

# Progressive Tennis SAMPLE/DRAFT MATERIAL

## ½ Court Tennis

### Goals and Program Content

#### 5-7 Years Old

Note: ideally, players aged 7 will already be playing ¾ court tennis; however most likely there will be a large number of 7 year olds who have limited tennis experience and will need to participate in half court tennis before graduating to ¾ court

#### Goals of Program:

##### Tactical

Overall: to rally with consistency and initiation to matches and learning rules; to be introduced to “basic strategies of moving opponent” and “playing to the opponents weakness” (bh)

##### Psychological

- Make every ball mentality; liking the effort to run and to keep the ball in play
- Love to play

##### Technical

##### Groundstrokes

Overall: establishing consistency through basic reception skills.

- Ready Position (“Be Ready”)
- Unit Turn (both arms and body) before ball bounces (“Get Sideways”)
- Grip change to eastern/semi western
- Balance (“Be Stopped”)
- Neutral or semi-open stance for FH; Neutral, Semi-Open, Closed for 2 hand BH; neutral or closed stance on 1 hand BH
- Prepare racquet with mini-loop or straight and bring the racquet to impact with a stable wrist with the palm facing forward on the FH and the knuckles going toward target on the BH
- Extended hitting zone (“Keep Eyes of Strings Towards Target”)
- Shoulder and racquet move together on FH and 2 hand BH; minimize rotation on 1 hand BH
- Impact at waist level, slightly out front at a comfortable distance from body (“In Front”)

##### Red Flag

1. Wrong Impact Point
2. Extreme Grips/Lack of changing grip
3. Excess movement in wrist segment
4. Arm only swings (1 hand BH exception)
5. Lack of balance

##### Volley

Overall: To warm-up and to get ball back

- Prepare the racquet face in front as the ball crosses net by setting hand open behind impact
- Sideways (turn towards ball) stance
- Impact slightly out in front, comfortable distance from body
- Stable wrist and “Touch” feel

#### Red Flag

- Extreme grips (check 2 hand closely)
- Any swing or wrist instability
- Wrong impact point
- Lack of balance

### **Serve**

Overall: To get the point started

- Start with racquet in slightly cocked position on side of head and slight extension up to impact
- Toss to intended Impact point
- Coordination of toss and hit
- “Touch” feel

#### Red Flag

- Incorrect and/or inconsistent toss/impact point
- Excess body movement or racquet swing
- Extreme Grips
- Poor throwing action

### **Overhead:**

Task: To hit ball at medium pace with a slight downward trajectory to partner

#### Red Flag

Same point as Serve

### **Technique Return of Serve**

Overall: the return of serve is used to begin the point with consistency.

- There is little to no difference between a return of 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> serves at this level. Same fundamentals as Ground strokes

### **Footwork**

Overall: Desire to move - every ball one bounce

- Lively Feet

### **Physical**

See “Fundamentals” program on Long Term Physical Development Program for details

## Half Court Mini Tennis Curriculum

General Description of Course Curriculum: The content is made up of two types of practices. One, which we will call a “Preparatory Practice”, where the main focus is the development of fundamentals through the most common tasks (or situations) which are required for long term development. The second type of practice, which we will call a “Competitive Practice, where the main focus is on competing with a tactical and/or psychological theme. A 35 week program would unfold as follows:

- 2 cycles of 4 prep practices, 1 comp practice (10 wks)
- 4 cycles of 3 prep practices, 1 comp practice (16 wks)
- 3 cycles of 2 prep practices, 1 comp practice (9 weeks)

The following is a rough draft of an outline of the content which provides a very brief description of the tasks which can be developed for each of the basic strokes and associated situations. If this outline is agreed upon, we can then have the lesson plans designed (with few words, good diagrams and easy to use) with a very user friendly format and an associated video to provide the coaches with a clear understanding of the content.

