

TennisPro®



The International Magazine for PTR Tennis Teachers and Coaches

November 2024



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TENNISPRO®

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For the Record

Dear Members,

As I step into my new role as CEO, my top priority is to connect with each of you; our dedicated coaches and professionals. I firmly believe that understanding your needs and challenges is essential for driving meaningful progress within our organization.

Rather than rushing into immediate changes, I am committed to a thoughtful approach. I want to hear directly from you: What aspects of the organization are working well? Where do you see opportunities for improvement? Most importantly, how can I ensure that PTR / PPR becomes an invaluable resource that you are proud to be a part of?

This is a pivotal moment for us, filled with potential for growth and innovation. Our founder, Dennis Van der Meer, inspired coaches, players and people from all-around the globe and together, we can continue his legacy and elevate the organization into a vibrant community where coaches find real value, support, and connection. My goal is to create an environment that empowers you to thrive in your profession.

Once I have gathered your insights, I will develop a strategic plan that addresses our collective needs and aspirations. I am a leader who combines a contemplative approach with a competitive spirit, and I am dedicated to fulfilling my promise to you as your "chief coach."



Pete Hurley
CEO/Executive Director

I am excited to engage with you and learn from your experiences. Your perspectives are invaluable as we chart the course for our future together.

Thank you for your commitment to our community.

Best regards,



TENNISPRO®

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UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

November 16 & 17 | Atlanta, GA | Atlanta Athletic Club

November 16 & 17 | Southlake, TX | Southlake Tennis Center

November 16 & 17 | Wesley Chapel, FL | Saddlebrook Resort

November 25 & 26 | Dorchester, MA | Sportsmen's Tennis & Enrichment Center

December 7 & 8 | Jackson, MS | Club & Township

December 7 & 8 | Highlands Ranch, CO | Highlands Ranch Community Association

December 7 & 8 | Wheaton, IL | Wheaton Sport Center

December 7 & 8 | Palm Desert, CA | Monterey Country Club

December 7 & 8 | Fremont, CA | Fremont Tennis Center

December 12 & 13 | Wesley Chapel, FL | Saddlebrook Resort

December 14 & 15 | Orlando, FL | USTA National Campus

December 27 & 28 | Portland, ME | Apex Racket & Fitness

December 28 & 29 | Bronx, NY | Cary Leeds Center

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Member News

HOPE COLLEGE

Hope College Professional Tennis Management transitions Racquet Sports Management Program to a more inclusive Racquet Sports Management Program (RSM). This change reflects the growing diversity in racquet sports and aims to equip students with a broader skill set to thrive in various racquet disciplines. The new Racquet Sports

Management Program will encompass not only tennis but also pickleball, padel, squash and platform tennis. By expanding the program's scope, Hope College will provide students with comprehensive training in coaching, facility management, event planning, and marketing strategies tailored to multiple racquet sports. Learn more at hope.edu

CARDIO TENNIS

As part of the PTR grand opening ceremony, Cardio Tennis education was on the agenda. This fun group spent 3 hours on the court with Michele. New friends, reunited with old friends, learning and loving triples, pickleball coaches understanding how they can incorporate Cardio Tennis fundamentals, and pickleball players/coaches reigniting their love of tennis!



Hope College
RSM



LEA BERGMAN

Lea Bergman is beginning to pursue a Masters Degree in Sport Management with a concentration of Director of Racquet Sports at the University of Florida!



DARRYL LEWIS

Darryl Lewis has started in a new position as the Director of Court Sports at Belfair in Bluffton, SC. Congrats, Darryl!

Member News



PTR TENNIS UK

August - 18 coaches from 8 countries met at Wimbledon Park to grow and evolve their coaching careers.



NEW YORK LEVEL2

September - A Level 2 Workshop was hosted by Marley Woods in Roosevelt Island Racquet Club

Member News



PTR ITALY

PTR Italy awarded 7 VDM Educational Scholarships! Congratulations to the following members for their outstanding performance on and off the court: Alessio Capoluongo, Giulia Esposito, Francesco Godino, Lucas Melone, Niccolò Pozzi, Gabriel Variano, Felice Matteo Oliva.



ELLIOTT DATLOW

Aspen Hill Club hosted a USTA Mid-Atlantic Foundation 12 and under Green Ball Junior Circuit event with the goal of creating fun events so the kids want to play more tennis and increase their on-court challenges.



ANNIKA WEEBER

Annika Weeber made a move to Madrid, Spain to take on a new role as an English Language and Culture Assistant. She recently graduated from Hope College with a Bachelor's degree majoring in Business and Spanish and minoring in kinesiology and Professional Tennis Management, and for the last 2 years she has worked as a tennis professional all over the United States. Congrats on this new opportunity, Annika!



ROYAL PALM

Eric Hechtman of the Eric Hechtman Tennis Academy certified the Royal Palm Coaches in Pinecrest, FL.



