

World Squash Federation

Coach Education Programme
Level 2

Why a WSF Coach Education Programme?

- WSF Initiative to improve the quality of coaching squash across the World
- To set an agreed standard that is safe and of 'World best Practice'
- Coaching that is quality assured
- Brought together with Collective Knowledge & Collective Experience
- With a clear emphasis on a process of How to Coach

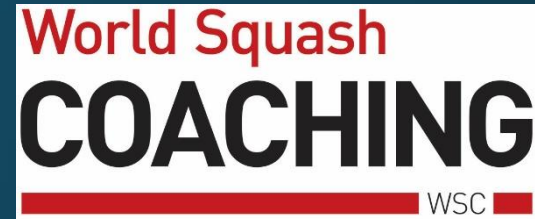
Philosophy

- How Squash is judged
- Open skill = Perception – Decision – Action (PDA)
- Process – LTPD – Biological windows – Neurological pathways
- Based on Knowledge of how squash is played – Skill of Delivery of passing information – Lesson Planning = Process & use of coaching **TOOLS** of **HOW** to coach

Cont'd

- The BIG mistake is to just look at the what – when it is the HOW that moves theory into practice
- It is a PROCESS!! – Order Thoughts – be Explicit
- To know and not to do is to **NOT KNOW!**
- If you have 15 years experience – Please use it – Do NOT repeat 1 years experience 15 times!
- Evolution not Revolution!

The Guiding Principles



1. Game Based
2. Coach the Intention NOT the Action
3. Sub-Conscious Learning NOT Conscious Learning
4. Sally Sunflower – understand individual differences

WSF Level 2 Certificate will enable candidates to:

- Understand the role of a Coach to effect positive development of intermediate players with additional 'Skill & Accuracy'
- Understand the process of coaching 'Tools'
- Effectively demonstrate and use the coaching tools skilfully
- Plan and incrementally deliver a series of lessons to intermediate squash players

Competency 1 – Knowledge and Understanding

At the end of this module coaches will be able to:

- Relate to other coaches and tutors on the course
- Self-reflect as a coach
- Understand the challenges of a WSF L2 coach within the WSF coaching programme
- Re-cap WSF L1 syllabus
- Understand the coaching process of developing skill and accuracy within open rally situations
- Skill - Theory into Practice – Improving the skill of performance

Assessment Criteria

- The course / assessment takes 4 parts:
 1. Pre-course home study: Introduction to the mind and body in action ([Reading list](#))
 - How the body works: Energy systems, testing
 - Mental skills, Motivation, Goal setting, Concentration, Confidence
 - Principles of training for LTPD
 2. Assessment is on-going throughout the delivery of the course with contribution to discussion, Q & A and practical application to activities being taken into consideration.

Cont'd

3. Formal practical assessment with:

- A brief written lesson plan on a given topic to deliver in real time between 20 & 30 minutes
- The safe practical delivery of individual and / or group lesson
- A question and answer session with the tutor / assessor based on the course syllabus and what has been delivered.

4. Post course assignment to produce and deliver a 4 week training plan

- **N.B.** It is expected that on assessment candidates will be suitably dressed, prepared, on time, and having with them any resources they require to coach. The assessment session should be delivered in a real time situation to affect positive change in a player's open rally skill ability whilst being allowed to express their own personality

