations, involving a whole new set of restrictions and rules. Due to the changing behaviour of sports consumers and these new regulations, business will be conducted very differently. Teams must learn how to work together remotely, and organisations will have to find new ways of delivering their services from a distance. Clubs, coaches, medical staff and players should all be prepared for a challenging period (Mohr et al., 2020). In this section, we aim to identify some of the emerging changes in the consumption and delivery of sports.

One consequence of lockdown conditions has been that the demand for home fitness equipment such as yoga mats, free weights, resistance bands and exercise balls has sharply increased (Hammami et al., 2020).

Digital transformation of sports, though by far not a new topic, has accelerated dramatically during the time of the pandemic. The delivery of certain exercise forms such as Pilates, fitness and yoga are far more amenable to adaptation than tennis, with certain services moving quickly to online platforms. Recently, we witnessed a boom in YouTube workout channels, yoga classes via Zoom, Skype aerobics classes, etc.

Delivering sports through online platforms has many advantages, decreasing costs and time consumption. On the other hand, it is hard to say that consuming sports online offers a comparable experience to live gatherings. As a result, the social aspect of sports may gain more value in the future.

These are only some of the impacts which we expect to witness. However, the sports industry consists of many clusters, consisting of various products and services. The scope of this article is confined to providing tennis club management with a source of information for strategic planning during the Covid-19 era.

SWOT ANALYSIS FOR TENNIS CLUBS TO EXAMINE THE CURRENT CONDITIONS CORRECTLY

For this study, we chose to implement a SWOT analysis, which is a robust tool for strategy formulation and selection. However, it should be noted that this analysis is relative to our given context and certain factors might vary elsewhere.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionals who have been waiting and planning for a long time to work • Increased consciousness of members and club employees <p>Having time to plan preparation process until the club opens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panic phase has passed - management capable of dealing with crisis competently • Having facilities with wide open spaces, outdoor courts • Trustworthy facilities with high level of competence in cleaning and hygiene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees suffering from lack of physical activity (deconditioning) • Increased cleaning and disinfectant expenses • Insufficient number of cleaning staff • Failure to increase number of personnel depending on increased workload at the same rate • Difficulty of members to comply with current cleaning practices and rules • Problem of allocating shares to promotional budget • Many clubs have had to pay rent even without income for months
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire of members waiting for the opening of facilities • Increasing importance of preventive health and need for physical exercise • Opportunity to apply cleaning rules that could not be applied previously • Relatively increased negotiability of new sports equipment • Individual training sessions • Possibility of extra sales during summer period (relatively fewer sales in an ordinary summer) • Hybrid member exercise tracking systems • Availability of on-site monitoring software for distancing measures which can track people within club space • Increasing necessity and possibilities of personnel to improve their health knowledge • Increased awareness of elderly population on positive effects of exercise on health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second wave risk of Covid-19 • Possibility of having a member or employee that contracted Covid-19 • Fearful member profile that resists coming to facilities considering the outbreak has not yet passed • Restriction in purchasing power of members due to general economic problems • Non-sectoral authorities, politicians, boards that do not want clubs to operate • Insecurity towards sector if any other tennis club does not comply with hygiene rules • Negative impact of media making comments and news with insufficient information • Sectoral negativities in a highly competitive environment

TASKS FOR TENNIS CLUBS AFTER THE OPENING

As with all organisations, tennis clubs should build on their strengths and try to minimise their weaknesses. Especially during the Covid-19 era, tennis clubs have to maximise their response to opportunities and ultimately overcome threats. In the following section, we have aimed at creating a to-do list for this purpose.

First, members need to be informed about the practices and rules in the Covid-19 era. There should be daily evaluations about Covid-19 cleaning and hygiene applications, and continuous improvement of these applications through feedback. Continued promotion through social media and other platforms by sharing images and videos from facilities would inspire trust in members who are considering returning. Potential new or existing customers might be better persuaded by a personal phone call. Previous crowd group sessions (for example a tennis school for children) should be divided into smaller groups, with the number of sessions increased and campaigns made for individual training sessions. In-house team meetings should be held more frequently and in a knowledge-sharing manner so that negative situations are resolved with proactive methods before they occur. We suggest sharing plans for the future to ensure the continuity of members and keeping members informed of plans and changes. Evaluation, scoring and updating of the applications at regular intervals after the opening in the project management format are also recommended. Ensuring an insulated and infection-free environment is the most critical issue during this process, and management's task is to draw on all available resources to achieve this goal.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

There is no doubt that we are witnessing one of the most extraordinary and unprecedented periods in the modern world. But tennis clubs must convince their members to come back. Tennis clubs offer a means to health and wellness, and this is what people need. The only way that your members will come back is if they are assured that coming to you is still their best option. Clubs will reopen, and the world of sports will be active again. However, it is impossible to believe that we will see a return to how things were done before the pandemic. The world is verging on a new reality, and sports industries have to be transformed in this direction. These changes will leave tennis clubs with some complicated questions, centring on how to deliver quality services to customers that ensure their safety and inspire their confidence.

