

**UNTOLD**

# TENNIS

## STRATEGIES



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# Foreword

Tennis is an interesting game which has quite a huge following worldwide. This is also a big money game and that is perhaps why it draws such a lot o hype and popularity. Get all the info you need here.

## ***Untold Tennis Strategies***

# Chapter 1:

## *What is so interesting about tennis?*

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The following are probably some of the reasons why tennis is such an interesting game:

- Tennis is a game that involves a maximum of 4 players at any one time. The two player set is a more normal scenario and the four player set is called a doubles. This makes it easier to watch as the game only requires the attention to be focus on this small number of players.
- Tennis is a sport where there is no hint of violence attached to it. Both the players and the spectators are usually very well behaved, thus no one would even be in danger of getting caught up in a sudden violent outbreak. This makes the game more enjoyable to observe and be a fan of.
- The scoring format for the tennis game is also fairly easy to follow and fouls are equally easy to spot and be called out. There is very little that would contribute to confusing both the players and the fans. An interesting point to note would be that the scoring format which does not run from point one onwards but starts at the number 15 onwards, originated form the medieval time and the use of the sun dial.
- Tennis players also generally don't really wear any particular uniforms, however most player tend to favor lighter color and

while seems to be the most popular pick. In more recent times the fashion adopted by many tennis players, especially the women have been rather interesting and innovative, making them a more interesting spectacle to watch.

# Chapter 2:

## *Things you need to know about the court*

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There are a lot of different elements and facts to know about tennis courts. Although the new tennis fan may not be able to tell the difference between the courts, the more popularly played surfaces, would include the clay court, the normal looking court and the grass courts.

The following are some of the things one should know about the tennis courts:

- Court sizes, coating surfaces, court materials, fence material and building material usually follow the guidelines laid out by the American Sports Builders Association.
- Asphalt base courts – this type of surface has a compacted stone base, with proper drainage incorporated in an important element that will promote the longevity of the court's surface. The amount of stone and asphalt used is variable and usually depends on the individual's requirements at the site.
- Asphalt overlay – there is usually a measurement of two inches of asphalt placed over the existing court surface after a layer of paving fabric has been laid, as this will help to bridge the old and new surfaces.
- When in the process of building a tennis court, the weather conditions play an important role, thus the need to be sure the



court is built during favorable weather conditions. Failing to observe this very important condition may create future problems, when the court's surface becomes problematic.

- The painting and leveling processes also require a lot of attention, as this contributes directly to the playing aspect of the game. If the wrong quality of paint is used, the reflection and distorted impression of the surface that is perceived by the naked eye can be very disconcerting for the players using the court. Most players are very sensitive to any off balance in the surface of the court, which will also usually cost them when they are unable to get comfortable enough to play a good game.

# Chapter 3:

## *How to choose the right racquet*

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Buying a tennis racquet can be a rather confusing exercise, mainly due to the vast variety available in the market today. This is even more difficult, when there is no advice forthcoming in the form of a personal coach or a more experienced player. However all is not lost, as by following a few guidelines almost anyone will be able to make a more informed purchase.

The following are a few tips on how to purchase a suitable and useably comfortable tennis racquet to suit the individual's needs:

- Seniors and females should ideally focus on purchasing a racquet that can provide the added power as these categories of people usually have slower and less powerful contact swings. Therefore getting a racquet that is light weight and perhaps has a slightly oversized head is better than using one that is longer and head heavy.
- The intermediate player who is a little more skilled at the game may require a little less power from the racquet, thus needing one that allows enhanced maneuverability. Here the ideal racquet should have a midplus head with a more extended length. As for the more advanced to high level players, the racquets should ideally have racquets that are heavier in weight and have

smaller and more balanced heads, thinner beams and better control.

The general rule of thumb would be that the heavier the racquet, the more power and stability it will be able to generate. This will also help to lessen the transition of shock when in contact with the ball. As for the lighter version of the tennis racquet, it may be easier to swing and maneuver, however may not give the player the added power to create any forceful play action.

The grip of the racquet should also be one that allows the player to be both conformable and in control of the general direction the ball flight takes. If the grips are unsuitable, these can be changed at the request of the player.

# Chapter 4:

## *Familiarize yourself with the tennis rulebooks*

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As in any game played, tennis also has a set of rules that are usually universally followed whenever a game is played. Although, there may be some allowances and leeway given, in general the rules are in place to govern over and ensure a fair and enjoyable game scenario.