Understand the challenges of a WSF L2 Coach within the WSF Coaching Programme

WSF MATRIX

Player Level	Player Emphasis	Player Needs	Coaching Style	WSF Coach Education	Duration	LTPD	
PSA / WSA	Training to Win	Sum of Below	Empower	Level 4	N/A	Training to Win	Mental toughness – Performing under pressure – Self control – Self confidence – Minimise errors – Advanced imagery – Lifestyle for a winning mentality - Periodisation Will it make a difference 10 x 1% changes adds up to a huge difference = 10%
National Juniors	Training to Compete	Tactics/Apply Pressure	Direct	Level 3	6 days + pre course reading & post course assignment	Training to Compete – 15 to 23 years	Height changes tend to end – Increase muscle mass – Speed and power training – All physical systems becoming established – Increase training loads - Structured psychological skills practice – Self talk – Mental state of peak performance – Establishing & maintaining concentration/focus – More outcome goals
Intermediate Players	Learning to Train / Training to Train	Skill / Accuracy	Coach	Level 2	4 days + pre course reading & post course assignment	Learning to Train – 8 to 12 years Training to Train – 11 to 16 years	Growth spurts - Improved motor control/coordination helps skill learning/building & skill performance – Neurological pathways still developing – Performance gains largely from growth - Sensitive to aerobic capabilities, flexibility, strength and speed capacities - Linking actions to result - Choosing targets – Focusing of thoughts to actions -Confidence building - Focusing attention – Imagery – Process goals not outcome
Early Learners	Learning to Play	Fun Games Simple Rallies	Teach	Level 1	4 days	Active start - 0 to 6 years FUNdamentals – 6 to 9 years	Rapid development of the nervous system - Aerobic capacity is primary - Skeletal system is fragile - Rapid development of the neural pathways - Coordination improvements - Mental skills developing rapidly – Focusing of attention – Modelling of game situations

Skills Are:

Sensory - Motor i.e. From the sensory organs
Sight – Sound – Touch – Physical movement

Perceptual Motor Skills – Often referred to Open Skill

- Big muscle groups – Which use the whole body e.g. Squash
- Small –e.g. Keyboard skills
- **NB** Most gross skills also involve some use of the fine coordination's e.g. Squash

Understand the coaching process of developing Skill and Accuracy within Open Rally situations

Theory into Practice

- Definitions of the different types of skill and guidance through practical examples of how they apply in a learning situation specifically for squash

Open Skill

An open skill is 'To apply a movement which is technically sound for a particular action and which is an integral part but NOT the whole part of the skill e.g. Where the situation is changing requiring the player to

1. Read the opponents actions
2. Make a decision as to what they will do i.e. starting to move towards where they will time the ball
3. Strike the ball accurately to the chosen target

Cont'd

Closed Skill

Action / Technique of striking may be described as a **closed skill**

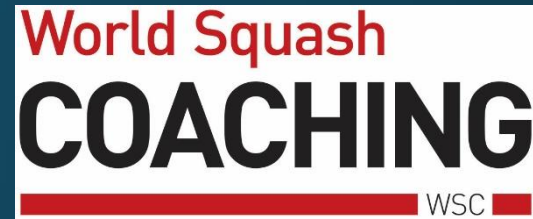
Squash players may be proficient in striking the ball but lack the skill in an open rally because they do not recognise (Perception) the right opportunity to make a good decision and to then use their technique

N.B. It is imperative that squash is taught mainly for it as reflected in a match situation



Hicks Law

Hick's law - Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hick's_law



- Translation of Hick's Law into squash specific example e.g. Player A plays a very tight shot to length with the ball rolling along the wall. This suggests that the options available to player B are severely limited – Player A anticipates that player B is very likely to play the ball straight which equals one option – Hence player A has more time to choose and execute his next chosen shot
- If player A plays a very loose ball then player B has unlimited options – Hence player A has a lot more information to process the actions of player B. Hence player A has a longer reaction time, taking more time to process
- Highlight the difference between **Anticipation** - What is likely to happen & **Perception** – Proof of what has happened???
- That playing a game or rally involves all of the actions taken over the whole period of the activity of the game or rally e.g. WWWH = PDA and is described as an **open skill**
- That every player will develop their own style as dictated by their nature, coordination, length of levers etc

Factors Affecting Skill Learning

- Coaching
- Demonstration
- Verbal Directions
- Practice
- Competition
- Knowledge of Results
- Motivation
- Distribution of practice
- Speed and accuracy
- Whole and Part Learning
- Progressive Skill Building

