

Aspects of training quality in children

Alexander Ferrauti

Faculty of Sport Science, Ruhr University Bochum, Germany

Demonstration

A General warm-up

1. Stroke imitation, coordinative runs, tennis-specific movement patterns
2. Dynamic stretching
3. Ankle, leg and whole body stabilisation
4. stride frequency, agility, reactiv strength, reactiv stiffness jumps

B Tennisspecific warm-up

5. Ground stroke preparation
6. Volley preparation
7. Agility drills
8. Small games

C Technical and tactical training

9. Forehand winner percentage drill
Preactivation with basketball
Topspin-Volley
10. Forehand winner game
11. Backhand variability
12. Backhand stability cross game
13. Service Power
14. Net game
Sideward jumps and badminton overhead clear

Recommendations

Start the training unit with coordinative runs and a tennisspecific muscle warm-up

Shorten the stretching part;
4 dynamic movements are enough!

Include running ABC, whole body tension and balance exercises into warm up

Always reactivation of fast motoric patterns before tennis training and match play

Use the short game for “stroke Re-Ontogenesis”, control of wrist, hitting point, grips

Use the short game for a focused Volley stabilisation without any time pressure

Include footwork and agility drills in each unit (most important condition factor in children!)

Use sensful and match related small games

Improve forhand velocity and precision
- include a specific conditioning
- include cognitive demands
- 4-8 strokes (quality vs. quantity)

Combine technical and tactical training immediately with specific games

Improve backhand stability and variability
- include cognitive demands

Combine technical and tactical training with specific games (include more overheads)

Improve stroke velocity of 1st serve
(2 km/h per month)
- throwing balls, strength (homework)
- throw ball in front/basics for serve&volley

Teach footwork techniques for the longterm development of approach tennis

D Conditioning

15. Running speed and agility
- Footwork drills in each training unit as a partly replacement of endurance training !
- create maximum time pressure (e.g. volley, drop-shot or 2nd bounce)
 - include change of direction
 - max 4-8 strokes (short distance)
 - max 2-4 strokes (long distance)

E Cool-down

16. Baseline rhythm
- Relax, have fun and allways feel good (e.g. music) when you leave the court
17. Stabilisation/relaxation
- Include whole body stabilisation (additionally as homework)

F General Points

1. The winning tactics differ completely between a 10 yrs (no 1st serve, hitting point deep behind baseline, high ball curce, no net attack, 80-90 % forhands) and a 20 yrs old player. In consequence (1.) we have a lot of drop outs or at least problems in transfer from junior to adult tournaments, (2.) the promotion of talents according to early succes oftenly forgets the long term potential of development, (3.) solid and powerful baseline game is the typical and nearly unique male championship tactic, (4.) only a few - but Top Nr 1 players - show variable baseline and net game.

Recommendation: early preparation of technical, tactical and conditional preconditions with an early but sensible adaptation of tournament match play tactics. Aim to find the midway between enough early succes and a longterm game development.

2. The most important training contents in the development from children to junior tennis in my opinion are (1.) a powerful and precise forehand and 1st serve, (2.) a solid and variable backhand, (3.) footwork, balance and running speed and (4.) basic motoric patterns and confidence for the net game.

Recommendation: be allways aware that the time from 12 to 14 years is very short and that even each single training unit is an important step of the individual development. Work with a clear plan and according to precisely defined training targets.

3. From a pedacogical and psychological point of view, coaches have to start early to transfer a part of the responsibility for training succes to the children. Only self responsible children with an own defintion of targets will be succesfull in the future.

Recommendation: give guidelines for homework training contents, training and match statistic documentation aids (e.g. excel files).

Address for correspondance:
Prof. Dr. Alexander Ferrauti
Ruhr University Bochum
Faculty of Sport Science
Department of Training Science
Stiepeler Straße 129 UHW
44780 Bochum
alexander.ferrauti@rub.de
0049-234-3222451