The following are some of the more basic rules that each tennis player should be aware of and observe diligently:

- Standing on opposite sides of the court and literally in a cross section format, the player who starts the ball delivery motion would be called the server, while the player who receives the ball will be called the receiver.
- The starting positions, receiving and serving options are decided at the toss of a coin, before the very onset of the game. The game should only commence when both players have signal their readiness to start play. The server should be standing behind the baseline on the deuce court but within the boundaries of the single court when playing a single match, and within the doubles sideline when playing a doubles game.
- The server can start the serving motion from anywhere, but the ball must bounce in the service box within the flight it takes. If the ball does not land in the service box, it is deemed a fault and a second serve is called for.

- The scoring is done in a clock wise fashion whereby the first call would be Love which means zero; the second point would be called at 30 and the third at 45. The game is won when the score goes back to Love. If the score is 40 – 40 which is called a deuce, then one side has the opportunity to win by two points.
- Advantage In means the server has the advantage to win and the Advantage Out means the receiver has the advantage to win.

# Chapter 5:

## *Learning the basic strokes*

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Tennis is not just a matter of hitting a ball with a racquet. There are quite a few specific styles or strokes that should be understood and mastered in order to be able to play the game well.

The following is a general breakdown of the various different stroke styles that are more commonly used during a regular tennis game:

- Forehand ground stroke – one of the more common strokes used, this is where the ball is hit to be returned after it has bounced off the surface of the other side of the court. It is usually hit around the baseline and with a topspin, but the shot can also be hit is a flat shot or slice shot style. This stroke is usually made from the same side of the body that is holding the racquet.
- Backhand groundstroke – this stroke is almost completely similar in playing style as with the fore ground stroke, with one notable difference, which is, it is done on the side of the body opposite from the racquet holding hand.
- Forehand volley – here the ball is hit to be returned before it comes in contact with the opposite side surface and is usually executed when the player is closer to the net area. This effectively minimizes the time the opponent has to tackle a successful return stroke. However this can be a rather dangerous risk to take as the player may not be able to counter

and successful return stroke effectively. This stroke is done on the side of the body of the hand that is holding the racquet.

- Backhand volley - this stroke uses the same execution style as the forehand volley with the notable difference of the ball being played in the return stroke from the side of the body opposite to the racquet holding hand.

# Chapter 6:

## *The importance of the grips*

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The general rule of thumb to go by would be to find a grip that is most suitable for the individual as it is not a one size fit all kind of concept. The grip will not only determine the quality of play that the player eventually displays but can also affect the body conditions negatively.

Basically it would be better to start with a smaller grip size and then make adjustments until the grip size is both comfortable and safe for the user. If the grip used is unsuitable, there would be some twisting of the hand to, execute the stroke each time it is executed, thus contributing to the tennis elbow syndrome. This is a rather painful condition and would almost always require the attention of a medical professional.

The ideal grip size is usually found anywhere between the standard measurements of 4" to 4 and 5/8" and are at about 1/8" in intervals. The grip is often calculated by referring to the circumference of the grip the individual makes when holding the racquet. In order to get an estimation of the most appropriate grip size, a ruler should be placed at the bottom of the horizontal crease in the palm of the hand that is going to be holding the racquet. The measurement is taken from this point to the tip of the ring finger. This will indicate the ideal grip size for the individual. However if there is a need, an additional over grip can be added on which is about 1/16" in size to make the feel more comfortable.



Another method for measuring the grip would be to observe the amount of space between the fleshy part of the pal, and fingertips. Being able to “plug” this gap with the index finger of the other hand comfortably without any looseness or tightness (that doesn’t allow the finger in), would then give the player a good idea of the suitability of the grip chosen.

# Chapter 7:

## *Working on the perfect swing*

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There are a few set motions to follow in order to be able to execute the perfect tennis swing. By following these motions as closely as possible the individual will be able to master the swing well enough to break the opponent percentage of the ball possession, thus improving the chances of scoring points.

The following are some tips on how to go about perfecting the tennis swing:

- Getting ready to receive and return the hit would require the player to keep the racquet in a back position all the time. Once the ball is hit by the opponent, the player should immediately react and move to a position that would be ideal to receive and return the ball with a quick and fluid motion.
- While establishing the balance in the stance, the player should be aware of allowing the stroke to be played while letting off with the non dominant hand while keeping the racquet pointed away from the intended target at a waist high position. Maintaining enough space between the body and the ball when in the final position to return the shot is important. Always ensuring the ball is hit from a waist high stroke will help to keep the balance and the return stroke accurately placed.
- Making contact with ball when the racquet head is positioned at the same height as the hand is important and this should be

done while remembering not to bend or straighten the arm. Moving the wrists to accommodate the stroke is also not encouraged as it will change the direction of the contact on the return stroke. Instead the player should be accustomed to rotating the shoulder while keeping an eye on the ball at all times to calculate the ideal return stroke.