World Squash
COACHING

WSC

Coaching

- Is where the coach guides the learning process and sets practice progressions with specific areas of focus for the learner so enhancing the learning process and improvement e.g. PDA - Grip – George – Linking action to result
- Good instruction helps the learner players progress more quickly rather than just performing practice drills without specific areas of focus
- Advantageous to get this right in the early learning stages
- Even with good instruction the player must be allowed to 'have a go' and progress with some trial and error – As in do not provide any feedback! – TOOL: - When problems do less!
- The player needs to adapt to movements of 'good form' – TOOL: o- ---100
- One size does not fit all – Use different areas of focus
- Encourage experimentation to help develop personal style

Demonstration

- A picture paints a thousand words
- Practical demonstration is very valuable at all levels – providing it is good
- The player needs to see the demonstration in context of the rally for it to be effective e.g. WWWH = PDA
- Demonstration should preferably be done at normal speed with little dialogue using the following process
- **B. Ideally all 6 of the following progressions should be applied in the single session**

Sequence of Progression

1. In real time with the coach and player circling and driving to length on one wall, the coach introduces the area of focus so the player recognises the situation where there is an opportunity to produce the designated shot
2. The player in an unpressured situation tries the new shot within a Closed Skill routine for a max 2mins. This progresses to:
3. A Show & Test rally where the coach highlights the most relevant visual cues for the player to focus attention on – To then test when the player feels that s/he can recognise a good opportunity – Progresses to:
4. A cooperative game in an Open Skill format, emphasising accuracy with both coach and player taking the opportunities to play the new shot when appropriate – Progresses to:
5. Open Rallies in real time for consolidation practice
6. Include the trained task in a practice match

Verbal Instruction

- The technique of striking the ball within a skill is relatively simple so the skill becomes the ability to recognise the ongoing situation of reading the opponents actions and making a good decision as to what response (Action) to take e.g. PDA
- Therefore verbal instructions should focus attention on how to recognise the best options. In deciding what to look for and how best to choose, use PDA
- Detailed descriptions of striking movements should be avoided or kept to a minimum – Example of teaching an infant to walk
- With an open skill players learn best when they actively perceive, decide and act from the instruction
- As players progress, verbal instruction can help to add new meaning to the skill. This helps the player to correct his own actions
- The TOOL: When **problems occur – Do less** applies, which simply means take information away. The less conscious players are of their physical movements the more their natural body rhythms are allowed to take over
- The tutor introduces a practical example of sprinting as fast as possible while trying to describe what each part of the body is doing at any given time. The same could be done with a walking example

Practice

- As discussed in the demonstration sequence / process
- Let them try – Modify things to make it work
- Repetition does not necessarily make it better, often it makes it worse as a poor movement pattern becomes ingrained
- It takes time to overcome errors and learn more efficient and effective ways

N.B. Relates directly to the 'Progression Sequence'

Competition

- Is to measure oneself against / test / gain superiority over / defeat an opponent
- 'One – on – One' direct opposition
- It is the way that squash is played, competed for, won and lost
- Hence competition is essential to the skill learning process as it includes all the components required in squash
- Competition can take 2 forms to gain maximum benefit
- Practice matches – Where no real pressure exists to win or gain ranking points – where the aim is to make all of the elements come together
- Competition matches / Tournaments often with crowds / noise etc, where there is a perceived pressure to win

Knowledge of Results

- Knowledge of Results is a form of feedback to pupils, specifically referring to the performance of a skill.
 - If players practise without knowing how well they are doing it is very unlikely that they will improve – **TOOL: WWWH-PDA**
 - When players acknowledge their mistakes they can begin to take steps to correct them
 - The key lies with identifying the cause of the mistake – **TOOLS: Diagnostic Clock & Linking the Action to Result** both apply
 - Physical targets can play a big part in providing knowledge of results which allows players to adapt their actions to compensate
 - Add attacking options to press home an advantage and defensive options when under pressure
- N.B.** It is important that knowledge of results are obtained within an open rally situation to gain accurate information as to the cause of mistakes rather than the symptom