PPR CERTIFICATION WORKSHOPS

LEVEL 1 CERTIFICATION WORKSHOPS

November 10	Porlamar, Venezuela	Sunsol Padel Club
November 12	San Francisco, CA	Bay Padel & Pickleball
November 15	Wesley Chapel, FL	Saddlebrook Resort
November 17	Boynton Beach, FL	Rally Sports & Social Club
November 18	Glendale, AZ	The Pickleball Space
November 22	Lansing, MI	Court One Athletic Clubs
December 6	Natick, MA	Pickledom
December 6	Hilton Head Island, SC	Palmetto Dunes
December 6	Ridgeland, MS	The Club at the Township
December 7	Augusta, GA	Augusta Country Club
December 7	Lake Nona, FL	USTA National Campus
December 9	Los Angeles, CA	LA Pickleball Club in Westchester
December 12	Wesley Chapel, FL	Saddlebrook Resort
December 14	Columbus, OH	Life Time Easton
December 16	Glendale, AZ	The Pickleball Space
December 17	LaQuinta, CA	LaQuinta Resort
December 18	Columbia, MD	Dill Dinkers

Partial List - For up to date information visit www.pprpickleball.org

LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATION WORKSHOPS

February 22 & 23	Wesley Chapel, FL	Saddlebrook Resort
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Member News

Jessica Gonzalez, was part of the Blind Tennis program at Gold River Sports Club that was supported by the PTR Foundation last spring, and received a wildcard to the 2024 IBTA World Championships. The Blind Tennis Program was run

by Coach Samir Mahir.

IBTA's goal is to grow participation worldwide and provide opportunities to players from different backgrounds to compete internationally. Jessica is one of

many talented players at the Gold River blind tennis program. Her game has improved tremendously since 2023. The PTR Tennis Foundation is proud of Jessica!



SHOES

PTR Coach, Marcus Reese, helps give back by raising money to buy new shoes for nearly 50 children in Texas. <https://www.taylorpress.net/article/8480,soleful-giving>

Member News



ADAM FRIEL

Since opening November 11th the Leftwich Tennis Center has had adults participate in the drop-in clinics almost 10,000 times, bringing in nearly 300 brand new players so far! They built a new program called “The Night Time Showdown” which had 45 players on 6 courts during the winter. They also run all different classes including cardio style classes, USTA team practices, live ball clinics and beginner ROG programs. According to Adam Friel, The Head Professional-Adults, USTA teams and players have been crushing it by winning multiple different state and sectional tournaments and he couldn’t be more proud of them!



RODNEY ROSS

Rodney Ross is now the Director of Racquet Sports at Wellesley Country Club



BRUNO SANTARELLI

Bruno Santarelli is now the Assistant Director of Racquets at Wellesley Country Club



NKRUMAH PATRICK

Nkrumah Patrick is now the Senior Racquets Professional at Wellesley Country Club



ALYS BEACH

Val Goncalves Jr was a part of the project at Alys Beach building a new racquet sports facility with American Red Clay tennis courts, three pickleball courts, an activity lawn, restroom facilities, seating areas, and shaded viewing pavilions.

Member News



TOM WHITTEN

Congratulations to Tom Whitten and The Olympic Club's Men's and Women's Open Teams, as well as the Men's 50+ Open Team, for securing three national championships at the National Open Invitational Tournament held at the Darling Tennis Center in Las Vegas. This was the women's 5th championship in 6 years, and the Men's Open Team's 2nd consecutive and 3rd title in 4 years. It also marks the first time in the Club's history that they have won a title in a senior age category.



EMMA WELLS

As a part of the Merton Big Sports Day, Emma Wells and her team welcomed 400 participants on the tennis courts in Wimbledon Park. They showcased their mission of community and tennis for all with a huge variety of sessions throughout the day.



MARK PACHTNER

Mark Pachtner wrapped up his final Special Olympics Tennis Fun day, after 24 years of the event. They raised over \$250,000 for the Special Olympics in Arizona, Minnesota, Georgia, California and Florida. In that time they have had over 1300 athletes and 23 volunteers.

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Member News

REVIEW OF THE LAVER CUP - KIDS DAY

On Thursday, September 19, 2024, TC 1899 e.V. Blau-Weiss had the great opportunity to visit Kids Day as part of the Laver Cup 2024 in the Uber Arena (Berlin, Germany) with some of our coaching staff and kids. From 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. we were able to be up close

and personal with a training session of the professional tennis players and see live how the stars (including Fritz, Tiafoe, Alcaraz and Zverev) prepare for the tournament. Before and after the training session, there were numerous exciting activities available to

us, including free tennis, mini tennis, serve competition, target wall shooting and many other great attractions.

"It was an unforgettable day full of fun and tennis enthusiasm!" - Coach Karsten Weigelt.