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RECOMMENDED ITF TENNIS COACH CONTENT (CLICK BELOW)



Coaching and coaches in the COVID-19 situation. The Polish perspective

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to share the situation faced by Polish tennis in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. The beginning of the 2020 looked just like the next prosperous year to come. With a new and dynamic leadership, the Polish Tennis Association (PTA) have been looking forward into the future. The budget was growing and all programmes and activities, from performance sport to Tennis 10 were also growing. The different projects are presented and discussed.

Key words: COVID-19, coaching, coaches

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INTRODUCTION

The beginning of the 2020 looked just like the next prosperous year to come. With a new and dynamic leadership, the Polish Tennis Association (PTA) have been looking forward into the future. The budget was growing and all programmes and activities, from performance sport to Tennis 10 were growing, too. We were looking forward and preparing for our major event - a Davis Cup tie against Hong Kong, in conjunction with the annual XXXI Tennis Coaches Conference in Kalisz, the oldest city in Poland.

The COVID-19 situation already “existed” but abroad. The first case became known on 4th March when players from Hong Kong were already in the country for the Davis Cup tie (Corona Tracker, 2020). Due to the changing nature of the situation, the local authorities decided not to cancel the Davis Cup tie but to play it without audience (Tennis World, 2020). So, the coaches conference was at the same time and venue but the attendants could not watch matches. Because of this decision, it was agreed to extend the programme of the conference up to 3 days in order to provide a better use of the time for the approximately 250 coaches attending. In fact, were very lucky because just some days later all activities were suspended, including all our events like pre-season camps, coaches’ courses and tennis10 tournaments.

The necessary isolation changed coaches and players life from one day to another and in many cases, became quite dramatic. As it is the case in many other countries, the vast majority of tennis coaches in Poland are self-employed (Gowling, 2019). Therefore, their income is mostly based on court activities. They obviously could not work on line. Thanks to the quick decisions of the national government, that announced an anti-crisis programme called the “Financial Shield”, which included assistance reliefs in the repayment of the loans and in the cancelling or deferring of rents, the situation of the self-employed coaches was alleviated. On average, a tennis coach could get directly or indirectly approximately \$3000 of public assistance (British Polish Chamber of Commerce, 2020).

ACTIVITIES

The Polish Tennis Association tried to deal with the situation as a kind of blessing and opportunity – suddenly we have got an extra time for us. PTA and ATT (Academy of Tennis Coaches) immediately announced an initiative – “If we can’t play – let’s study”. We have welcomed with thankfulness the ITF’s initiative to use ITF Academy for free, and at the moment there are almost 550 Polish coaches registered (ITF Academy, 2020). In addition, the national educational platform has been created with 300 coaches participating in the PTF certification courses. This was a relatively easy process as the PTF has been already working on adding e-learning activities into the regular courses for over



2 years, so the situation only speeded up the implementation process (Mester & Wigger, 2001; Over & Sharp, 2008).

The e-learning content of the PTF coach education programme is quite straight forward since in order for the coaches to finalise the courses (PT CBI, CAP or HP), they have to complete the on-line section of each course by reading the content and answering to several questions. The questions (and answers) change in order to keep the coaches informed and entertained at the same time. The completion of a module was a condition to be accepted to take part in a face-to-face course in June (Sackey-Addo & Pérez, 2016).

We must admit that that we regret that we did not start the e-learning as a part of traditional courses earlier. From our perspective – when it was again allowed to restart the courses, the candidates who followed the ITF Academy presentations and passed the on-line tests, on both platforms were much better prepared for the practical parts of the courses and, therefore this made it easier for the tutors or facilitators to transform knowledge into competences. We truly believe this is a fundamental tool for the coaches (Cushion et al., 2010).