Motivation

- Squash should be pleasurable with some degree of success which is essential to continue in the sport. Therefore the feelings that accompany playing squash are important
- Pleasure arises when the right actions are taken and frustration occurs when things go wrong
- Knowledge of the results helps the player to identify skill deficiencies thus aiding the developmental process which in turn provides the motivation to improve
- It is the quality and focus of the practice that aids learning and motivation
- Learning methods that provide steady progress prevent bad habits and ensure the correct development of squash skills e.g. **PDA**

Cont'd

- Praise from the coach improves the development of skill but when used too often it loses value
- Do not criticise too quickly, and be constructive when you do – TOOL: when **Problems do Less**, to avoid frustration
- Competition is invaluable in building squash skills as it incorporates all the elements of playing squash and therefore it is often a motivational TOOL:
- However competition can work against motivation when winning becomes too important. Far better to apply process goals in competition i.e. encouraging the reproduction of the skills in a competitive situation with success and praise

Distribution of Practice

- Developing squash skills is limited by time.
- The limiting factors for any one session are governed by
 - The interest of the player/s
 - Level of physical and psychological fatigue, manifested in feelings of
 - Tiredness, boredom, increased errors, inattention to the quality needed for the task, lack of focus concentration
- The practice should stop if and when the player loses interest
- The maximum duration of a practice is therefore also governed by the level of ability and the motivation of the player
- Many coaches and players set themselves a training session based purely on time TOOL: 0 -100
- For skill development session based on time will not be successful but may have strength and stamina benefits
- When the skill level begins to drop the session should stop or new elements to stimulate interest and add focus should be introduced

Cont'd

- Adults have greater concentration powers and so can maintain the quality for longer periods than children
- Novices tend to be tense and use excessive energy
- A strongly motivated player can practice and maintain quality for longer
- Practicing little and often is considered to be the best option (Distributed Practice)
- This means that when learning a new skill sessions should occur frequently
- Skilled players can derive great benefit from mental practice
- Pressure training can enhance the whole skill by reducing the time for the player to read the situation, process the information to make a decision and to execute PDA
- Pressure training should stop when the quality cannot be maintained

Speed & Accuracy

- Tradition has dictated that in order to achieve both speed and accuracy, we start gradually with accuracy, and then work on increasing speed
- This is based on the assumption that it is easier to speed up accurate movements than to correct fast inaccurate ones
- Slow movements are performed differently even though the path of the movement is the same
- Therefore when both speed and accuracy are required the emphasis needs to be on the speed increasing as quickly as possible **TOOL: 0 – 100** applies

Whole & Part Learning

- Whole and part learning means that coaches first demonstrate the whole movement within a rally situation. Let the player try. Then break it down into a smaller movement (part of the rally) Practice the small part until consistency is achieved then return to the whole movement of a rally situation as quickly as possible
- This creates the learning in context of the rally which includes the PDA process rather than just the action of striking a ball

Progressive Skill Building

- Is where coaches start with the simple process of driving to length with a partner
- This is one shot and one target
- Add a drop shot - two shots two targets
- Add a boast and a cross court drive - four shots three targets
- Add the opposite side length drive – four shots four targets all in context of a rally – PDA

Factors which vary with learner players

- Age
- Sex
- Intelligence
- *LTPD PowerPoint Presentation*

World Squash
COACHING

WSC

Some Rules for Skill Building

- When attention is paid to the Action i.e. the striking movements that are made, are they smooth, rhythmical, and balanced? - **TOOL: Relaxed rhythm**
- That good coaching is beneficial when it is well informed and appropriate to the level of the player
- The player must ultimately play without guidance therefore instruction should be interspersed with longer periods of clearly focused practice without technical help
- The coach should remain as a focal point for the player when problems arise but eventually the initiative must rest with the player. This is when discovery and self coaching become more valuable
- In squash it is the ability to recognise the ever changing situations, make good choices and strike with accuracy e.g. PDA which denote a skilled player
- The coach's role is to facilitate the process and sequence of events (PDA) to allow the player to learn
- Learning is done by the player
- Players reserve the right to develop their own individual style!
- **NB Learning has only taken place when the skill can be reproduced in a game!**