Member News



BLAU-WEISS MEN'S TEAM STAYS IN BUNDESLIGA

After a tough and exciting season from July to mid/late August our men's team finished their 2024 run with four wins and four losses to come in fourth (and best team from Berlin) in the 2nd Bundesliga.

The final weekend with a 7-2 win (4-2 after the six singles) at home

against Suchsdorfer SV and an amazing 7-2 (4-2) on the road against TC Iserlohn showed how great our guys perform on court and what an amazing team spirit they developed supported by their coaches René and Karsten.

All of the team played an amazing season. Our Berlin boys Jonas

Hartenstein and Michael Agwi played a vital role in the matches. Especially Michael, who finished his first year playing Bundesliga staying undefeated (8-0 – winning all eight singles!), made a big impression.

Member News



IC TROPHY - LEADING TENNIS CLUBS OF GERMANY

On September 21 and 22, 2024, the IC Trophy of the "Leading Tennis Clubs of Germany" took place at our facility (TC TC 1899 e.V. Blau-Weiss). This annual event is always combined with a meeting of the respective club management, with the aim of exchanging experiences and problems of the large clubs and tennis in general and preparing themselves as best as possible for future tasks.

Eight teams - each consisting of one girl and one boy U18 - competed at our beautiful facility. Daria and Matteo represented TC

TC 1899 e.V. Blau-Weiss together with team coach Emma.

Our team impressed with a strong performance and moved into the final after a 3-0 win over ETUF Essen and a 2-1 win in the semifinals against GW Mannheim. The opponent was the Rochusclub Düsseldorf, who also secured their place in the final with two 3-0 victories over DCadA and Iphitos Munich. In a thrilling final in which Matteo lost his singles in the match tiebreak and Daria won her singles in the match tiebreak, the mixed doubles had to decide the match.

After a hard fight, the second set was lost in the tiebreak and our team took a good 2nd place. Congratulations to the winners from the Rochusclub Düsseldorf.

We would like to thank Vanessa Munteanu-Wille and Karsten Weigelt for the great organization and tournament management. Special thanks go to all participants for a fair and exciting tournament.

We are already looking forward to the next IC Trophy, which will take place in Düsseldorf in 2025.

Member News



ROYAL PALM

Michael Agwi, born in Ireland but moved to Berlin when he was a baby, improved his ranking from 980 ATP beginning of 2024 to top 500. Coach Karsten Weigelt was privileged to work with him on court once/twice a week.



Wellness Wave July 16 2024 How Tennis Relates To Life

JIM KANE

Jim Kane won his first round against a young hard hitting player, 6-4, 7-6 in the Worchester County Open. As he says, "experience may have played a part – 60 years age difference!"

Jim Kane appeared three times on the (soon to be syndicated) Wellness Wave Show with Phil George: a former college tennis coach & biochemist. (Guest instructor: Southeastern Asian Coalition- 30 youngsters- Worcester, MA) Attached are links to a few of the Shows:



[Click here to watch](#)



[Click here to watch](#)

Member News



LANSDORP

Robert Lansdorp, a former PTR member, died on September 16th, 2024, at the age of 85. He coached many tennis champions, including Tracy Austin, Maria Sharapova, Pete Sampras and Lindsay Davenport; developing their ground strokes through his regimen of intense repetition.

"Never get the competitive spirit out of a kid," Olivier Lingbeek fondly remembers Robert Lansdorp saying.

Pictured here with Ann Grossman Wunderlich.



ASPEN HILL CLUB

Aspen Hill Club joined up with USTA Mid-Atlantic Foundation to host their 3rd Tips and Sips party, combining the event with a USOpenTennis semi finals watch party. Participants played 1.5 hours of FUN doubles round robins, followed by a catered dinner.

A graphic with a blue background showing a tennis player in action. Overlaid on this is a red banner with the text 'CALL FOR MEMBER NEWS' in white. Below the banner, there is a black box with white text providing instructions on how to submit member news.

**CALL FOR
MEMBER NEWS**

Share your latest successes in teaching or playing the sport we love! Send an email to cate@ptrtennis.org with your member news (pictures or videos are always welcome), and we'll share it with the rest of the membership in the next issue of RacquetsPro Magazine!



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SCAN HERE

Attack The Kitty-Corner

by Uros Budimac

An Excerpt from MINE! - An Illustrated Guide to Women's Doubles

SITUATION

You are at the net and yes! You got what you wanted: a reachable volley! But you hit it right back to where it came from—the baseline. And the rally continues when it should have been your point. Ugh!

SOLUTION

Hit kitty-corner—toward the opposing net player—immediately! They are closer to you and therefore will have less time to react to your volley.

When at the net, always be ready for the next shot and have your target in mind. Always think, “The next one’s mine!” That

way, when you do get a volley, you will be ready to make your best shot right away.