### Preparatory Practice

1.5 hours	20 min	Phys Dev (to be completed using the Physical Long Term Athleted Development Program)
	25 min	<p>Improving our GS consistency (co-operation vs opposition)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Progression to Rally (fh and bh) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self, 3-2-1, share, start ball, get to 1, then 2, 3 and 4</li> <li>• Progressively increase distance</li> <li>• Must have basic fundamentals by the time players are at half court: sideways stance, correct grip, impact in front, hitting zone (see above); recovery should also be stressed in all training</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Rally Cooperative Tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Down-the-line in narrow corridor</li> <li>• X-court exchange</li> <li>• X –court, 1 same distance other angle then deep</li> <li>• From middle, with fh and then bh into both corners (player receiving must do so with fh only, bh only, then appropriate shot</li> <li>• From middle, inside out fh 2 x, then opposite corner</li> <li>• Rally with depth target</li> <li>• 1 Rally at different distances: 1 at same distance, other alternates</li> <li>• x-11 pattern (maybe too complicated)</li> <li>• z pattern (maybe too complicated)</li> <li>• receive down-the line, hit angle</li> <li>• rally at different heights with same landing space</li> <li>• rally at different heights with different landing spaces</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Rally Opposition with constraints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 play in one corner against other play full; must alternate sides</li> <li>• 1 play out of center, other play in center only</li> <li>• both play out of center corridor or lose point</li> <li>• one player play only fh’s, other can use both gs’s</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

- both player use only fh's, if get other to hit bh win pt

12.5 min

### Starting the Point – S & R

1. Getting the serve in
  - Progression to develop fundamentals
    - Coordination of toss and hit (this is most challenging step for young children... may need to use balloon, hand to eventually build up to toss and hit with racquet; also might need lots of repetitions and practice with tossing exercises with non playing hand)
    - Include throwing practice each day... let them throw their serve in targets, different heights, etc.. similar tasks as serving except throwing
    - Serve Tasks:
      - Arched trajectory in court
      - Arched trajectory controlling direction
        - Break into 2 targets
        - Break into 3 target
      - Alter trajectories, arched and straight into box
      - Alter trajectories and direction targets
2. Return: fundamentals are same as for gs; add ready position and emphasize importance of a quick and proper set-up
 

Return Tasks

  - get it back with arched trajectory
  - get it back to bh with arched trajectory (control direction); then with depth
  - get it back to either fh or bh corner (outside of middle, with arched trajectory); then with depth
  - get it back using fh when ball comes to bh with above tasks (can add return and come in to net)

12.5 min

### Playing the net/playing against someone at the net

1. Progression for 1 gs and 1 volley:
  - begin development of volley with one known stroke at a time as it takes time to develop ability to go from fh to bh or bh to fh given the short time to prepare; racquet will begin already in volleying position
    - self rally
    - sharing a ball with partner, 3-2-1
    - volley to volley, rally at short distance (fh to fh; bh to bh, no uncertainly)
    - volley to volley over net
    - volley to gs (close distance)
    - volley to gs (back up)
  - Must have basic fundamentals by the time players are at half court.; correct grip, catching action, see above);
2. Cooperation: Continue development of volleys via unknown ball, thus perception becomes main focus while maintaining fundamentals previously established; now we will introduce a neutral ready position as the players will need to move from this position to volley

3. Cooperation: Volley against GS: play volley with direction control targets, distance control targets, etc... ie. Cooperation with ball controls
4. Opposition:
  - Volleyer starts ball by hitting gs and coming to net, point is played out
  - GS starts by playing shorter ball to volleyer who approaches net and point is played out

Overheads

- Cooperative Progression: develop fundamentals in overhead
  - Gs provide lobs (player learns to lob) to player at net who hits oh gently back to lobber, lobber catches ball with hands and repeats; change roles
  - GS lobs and player at net hit overhead back to lobber
  - GS lobs and player at net alternates direction targets and lobber moves from corner to corner in effort to keep play going
- Opposition:
  - GS starts by with lob and point begins
  - Net player starts by providing ball to GS, GS lobs and point is played out
  - GS starts ball and net player must hit first ball back to GS, who then lobs again and point is played out

20 min      Compete – Scrimmage

**Competitive Practice**

1.5 hours

20 min	Phys Dev
15 min	Pre-Match Warm-Up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ warm up gs, volley, oh and serve-return</li> <li>▪ maintain fundamentals established to date</li> </ul>
55 mins	Competition with Themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ calling the score, rules and good sportsmanship</li> <li>▪ looking like a player, getting and looking ready for every point</li> <li>▪ outrallying your opponent</li> <li>▪ moving the opponent</li> <li>▪ playing to the opponents weakness (starting the point to weakness and getting to weakness)</li> <li>▪ playing to bh when player runs around</li> <li>▪ getting to the net (taking advantage of all shorter balls)</li> </ul>