Competency 2 – Skill of Delivery

By the end of this module, coaches will be able to demonstrate that they can;

- Understand the key principles of Introduction – Demonstration – Pedagogy (Time on task – Progressions)
- Observe and diagnose areas for the development of skill and accuracy
- Understand the purpose of coaching TOOLS and demonstrate how they enhance the development of skill and accuracy to affect positive change
- Assess matches from a tactical perspective
- Understand, introduce and practically apply tactical awareness

Demonstration & Practice in Sequence

1. Demonstration to show the whole rally in real time, highlighting any new shot to be added to the rally one at a time.
2. Player briefly tries the new shot within a closed-skill situation.
3. Progress to a SHOW & TEST rally where the coach, within the rally, highlights the most relevant visual cues. When the player is confident that s/he can see the differences in the visual cues, move on to the TEST with the coach playing randomly within the same limited pattern.
4. This progresses to a cooperation game in an open skill situation, with the emphasis being on both coach and player playing randomly within the limited pattern where emphasis on accuracy is essential.
5. Then progress to same pattern game within an open skill situation in 'real time' at speed for additional practice. **TOOL: o**
-----100
6. Include the trained task in a practice match

Sequence of Progressive Skill Building

- 1 corner/quarter game – Coach & player playing to length
- 2 corner game – By adding a straight drop
- 3 corner game – By adding a boast and cross-court drive to the back of the service box
- Becomes 4 corner game
- Becomes 5 & 6 corner game by adding straight drive on the opposite wall with straight and cross court drive
- Becomes 7 & 8 high overhead by adding high straight and cross court lobs
- Can be done as one on one or group session.

Example of the Lob

- **What**
- A high, soft, floating shot to the back of the court. Played straight or cross court high on the front wall and onto the side wall
- **Why**
- Defensive – to relieve pressure and buy time to recover.
- Attacking - To buy time and limit opponent's options. To change the pace in a rally
- **When**
- The opponent is in a commanding T position
- **How/Perception**
- Watch your opponent (body position) and their racket head immediately prior to contact to track the ball in order to determine the speed, height and width of that shot
- **How/Decision**
- Choose target/stroke selection and pace of shot
- **How/Action**
- Start from the T-zone, move towards striking zone and begin racket preparation. Allow space between the elbow and body. Last stride on balance adopting a sideways position. Emphasis on lower racket preparation so you can hit underneath the ball, whilst follow-through remains high. Push off leading leg to recover back to the T zone.

Example-2

Wall/Attacking Boast

- **What**
- Usually played with pace to strike the side wall low, then the front wall and to hit the opposite side wall nick on second bounce
- **Why**
- As an attacking shot to reduce your opponent's organisation time
- **When**
- When your opponent is in front and not looking OR when you are on the T-zone with your opponent behind you and you are able to cut the ball off early
- **How**
- From a watching position on the T-zone – Recognising that your opponent is not looking OR is behind – Cut the ball off as early as possible – With a wide foot base and facing the side wall

Example of the Nick Shot

- **What**
- Hit the ball lightly to strike the front wall in the opposite front corner to drop into the side wall nick
- **Why**
- To win the point quickly
- **When**
- player is on the T-zone with opponent behind and the ball is loose in the middle of the court
- **How**
- When the player recognises when the ball is loose enough away from the side wall - Get the racket head slightly on the outside or inside of the ball with a loose grip and light brushing action

Example of the Trickle Boast

- **What**
- To hit the ball to strike the side wall and then the front wall without real pace
- **Why**
- As a point winning shot
- **When**
- When the opponent is off the T-zone and not looking
- **How**
- With recognition of a loose ball, with a striking action similar to an attacking boast but without pace using a loose grip

Example of the Kill Shot

- **What**
- Hit the ball to strike the front wall as close to the side wall as possible, with maximum speed and power so that the 2nd bounce is before the service box
- **Why**
- To win the point quickly
- **When**
- When the opponent is away from the T-zone
- **How**
- When the player recognises a ball is high and loose enough, and chooses to take the opportunity, striking the ball with a forward and downward cutting action using a relaxed rhythm