NOTES

You do not need to hit the ball any harder when attacking. Simply by placing the ball toward the player closer to you, they will feel attacked because they will have less time to react to your shot.

COACH UROS SAYS

Know your target. Attack the player closest to you. Put pressure on them! Take away their reaction time!



Uros Budimac is a Tennis Canada High Performance Level 3 Coach and is also certified with the United States Professional Tennis Association and the Spanish Tennis Registry. He has over 15 years of experience coaching players of all ages and ability levels. For the past 12 years, he managed local tennis programs at Hollyburn Country Club as well as Vancouver Lawn Tennis & Badminton Club and is one of Canada's leading young coaches. Uros creates change in a players' tennis game in a friendly yet highly effective way of communicating and believes that everyone can improve – at all levels of play. He was a National level player in Serbia, followed by a tennis scholarship in the US before moving to Vancouver, Canada and devoting himself to his coaching career.



Attack The Kitty-Corner

An Excerpt from MINE! - An Illustrated Guide to Women's Doubles

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Representative Learning Design

by Isaac McBroom

Skill transfer, is commonly defined as the influence of previous practice on the performance of a new skill in a competitive setting¹. In short, how well does a player use their recently practiced skill in their matches? Research in effective coaching models has continued to advance, however, many coaches continue to adhere to their long held traditional beliefs. This is common for several reasons including comfort, fear of the unknown, cultural resistance, lack of resources, or most commonly, the belief that the traditional way “works.” To understand

this rationale, we must define what “works” means.

What “works” in an athletic setting, should only be assessed by the effective use of a skill in competitive play.

What is the traditional view of skill acquisition? It is the theory that there is a single movement solution for a given situation. Skills are often practiced with the practitioner providing the ‘movement solution’ for the player, followed by a set of



Skill Acquisition: voluntary control over movements of joints and body segments to solve a motor skill problem and achieve a task goal.

Skill Retention: The degree to which one can remember (or perform) a previously practiced skill after an elapsed period of time.

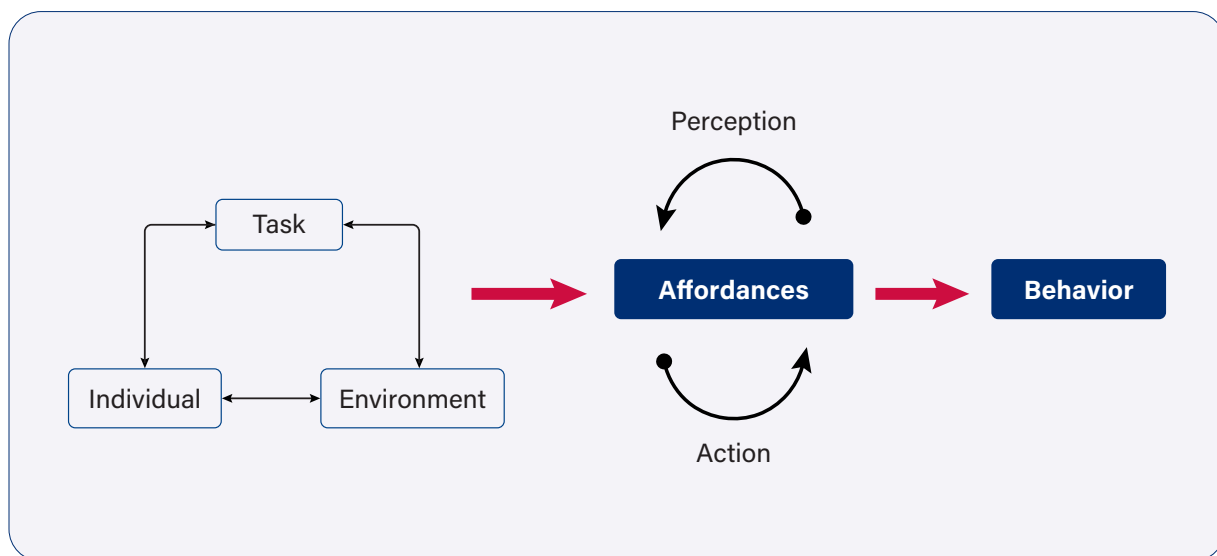
Skill Transfer: Influence of previous practice on the performance of a new skill in a competitive setting.

repetitive drills to create “muscle memory.” The theory of “muscle memory” promotes that through repetitive practice, the “perfect technique” will become automatic, and can be performed without conscious processing². A rebuttal presented by Ivanovic³ states strongly that “from a scientific perspective, the common term “muscle memory”, so popular with coaches and players is sheer nonsense”.