The conclusion of this section is that it was really worth to use the lockdown as an opportunity for further development of our coaching system and we believe that we will be ready to apply for an ITF Recognition of our Coach Education System at gold level very soon.

RETURN TO PLAY

The other area in which we were quite efficient was that of the return to play and, slightly later to competitions in all age groups. Our President Miroslaw Skrzypczynski, the board and the Head Coach Tomasz Iwanski did a big effort to persuade the Ministry of Sports that tennis is a very safe sport. Due to their in-depth knowledge of the game, they put together new safety rules for tennis which were presented to the Ministry of Sports and permission was asked to return to play as the very first sport. The rules and procedures were quite strict but necessary to a safe

return to play under the new conditions. All tennis clubs (except the indoor facilities) returned to play during May. Besides, the PTF have also organised training camps for all national teams from 12 & under to Fed Cup and Davis Cup.

The next step was to return to competitions. All age groups including the Wheelchair Tour started their competitions. The original plan of organising a series of ITF events was turned into the idea of organising a series of tournaments called "LOTOS PZT Polish Tour" with a prize money of over \$400.

As per the main events, the national championships have started from the beginning of July. The National Women and Men Championships will offer 40,000\$ in prize money. Top players including Kamil Majchrzak and Hubert Hurkacz will take part in this event.

PROGRAMME OF TALENT IDENTIFICATION

The last project which we are proud of, planned as a new initiative for 2020, is the Programme of Talent Identification (PIT). The original plan of this programme was to monitor a number of players aged 9-11 years old during the spring time. Then, the most promising ones would be identified and invited to take part in talent identification camps that will be organised during the summer (Unierzyski, 2002; 2003; 2006; Unierzyski, Wielinski, & Zhanel, 2003). Due to the fact that the competitions were cancelled, we have asked all licenced coaches to directly nominate their most talented players to the programme. Furthermore, we have established simple selection procedures and have asked the coaches to send us video clips that included one motor test (agility run) and several strokes including the serve. Over 200 coaches sent video clips of their players. Obviously, the information that the talent identification team got was somehow limited but good enough to invite almost 100 players for "Orange", "Green" and "Yellow" 10-day camps that will be staged in August.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this article has been to provide a general overview of the programmes organised by the Polish Tennis Association in order to continue with the activity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A number of different projects have been presented with the intention to describe the challenges and solutions that PTA, coaches, players and different tennis stakeholders in our country have faced during these times.

As specifically relates to coach education, it is well known that one of the coaches' competences is the ability to adapt to various situations. We believe that our association, board and

the coaches did a good job during these difficult times, and effectively assisted our players to continue their development.

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RECOMMENDED ITF TENNIS COACH CONTENT (CLICK BELOW)



Accommodate and adapt - Coaching in COVID-19 environment

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ABSTRACT

Tennis play worldwide has been heavily impacted by COVID-19, with many of our landmark events not being played or postponed to non-traditional times. Many tennis facilities have had to close due to governmental restrictions to stem the growth of the coronavirus pandemic. As we start to come out of this lockdown, there is an opportunity to leverage the health benefits and natural physical distancing aspects of tennis to come out stronger and increase our global awareness of our sport, where one can play while having fun at any age. A major stakeholder in this realization is the coach. It is hoped that this article can provide some practical insight into how with a laser focus on learning methodology, skill acquisition, and a player-centered approach, we can accommodate and adapt and grow our sport.

Key words: COVID-19, coaching, methodology

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INTRODUCTION

We trust that everyone is safe and well. We also hope that as you are reading this article, you have been given the green light to return to tennis play and continue to grow the game. According to the recently shared ITF Return to Tennis-29th June Update and knowing this is a worldwide publication, we are all coming back at different times and restrictions (ITF, 2020). Tennis and golf have been primarily regarded as the safest sports to get back to physical activity due to its natural ability of physical distancing (CDC, 2020). Here in the USA, we are back to play with restrictions in many areas.

We are very grateful to be back in action and playing the sport we love so dearly. The USTA has just launched a "Get Out and Play" campaign encouraging safe return to tennis play for existing and new tennis players. Some states in the USA, such as Florida, in their initial phase-out of the lockdown, were suggesting tennis as a safe option for physical activity. We also believe that our American Development Model (Long Term Athletic Development Plan) is well positioned to be our guiding light and deliver our sport in the new normal with the need for better player experiences, developmentally appropriate play and competition, more local access to tennis, and having fun along the way.