Some More Rules for Progression

- Progress both up and down: **TOOL: '0 to 100'**. If success rate is in the range of 1 to 30, the task is too difficult, go to 100, too easy
- Set challenges; to simply set a practice routine is not enough
- It is the quality of the drill/routine that affects positive change – Must have a 'Focus'
- A routine without purpose can be detrimental
- Should the player be performing the routine badly, development will be inhibited as the fault becomes part of the muscle memory

Time on Task

- When concentration levels fall it is time to stop or change the theme being practiced
- **TOOL: '0 to 100'**, work at a success rate of between 40 & 80 for learning to be taking place
- Always aiming to get it better with a clear area of focus

Observe and diagnose areas for development of skill and accuracy

- What are you looking at and for?
- What information do you need?
- In what situation can you judge most accurately?

Diagnosis

- Diagnosis; this is best done in the game situation as it reflects the real environment of competition
- The PDA cycle as diagnostic clock



Some Rules for the Diagnostic Clock

- Identify the causes of the problems, NOT the symptoms, in the order of the PDA cycle, starting at 12.00, the player being ready at the **T-zone**. The coach observes and works around the PDA cycle to '**Anticipation**', with ticks for what appears to be at an acceptable standard, and crosses for what needs attention.
- Areas with crosses next to them are areas requiring attention/correction
- The cause, not the symptom, should be addressed, in the order of the PDA diagnostic clock.
- The correction programme should be reflected in the three environments of:

Solving the Problems

Some Rules

- The **coaching sessions**, is where the coaches pass information
- The **players own practice sessions** and in the **players' competition / practice match programmes**
- Practice matches are integral to a player's learning; they are different to competition matches in that they do not have the pressure to win.
- Coaching – Practice – Competition are essential to overall learning process.
- **If the player is unable to reproduce the skills in a match situation, then learning has not taken place!**
- All the elements have to come together.
- Re-assess frequently

Definitions of some Tools

- WWWH – PDA – The thinking process
- Spider Web
- Grip
- Radar
- George
- Linking action to results
- Choosing targets
- Relaxed rhythm
- 0-100
- Problems do less
- Show and test

World Squash
COACHING
WSC

WWW - PDA

The thinking process

- **What** - This is the objective that we want the player to do/achieve. Example what does the player want to make the ball do? Set an objective. If the player does not understand what they are trying to do, how will they know if the task was achieved or not?
- **Why** - This is how to gain tactical advantage.
- **When** - is it an appropriate opportunity to do it, being aware of the opponent's position on the court?
- **How** - This is how the skill is performed, judged by using the PDA cycle.

Spiders Web

- **W** - TOOL: to show how PDA is taking place in every rally by both players.
- **W** - Helps players to learn progressively in the whole skill as opposed to just learning to strike the ball.
- **W** - This is ongoing throughout the learning process
- **H** - By following the process of the 'Six point process' of progressions.

Grip

- **W** - Controls the angle and direction of the racket head
- **W** - The angle of the racket head controls the height, trajectory, depth, direction, speed and touch/feel of the ball
- **W** - All the time
- **H** - Finger and thumb to form a V with 3 remaining fingers gently cupping the racket handle

Radar

- **W** - Tracks the position of the moving ball in relation to body and racket hand
- **W** - Helps coordination of the body movement to the moving ball
- **W** - All the time
- **H** - Point to the ball with the free hand

George

- **W** - Is the natural height and distance of the playing hand in relation to the body for the point of contact of choice when striking? There is a difference between choice and necessity.
- **W** - Becomes the default point of contact action for maximum accuracy and range of shots.
- **W** - When maximum accuracy is required.
- **H** - Identified at early learner stages.