A coach's beliefs regarding effective methods of teaching skill acquisition directly affect their activity planning. In this article we explore a more comprehensive perspective to skill acquisition and transfer, expanding our views to provide additional solutions for planning activities, and developing our athletes into skilled performers. Non-linear pedagogy highlights 5 key principles for practice design: representativeness, constraints, manipulation, task simplification, information constraints, and functional variability. As an alternative to traditional views of practice, this article will focus on ‘representativeness’ in the form of Representative Learning Design. “Representative Learning Design is a framework for assessing the degree to which experimental or practice tasks simulate key aspects of specific performance environments”⁴.

All individuals behave differently when they must act upon their environment. Athletic performance is not solely a

product of repeating physical movements; it also heavily relies on the brain's ability to process information and make rapid decisions. When athletes are faced with unpredictable environments, such as during a game or competition, they engage different parts of the brain to find adaptable movement solutions defined as “skill.” This is in comparison to “technique” which is simply aesthetics. Technique typically is performed outside the context of play. Understanding these neural mechanisms can provide insights into how athletes can more efficiently train and prepare for competition. For example: a tennis player will use a different part of the brain when playing an opponent, than when they are hitting a ball that is fed by the coach. If the activity designed by the coach is to have the player act upon a fed ball, much of the important information a player needs to perceive from their environment has been removed such as the movement and position of the opponent, the speed, direction, and spin of the approaching ball off of the opponent's racket, the score, pressure, etc. Research has shown that the removal of key information sources from the performance environment significantly affects the timing and control of interceptive actions⁵. “Practice task designs with non-specifying information variables lead to slower rates of learning because of the less effective transfer between practice and competitive performance.”⁶.



"Representative learning design in practice is predicated on the key principle that movements typically need to be coupled to specifying perceptual variables in practice tasks that simulate competitive performance environments."⁶ It was Gibson that coined the phrase "Individuals must perceive in order to move, and they must move in order to perceive."

Therefore, the player must be able to view their opponent, their shots, and their opponent's movements to determine their own movement solution. They must also move to be able to see their opponent from different views on the court. As an example, a player should recover to a stronger court position following their own shot. This in turn will create a new view, offering new information to act upon. During coaching sessions, the practitioner must keep perception and action coupled when designing representative learning design activities to offer realistic visual information for the learner to act upon.

Skilled performers are those that have become more 'sensitive' to the available information in their environment. The

average first serve speed on the men's ATP tour is 123 miles per hour. That means that a player returning serve has around 200 milliseconds to visually identify the incoming ball, and another 300 milliseconds to react physically. That is less than a second! How can it be done? The returners at the professional level, through experience, have become very attune to the acute physical movements of their opponent's serve motion. In fact, returners begin moving, before the ball has been hit by the server. The ability to perceive this information can only be trained through representative settings. It has been suggested that experts and novices can be distinguished by their ability to interpret and utilize visual information rather than by their physical characteristics. This perspective encourages the design of practice simulations that closely mimic real competitive scenarios, allowing athletes to develop their information processing skills in a relevant context, and can have a significant effect on the efficient use of time and effort in practice. It may also explain why some athletes can achieve expert levels of performance in significantly less than 10,000 hours, and why some need more.⁷

REPRESENTATIVE LEARNING DESIGN

FIVE core principles

For Coaches To Create Representative Activities

1

Game-Like Contexts: The transfer of practiced skills to the real game depends upon the extent to which practice resembles the game. If the athletes do not practice in game-like scenarios, they will not play the game well, yet, if practice is too game-like, it may be difficult to teach the chosen skill. Therefore, practice must incorporate as much of the real-life scenarios as players can still manage their skill successfully.

2

Variability in Practice: Introduce variability in drills to simulate different match situations. This could involve altering the type of shots, the pace of play, or the positioning of opponents to challenge players and develop adaptability.

3

Decision-Making Focus: Encourage players to make their own decisions and find their own solutions to problems during practice. Guiding players to discover their own solutions and decisions creates stronger neural pathways transferring to long term memory. Success in tennis is not about repeating a solution. It is about repeating "finding" a solution.

4

Feedback Mechanisms: Representative learning design does not mean that the coach needs to sit back and not provide instruction. The role of the coach will change however, from providing movement solution to the athlete to a "guide," who helps players discover their own solutions.

5

Emotional and Psychological Factors: Incorporate elements that address the mental aspects of the game. This could involve simulating high-pressure situations or using competitive scenarios to build resilience and focus.



As professionals, it is important to create activities with the learner's perspective in mind. When coaching, are the activities you've created going to prepare the athlete for competition in the most effective manner? It is our professional responsibility to do everything we can, to educate ourselves on modern information, and methods as a means of helping our athletes achieve their personal goals. I challenge us all to continually self-reflect at the end of each day, asking ourselves the question

"why?" "Why, did I choose those activities?" "Why did I put them in that order?" "Why, did I racket feed, if live ball was possible?" Etc. We have a challenging profession. I believe that shifting our perspectives to a more comprehensive approach to skill acquisition theory leads us to better results. Inserting representative learning design activities into our athlete's development is a practical way to enhance skill transfer.