To set the scene for this article and provide a methodology on how we can cope with COVID-19, it is appropriate to look at the words of an icon, Marcus Aurelius, emperor of the Roman Empire, one of the greatest leaders of all time. "Our actions may be impeded.... But there can be no impeding our intentions or dispositions because we can accommodate and adapt. The mind adapts and converts to its own purposes the obstacle to our acting" (Holiday, 2020).

ACCOMMODATE

In this unprecedented time, as Marcus Aurelius is suggesting, it is important to take time to reflect and be aware of our current predicament. We are appreciative of the ITF leading the way with this COVID-19 monographic issue. We all know how negative it is with the coronavirus, so we will not dwell on this but instead look forward to coming out of this pandemic positively. The focus of this submission is to present practical applications to both welcome back current players and engage new players. The feedback we are currently receiving at the USTA is that a large number of facilities, although starting up has been gradual, are receiving a lot of interest in new players wanting to play tennis.

Applying the sentiment of Marcus Aurelius' impactful quote, how do we "accommodate and adapt" to these current conditions and come out as winners? As just mentioned, we need to reflect and understand what our current and future players have and will endure. We feel the following is an accurate account of our current condition:



- Kids unable to go to school and spend time with their friends - virtual school seems to be the norm
- Increased screen time
- Limitations to venues and programs that provide physical activity
- Limited free play and physical activity - only in the home environment
- No social interactions through sport participation
- No competitive play
- More people interested in taking up tennis due to safe COVID-19 conditions
- Coming back to play without having done much physical activity
- Mental stress endured during the lockdown
- Returning to play at a reduced level

Before we go into the COVID-19 suggested coaching methods due to lockdown, the health and wellness of the public has been put into question. Re-emphasizing the benefits of playing tennis or for that matter sports is important. Many social media posts have brought forth the safeness of tennis play, knowing in traditional singles play distancing is 78 feet, much greater than the 6 ft. recommended by the CDC (CDC, 2020).

We are going to cover specific elements of coaching tennis that have always been part of the skill acquisition/coaching repertoire. However, due to the outbreak of COVID-19, we feel certain coaching methodologies that might not have been practiced are

more prevalent than ever and can be great tools to use to grow our great lifetime sport. You will notice our method presents coaching/skill acquisition evidence backed theories and then centers their relevance with a COVID-19 practical application.

ADAPT

Sporting activity - Definitions and importance

Research has delved into understanding more the skill acquisition process throughout development, more specifically, how different learning activities can nurture continued engagement (Hodges & Williams, 2020). A distinction has been identified between those activities that are termed practice, which focuses on skill development and performance and those identified as play, in which the emphasis is on enjoyment (Cote, Baker, & Abernethy, 2007). Sports activities are often placed as a dichotomy between play and practice, and there is a growing desire that a more nuanced conceptualization of sports activities is required (Ford, Coughlan, Hodges, & Williams, 2015).

A recent formation of practice and play activities has been suggested along two axes (Cote & Erickson, 2015; Cote, Erickson, & Abernethy, 2013). One axis refers to the importance which is attributed to the activity, ranging from more extrinsic or performance-related (practice) to more intrinsic or enjoyment related (play). The other axis refers to how much instruction and input are assigned by an adult or the athlete. These two axes, when working harmoniously, together form a matrix in which different sports activities can be situated.



Spontaneous (Self-Peer led drills) - activities that cannot be defined as deliberate practice, play, or play practice. A form of informal learning that is determined by the athlete and no supervision by adults.

Practice organization to improve tennis playing skills

The planning and execution of practices by coaches depend on factors such as age, the experience of the player(s), and the difficulty of the skill. Research has pointed out that we should be challenging the traditional approach of "drilling" or "grooving" the stroke - using large numbers of repetitions with minimal variation (Reid, Elliot & Crespo, 2015).

Consideration is required on the amount of mental effort needed to perform the skill. Blocked practice - is the repetition multiple times of the same shot before changing to another shot - the



Figure 1-Matrix of sports activities (Cote & Erickson, 2015; Cote et al., 2013)

COVID-19 Practical application

Organization of random practices focusing on partner work with play connection and creativity:

- Random practices are more suited to engage the players in play.
- We have an excellent opportunity to eliminate lines due to the need for safe physical distancing and have more random play.
- Partner activities are a great way to facilitate random practices. Group players with similar abilities and challenge their play through play connections with other players.
- Implement random practices through having more partner work and less coach feeding.
- A great way to promote creativity is by asking the players to come up with their own activities and different ways to pick up the balls without touching them.