Linking Action to Result

- **W** - To develop the skill level to choose and achieve accuracy in open rallies when under pressure.
- **W** - Keeps the pressure on your opponent.
- **W** - All the time.
- **H** - By developing a range of shots to keep the ball away from the opponent; from anywhere to any of the eight corners

Choosing Targets

- **W** - To be aware of where an opponent is on the court
- **W** - To maintain pressure on your opponent
- **W** - All the time
- **H** - PDA

Relaxed Rhythm

- **W** - Keeping the body and grip free of tension
- **W** - To develop maximum speed of movement and accuracy when striking the ball as economically as possible
- **W** - All the time
- **H** - Controlled breathing and re-focussing between rallies. This is the biomechanical principle of summation and continuance of joint forces.

0 to 100

- **W** - The TOOL: to understand and identify the level of standard and ability
- **W** - To measure progress and work-rate
- **W** - All the time
- **H** - If the coach believes a player is working within the range of 40 – 80, then learning is taking place. Between 0 – 40 little or no learning is taking place, with a range of 80 – 100, the activity is not challenging enough and requires an alternative area of focus.

Problems Do Less

- **W** - To narrow the areas of focus for the player
- **W** - To speed up the thinking process of the player
- **W** - The player has difficulty in the learning situation
- **H** – By exercising good judgement and reducing the amount of information

Show & Test

- **W** - This is the **TOOL**: which the coach uses to model the visual cues of a shot, or sequence of shots of the opponents body movements and racket actions. It is essential that a player can read an early warning signal in order to predict the outcome of their opponent's actions.
- **W** - The body and racket movements determine where the ball will travel
- **W** - It is the first stage in the sequence of any shot of the learning process
- **H** - Focus the attention on the opponent's movements and racket action before they strike the ball

Tactically Assess Matches

- Be clear what you are looking for?
 - Strengths /Weaknesses – Of your player or opponent different areas of the court?
 - What triggers advantages/disadvantages?
- Know 'How' you will use the information?
 - Awareness of the opponent
 - Engineering rallies / Creating opportunities
- Can be done with Pen and Paper
- Can be done electronically

Competency 3 – Lesson Planning to Effect Positive Change

By the end of this module coaches will be able to demonstrate that they can:

- Introduce a series of simple physical tests
- Design a simple circuit training session
- Introduce simple mental toughness programme
- Design a brief summary of 4 one week 'Micro' planning cycles that make up a one month 'Meso' cycle

Guidelines for Testing

- The LTPD windows of opportunity
- Warm ups which prepare the body and the mind to train, practice or perform on court
- Cool downs which help to reduce body heat and flush out lactic acid. This is best performed at a very low level aerobic activity
- Individuality is key for young developing players. Levels of maturity will dictate the timing of the different windows of opportunity for progress
- Specificity. The training should be specific to squash movement patterns and requirements.
- Overload. Adaptation only occurs if the demands on the body, e.g. frequency, intensity and time on task are increased consistently. Recovery is dependent on periods of rest and is equally as important as the training.

Viking Squash Test – Pavel Sladeczek

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOQYDRVwnFY.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOQYDRVwnFY)

Speed endurance – timed court sprints:

4 x 4 corners ghosting

Starting on the T-zone, then run and lunge to touch the floor in the distance of a racket length from the corner with one hand. Going through the T-zone between each corner.

Guidelines for Training

- Aerobic capacity - Long steady runs where the distance and time is regularly measured for improvement.
- Anaerobic – Interval training between 1min – 90secs with work to rest ratio of between 1:2 and 1:4.
- Interval training - Between 1 and 3mins with a work to rest ratio of between 1:1 and 1:3.
- Speed - Sprinting 10secs - 6 sets X 20 court sprints with a work to rest ratio of 1:6.
- Strength- Hill running
- Strength-speed-power - Circuit training & Plyometric training
- Core stability training is essential at all levels.