"Good luck out there, coaches!"

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Isaac McBroom, a former academy owner, and tour coach, is the owner of McBroom Coach Consulting, specializing in coach development, learning facilitation, and performance consulting. He offers evidence based information aimed to help practitioners of all experience levels create more impactful learning environments for their athletes.



Mirada Lagoon
Dade City



TreeHoppers
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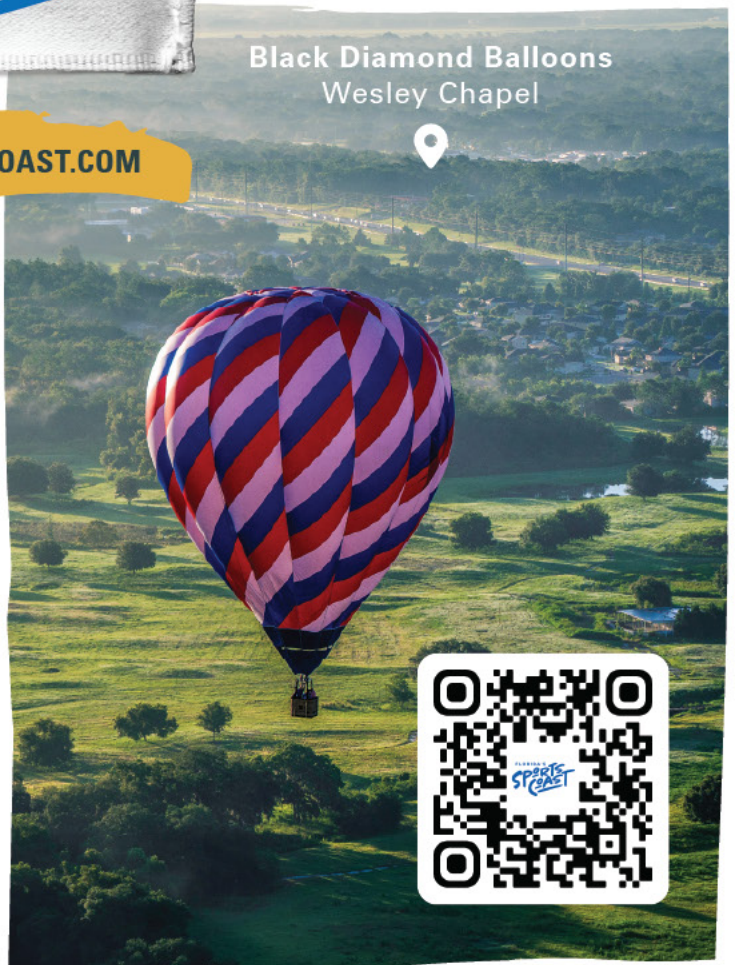
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How Injuries, Experience, and Dedication Turned Me into a Master Coach

by Jim Harp

The best way to prove your dedication to learning is to pull a muscle during an injury prevention program. Kidding, but this really happened to me, setting a perfect example for the other coaches of what not to do. But, like many other players and coaches, I wasn't always dedicated to learning.

Sports were a big part of my family, and it seemed like, for better or worse, everyone

had an opinion about what to do and what not to do, making everyone a "coach." Me included. My dad was an amazing coach, yet even him by my side I remained an average college player. The truth is I didn't know how to learn, and I thought you could just become a coach by telling people what to do. Thankfully I found the Professional Tennis Registry early in my career and decided to take my education seriously and





earn a certification because I didn't just want to coach; I wanted to BE a coach. The problem was I didn't know much about the profession or that there were different ways in which people learn. Receiving support from the PTR, USTA and IPTA, I became hooked on absorbing as much as I could.

This went beyond the certifications. I was attending almost every symposium, conference, and training session I could. Education was something I began to rely on as a crucial part of my growth, especially as I began to focus on the performance side of coaching.

In the beginning, I was a small fish in a big pond. The coaches around me had experience at every level imaginable and were some of the most successful in the world. I wanted to be like them which meant learning was going to be a lifelong commitment.

One day, I was a mediocre college player, and 30 years later, I had become a master

coach and coach developer, with numerous former and current students playing at every level of the sport. PTR played a central role in this.

Over the course of my 40-year career, I have witnessed the evolution of coaching education, which has, over time, developed into a comprehensive, research-driven, and science-based field. The things I have learned have helped me run a successful business, travel the world as a coach, travel the country as a coach developer, and put my daughter through college. I've been to touch the lives of thousands of players and families, many of whom I can now call friends.