# Chapter 8:

## *Practice the right spin*

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Being able to execute varied strokes effectively and efficiently will allow the player to serve better and more competitive strokes and will be present a challenge to the opponent. This will also create the opportunities for the player to score points and win the game easily.

The two main spin techniques would be the topspin and the backspin and being able to execute either one of these with a suitable force, will create ideal circumstances for the possibility of the opponent not being able to take and return the stroke successfully.

A top spin shot is shown when the ball is hit by sliding the racquet up and over the ball as it is being hit. The friction between the racquet's strings and the ball will cause enough momentum to make the ball spin forward towards the opponent.

This kind of shot will bounce at a lower angle to the ground as the shot dips down after impact. The natural friction caused by the bounce angle will create the topspin as the ball moves towards the opponent's side of the court.

The backspin shot is executed in an almost opposite manner, where the sliding of the racquet under the ball is positioned just before the return contact is made. Requiring only half the racquet head speed it will cause the ball to generate the ideal backspin or slice that is needed for the return stroke.

In this instance, the player is not required to change the direction of the already spinning ball. If the oncoming ball is already in a topspin motion the, the returning stroke will effectively create the slice hot as the rotation is maintained through the stroke. The direction of the shot can be changes but the ball will continue to spin from top to bottom as it moves away from the player towards the opponent side of the court.

# Chapter 9:

## *Mastering forehand and backhand*

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These two strokes are essentially what make up the game of tennis, and once mastered adequately, the player will be able to initiate a fairly competitive and enjoyable game play.

The tennis forehand is the most basic and most used stroke for any tennis player. It is also the money making stroke for the professional player in the tennis circuit.

Not necessarily being the easiest of all strokes, it is however the among the more effectively ones that can earn the player a good amount of points.

Simply put, the left handed player would naturally step to the right and hit the ball from the left side of the body in a return stroke that the opponent serves towards the player's body.

This movement would be duplicated but in an opposite motion if the player is right handed. Most players would prefer to use the forehand stroke than any other fundamental tennis stroke, as this would be the most natural body movement to meet an oncoming ball.

The tennis backhand is usually executed from the side opposite of the forehand stroke. Meaning if the player is right handed, the backhand stroke would be played from the left side of the body and if the player is left handed then the opposite motion would be used. Seemingly using the same concept, the strength and velocity of the ball in

motion can be more powerful and harder to read by the opponent. Initially this particular stroke can present a lot of challenges, especially in ball placement within the opponent court area, however with practice, it is possible to master this stroke enough to give the player an advantage over the opponent, simply because of the unpredictability of the stroke outcome.

A lot of players enjoy using this particular stroke as an alternative to the mundane usual tennis return strokes. It creates just enough excitement to break the monotony of the game.

# Wrapping Up

There are several winning strategies and techniques a tennis player can explore in the quest to improve on their game and become better and more competitively skilled players.

However is doing so, the most important winning strategy that most tennis coaches would advice would be the consistency in practice. Being committed enough to take the time to practice the various different tennis strokes until they are mastered to a standard that will allow successful competitive play is certainly one way of gaining the advantage on the opponent.

The player, who is more focus on mastering the art of playing good tennis, would understand the need to practice strokes that seem to present a challenge or that is difficult to manage through the natural course of the game.

This dedication will allow the player to improve, as the mastering of the stoke, becomes fruitful and evident after a few focused sessions.

Another aspect of the tennis game that should be taken into consideration is the mental side. Being able to play the game will would not only require the individual to have all the correct strokes, but would also require the player to be mentally ready for each return stroke.

This mental readiness will create the ideal mind and body coordination that will eventually allow the body to execute winning



strokes. Training the mind to respond like a professional player is something worth considering. Professional train to identify chances of playing strokes and style that will cause the opponent to falter.

This mindset will allow the player to consistently and effectively return shots that would constantly challenge the opponent, and eventually cause the opponent to make mistakes or tire out.

Mastering the strokes to the extent of being so comfortable, that the racquet would seem simply the extension of the natural hand movement is another technique that should come naturally if the player wants to excel at the game.