N.B. Has to be realistic and balanced with coaching, practice and competition

Design a Simple Circuit Training Session

- Warm up
- Press ups. From a hands and feet or hands and knees position, the arms at shoulder width and the body rigid
- Sit ups. Lying on the ground with the hands covering the ears, knees bent and the back straight, raise the body with an elbow to touch the opposite knee alternately. Return to laying position
- Triceps dip. From a sitting position on the floor with hands on a step with and the arms bent, push with the arms to raise the hips and then lower. Repeat
- Squat jumps. From a one kneeling position and the fingers touching the floor jump as high as possible landing on the opposite kneeling position
- Shuttle runs. A series of court sprints with both hands to touch the floor at each turn. There and back counts as one
- Squat thrusts. From a plank position jump with both feet to land close to the hands and return to the plank position
- Burpees. From a standing position drop to a crouch and then a plank position, back to a crouch and stand
- From a standing position with the feet slightly wider than the shoulders and holding a racket at both ends take a large step forward into a lunge position with a twist. Alternate legs
- Walk outs. With hands and feet on the floor walk the hands until reaching a plank position, then walk the hands back to close to the feet. Repeat
- Cool down with very gentle jogging and stretching

Setting a Maximum - Circuit

- For one minute do exercise 1 and record a maximum
- Take one minute rest
- One minute on exercise two and record a maximum
- One minute rest
- Complete all six exercises and record the maximums
- For a training session take 75% of maximum for each exercise and complete three full reps of all 6 exercises taking short rests at will to completion
- Test for new maximums monthly

Design a Simple Core Stability Circuit

- The plank – Lie on the floor and move to a position supported on the elbows and feet, holding for a count of ten – Repeat x six
- Arm & Leg raise – From a position on the hands and knees raise the right arm and the left leg to a horizontal plane – Hold for a count of 10 and rest – Alternate x 6 each side
- Side plank – Keeping the body straight support with right elbow and right foot for a count of 10 – Alternate x 6 each side
- Kneeling on the floor with both hands on top of the ball – With body straight roll the ball forward as far as possible – Hold for 4 seconds and return x 10
- Laying on the back with both feet on the ground and the knees at 90deg and the arms straight – Slowly raise the upper body and reach for the ceiling – Hold for a count of 4 slowly returning x 10
- Reverse sit up – Laying on the back and lower leg on the ball – Holding the ball between the lower leg and buttocks raise the ball off the ground – Hold for four seconds slowly returning x 10
- Reverse leg lifts – Laying the stomach on the ball with hands and feet touching the floor – Slowly raise the feet until the body is straight – Hold for a count of 4 slowly returning x 10
- From a half raised press up position and the lower legs on the ball – Whilst slowly pushing to a full arm, raise one leg off the ball – Hold for a count of 4 slowly returning x 10
- Laid on the back with the feet on the ball and the body straight – Slowly raise one leg – Hold for a count of 4 slowly returning the leg - Alternate x 10

N.B. All movement must be SLOW!

Design a Simple Mental Plan

- Two days before competition – Start thinking the match / event
– Visualise yourself playing well
- Four hours before – have a light carbohydrate meal – Keep sipping some fluids – Visualise playing well
- Two hours before – Keep sipping the fluids – Maybe a banana – More positive visualisation
- One hour before – Positive visualisation – Some light stretching – leading in to the full warm up
- Five minutes before – Calm the brain – Keep moving
- Between games – Deep breathing to the stomach – Coach reminds the player of the game plan – Introduce subtle changes to game plan
- Between rallies – At least three breaths as deep as the stomach – Squash with a smile (Stress relieving) – Remind of tactics
- – Visualise – Play the rally

Design a simple plan for a one month - Meso-cycle

- Individual sessions should always be prepared as an integral part of a seasonal plan and provide reference to skills being developed e.g. whole rallies built over time
- Best time for most of the physical work is out of the competitive phase
- Mark the big events clearly on the plan
- Identify preferably process based short and long term goals which are Specific – Measurable – Accepted – Realistic – Timed – Exciting – Recorded
- That allows players to feel good / right both mentally and physically for the event
- Record what works well – Not so well – What you will change next time
- Keep records of thoughts, improvements players make, injuries, players habits before and after competition alongside the methods used to assess the effectiveness of the coaching

Time to Make a Difference!