COVID-19 Coaching application

Sporting activity focus on Play and Practice and Spontaneous Play

- Play and practice should be used more often; start practices with tennis free play or warm ups that are games.
- Make sure you manipulate the constraints (ball, racquet, court) to promote competence and confidence with both play and practice.
- Spontaneous play should also be used more and could be in the form of virtual engagement with coach sharing activities that can be done at home individually or with a parent or sibling.
- Promote family play.
- Encourage free play with friends.

Deliberate Practice (Coach led drills) - training activities defined as a) specific focus on improving performance; b) a requirement for cognitive and/or physical effort; and c) contribution to skill development.

Play Practice (Coach led games) - activities that allow engagement in enjoyable, play like activities under the supervision of adults.

Deliberate Play (Self-Peer led games) - sport activities that are intrinsically motivating provide immediate gratification and are positioned to maximize enjoyment.

learner's mental engagement for each shot is minimal. Random practice-varying the shots-requires more mental engagement (Reid, et al., 2015). For example, if a coach asks a player to hit a slice serve from the deuce court, and is then asked to do the same shot again, the mental effort for the second serve is marginal. However, if the player was asked to hit a volley after the slice serve, more mental engagement is needed to produce the new movement sequence.

Research into the two training methods of block and random practice suggests that random leads to improved retention of the varied practiced skill, compared with practicing each task separately for a block of trials (Hodges & Williams, 2020). However, random practice does not improve the player's ability initially where the block practice does (Hodges & Williams, 2020).

Learner state - Developing interest to prolong skill acquisition

An essential factor for exploring interest as a critical ingredient in skill acquisition is that interest can be developed. One component that is essential to engaging and maintaining interest over time is the novelty of the activity. Research has suggested that situational interest in physical education in students was

linked with experiences of challenge, exploration, innovation, and attentional demands (Chen, Gully, & Eden, 2001). The benefit of situational interest includes enhanced content understanding, information seeking, and prolonged engagement (Renninger & Hidi, 2016).

COVID-19 Practical Application

Learner state application focusing on fun and player-centered

- Even though you will have previous players coming back to play, pretend you don't know them. Get to know your players all over again; establish that connection through asking questions.
- Install more fun into your sessions. Ask your players what they think is fun and follow through with one suggestion.
- Within certain constraints, ask players which activities they want to play. Give them autonomy; they will appreciate it.
- Mix up play and practice.
- Incorporate activities from other sports to bring more variety to your sessions.

Possible ways to enhance the novelty of sports activities are encouraging early sampling of different sports, developing coach-led practices involving a range of activities, and infusing elements of play into coach-led practice sessions. Psychology and education research has shown that the shift from external-centered (e.g., adult) processes to learner-centered (e.g., youth) processes is imperative for the development of interest (Renninger & Hidi, 2016). Often in the sport context, athletes are put into learning environments where adults control the agenda.

For youth, broader exploration is required to encourage youth-centered experiences by creating opportunities to participate in sport with different peer groups and various types of environments. Opportunities for youth to be producers of their development, problem-solve, and adapt to new situations can be done through unstructured play activities (Pellegrini, Dupuis, & Smith, 2007). Furthermore, play-based sports activities offer excellent opportunities for skill acquisition by assisting youth to acquire skills that are innovative, adaptive, and resilient. Being exposed to a range of activities builds blocks for youth in their decision making about future engagement in a sport.

Social interactions with parents, coaches, and sports organizations also play a pivotal role in fostering the development of interest (Renninger & Hidi, 2016). Parents are an empowering agent to youth to engage with new sporting opportunities that are personally relevant and meaningful. Coaches can facilitate interest by empowering their athletes to make choices during practices and by designing practices that allow athletes to make personal connections to sports activities.

CONCLUSION

We hope you have found our insight into coaching in the COVID-19 environment impactful. Having a methodology of accommodate and adapt can assist us working as a team to grow our beautiful game. Everyone loves playing the game of tennis. How we can facilitate this objective, mainly showing a little more empathy and understanding of where our players (player-centered approach) are coming from and where they need to go, can bring us to a fruitful coaching place. Stay safe everyone!

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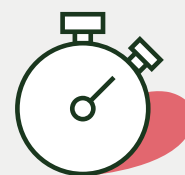
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