Listening to other coaches is now a "for better" scenario: collaboration leads to growth. I've met so many new people and learned new drills, which have helped my players develop. We've discussed everything from game-based coaching to session structure, and specialties. One of my favorite topics is technical development,

and I can enthusiastically engage in discussions about ground force and kinetic sequencing.

Simply put, I love to coach.

Maybe you coach because you played tennis at a high level, or maybe you played in high school, college, or even professionally.

Perhaps you fell in love with the game and want to help others develop a relationship with tennis like yours. Or maybe it is a combination of these reasons. Whatever your motivation for coaching, there is something inside you that drives you to get on the court and share your passion. Keep learning so you can be the best that you can be.



Jim Harp is a highly accomplished tennis coach and the founder of Harp Performance Tennis Inc., established in 2004 in Cumming, Georgia, where he continues to reside with his wife, daughter, and a variety of pets. Renowned for his expertise and dedication to the sport, Jim holds prestigious certifications as a PTR Master Coach and an ITPA Certified Performance Specialist. He is also a graduate of the USTA's High Performance Program and is recognized as a USPTA Elite Coach.

As a coach developer for both the PTR and USTA, Jim is committed to training the next generation of tennis coaches, sharing his extensive knowledge and experience in the sport. His coaching journey began in earnest in 2001, and he quickly made a name for himself, earning recognition as a 1994 NJCAA All-American player from Dekalb College.

Under Jim's leadership, the Harp Performance program has successfully placed numerous players in colleges and universities across the United States, showcasing his ability to nurture talent and develop competitive players. His coaching expertise extends beyond the domestic circuit, having worked with players on the ITF Junior Circuit, as well as at ITF Futures and professional events on the WTA and ATP tours.

In addition to his coaching accomplishments, Jim is an innovator in the industry, having secured a design patent for whistling and blinking vibration dampeners. His contributions to performance coaching have been recognized with various awards, reflecting his passion for excellence in tennis.

With a steadfast commitment to the sport and an unwavering dedication to his players, Jim Harp continues to inspire and shape the future of tennis through his leadership and expertise.

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What Would Coach Say?

Developing the Inner Coach

By Mitch Case

"I had you in my head the entire match."

If you've been coaching long enough, it's likely this phrase has been said to you at one point or another. Often, it's meant as a compliment - a way to share credit for a good performance with the coach. Or, it's a way to indicate that the player was engaged in the challenge - that they were actively using past coaching to help problem solve.

But while players give credit to the coach, that inner voice is truly their own.

One of the most impactful presentations on my coaching was delivered by Dr. Jim Loehr at the PTR International Symposium a couple of years ago. Dr. Loehr spoke about the most important coach in a player's life: the player's inner voice. He stated that how we speak to ourselves matters, and how we speak to ourselves is molded by how we're spoken to by important people in our lives.

Therefore, the way we coach a player will play a significant role in how they coach themselves.

This responsibility raises a vital question: how do I want my voice to affect their inner coaching voice?

IDEAS TO CONSIDER

When coaching sport, a large part of the job is to develop the ability to play - teaching the tactical and technical components of the game. However, the way in which we coach these pieces presents an opportunity to develop a wider range of performance skills - skills that will help players both in the sporting arena, as well as in life.

So, how does my coaching model and/or develop a wider range of performance elements? Some elements, for example:

- **Confidence:** the trust in one's ability to succeed
- **Grit:** perseverance driven by the passion
- **Resilience:** the ability to recover and learn from setbacks
- **Character/Sportsmanship:** living and competing ethically
- **Creativity/Problem Solving:** forging individualized or unique solutions
- **Awareness (tactical, technical,**

conditions): a sense of the environment or situation, and what to pay attention to

So, what can I do, as a coach, to create the best inner coach in my players? Some ideas:

- Consider your choice of words and phrasing (simple, precise, positive), and
- How you say those words (body language, tone of voice)
- Ask the "right" questions (what to pay attention to, what to solve for)
- Remind them of what they're doing well (keep doing it)
- Normalize challenge - failure is temporary and part of the process of figuring things out (you can do this, you love a challenge, this is fun)
- Model character and sportsmanship at all times

As coaches, we have a unique opportunity to develop people through sport. Not only do we get to share our love for the game, but we get to make people's lives better everyday! Never forget the impact you can make. Good luck out there, coaches!



Mitch Case is the Director of Tennis at Woodridge Lake in Goshen, CT. Mitch wears many hats as he is also a Staff Pro at Farmington Valley Racquet Club; Head Coach of the Northwestern Regional 7 High School Boys Tennis Team; a Coach Developer for the PTR; a certification tester for the USRSA; and a member of Tennis Magazine's Playtester Panel.

Mitch achieved his Master of Tennis in Junior Development from the PTR in 2020, and is a certified iTPA Tennis Performance Trainer and Kovacs Institute certified Tennis Serve Specialist.



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It's no secret that **PTR** has been taking care of coaches across the globe with initiatives and incentives that provide education, support, and continuous innovation in order to give their members the best tools for success. For this reason, the union with **GRSA International** as global certification and education partner is a step forward in helping coaches not just know more about the stringing process, product knowledge and science behind stringing, it's also possibly provide a new income stream.

We all know that seasons change, business goes up and down and it's always good to have other options to help us earn a living. Knowing more about stringing, the tech behind the service and how it benefits players, will essentially help provide an even more in-depth service to your clients. Knowing why a ball reacts differently with certain strings, tensions, combinations of string, string patterns and more just adds to your professional all-round service, if we add to the fact that you can also re-string rackets, then you're definitely on to a winner.

In this first stage of the partnership, **GRSA** are offering a very special introductory offer to all **PTR** members. As an active **PTR** member, you can sign up to **GRSA's** business membership for €99 and receive 2 online courses absolutely free. You'll be able to start from the beginning, getting the base knowledge of how to string a racket and move up to a more advanced level.

These courses are online and valued at over **€300**, this also includes a certification exam.

If this weren't enough, until Sep 15th, 2023 and exclusive to **PTR** members in the US, the first 500 to sign up for this amazing offer will also benefit from a special string and accessory pack from **HEAD** valued at over \$80! If you'd like more information about this great deal, you can contact **PTR** through normal channels, or you can visit the **GRSA** website and click on the **PTR** banner.



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Implementing a Red Ball Program for Adult Beginners

by Mika Padmanabhan

When I was approached by my Director of Rackets, Ken DeHart, in May to run an adult red ball program, I had no idea what he was even talking about. I coached most of the kids' red ball clinics and loved it, but for adults? He sent me a couple of the USTA resources and the curriculum and said, "I think you'll be the person for this." Little did I know the impact that this program would have on my immediate family and greater community.

Ken and I drafted the club specific marketing and promotional materials for the program and sent it out to the members and he suggested that my husband should come out and give it a try. My husband had never played tennis in his life but enjoyed the local pickleball games in the park and is an overall athletic guy. He invited a few of his friends from work and with the existing members who signed up, we had a 16-person class ready to go. The attendees



of the class ranged from young dudes who played other sports but never tennis, to older women who had been too intimidated to play tennis in the past.

One of these women in the class was my mom. As a tennis parent to two D1 tennis players, Kala has sat through over 1000 hours of tennis lessons. She could probably be a coach with the depth of her tennis knowledge but never even tried to play because she “wasn’t athletic like that.” My husband sent a few videos to our family chat and suggested that my mom come join him. In the 25 years that tennis was in her life, she did not even consider joining until this year. Not only has she been consistently attending for the last 2.5 months, she has brought her friends to the club to come play with her!

When instructing adults, especially those who might be intimidated by the complexity of the game, it is important to minimize

instruction to short notes in order to keep the program fun and simple. Some of the basic points I include in the first session are teaching to hold the racket so that the palm of their hand matches the strings and the direction they want the ball to go, making contact in front of their body and a basic swing path of “low to high.” Other keywords include instructing to “touch,” “direct” or “lift” the ball instead of using the word “hit” to help them keep the ball in the court. As students return for their second, third, fourth sessions and beyond, some of the lessons can include teaching them how to direct the ball cross court or down the line by facing their strings in the direction they want to hit the ball, teaching underspin by holding the racket face open and walking through the ball, and teaching a basic overhead serve by tossing up and meeting the ball with the racket. As the group progresses, simple orange, green, and yellow ball games can be implemented with modified rules in order to keep it fun, engaging and competitive.

While it may seem counterintuitive to give beginners with no experience less instruction, players often find themselves overthinking if they have too many cues on their mind. We have employed an instruction model with 10% instruction and 90% play in order to allow them to think less and move more. Students have the opportunity to explore their movements and determine what they need to think as an individual to make the ball go where they want it to go. Unlike young kids playing red ball, adults will often come to you with specific questions about what they could do better, which can allow you as the instructor to give smaller nuggets of individualized feedback to each student 1:1 in a group setting.

When I see the mix of people in the red ball program, I see a group of people who have felt alienated by a sport with a very steep learning curve. They are now able to try something new and fall in love with the sport that has captivated me for most of my life. I see my friends bringing their parents, I see parents of current juniors trying to build their skill set in order to play with their kids, I see young adults finding a fun way to run around after work. Red ball tennis is the gateway for more inclusion in tennis and provides an actually achievable pathway for adults who are interested in the sport but unsure if it's for them.



Malavika (Mika) is a former D1 player at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and holds the fourth most doubles wins in a season at Emory University. Mika earned her masters degree in motor skill learning across the lifespan from Michigan State University in 2018 and worked in both academia and MedTech for 7 years before returning to the court. She currently works at Alpine Hills Swim and Racket Club in Northern California and is a PTR certified professional.



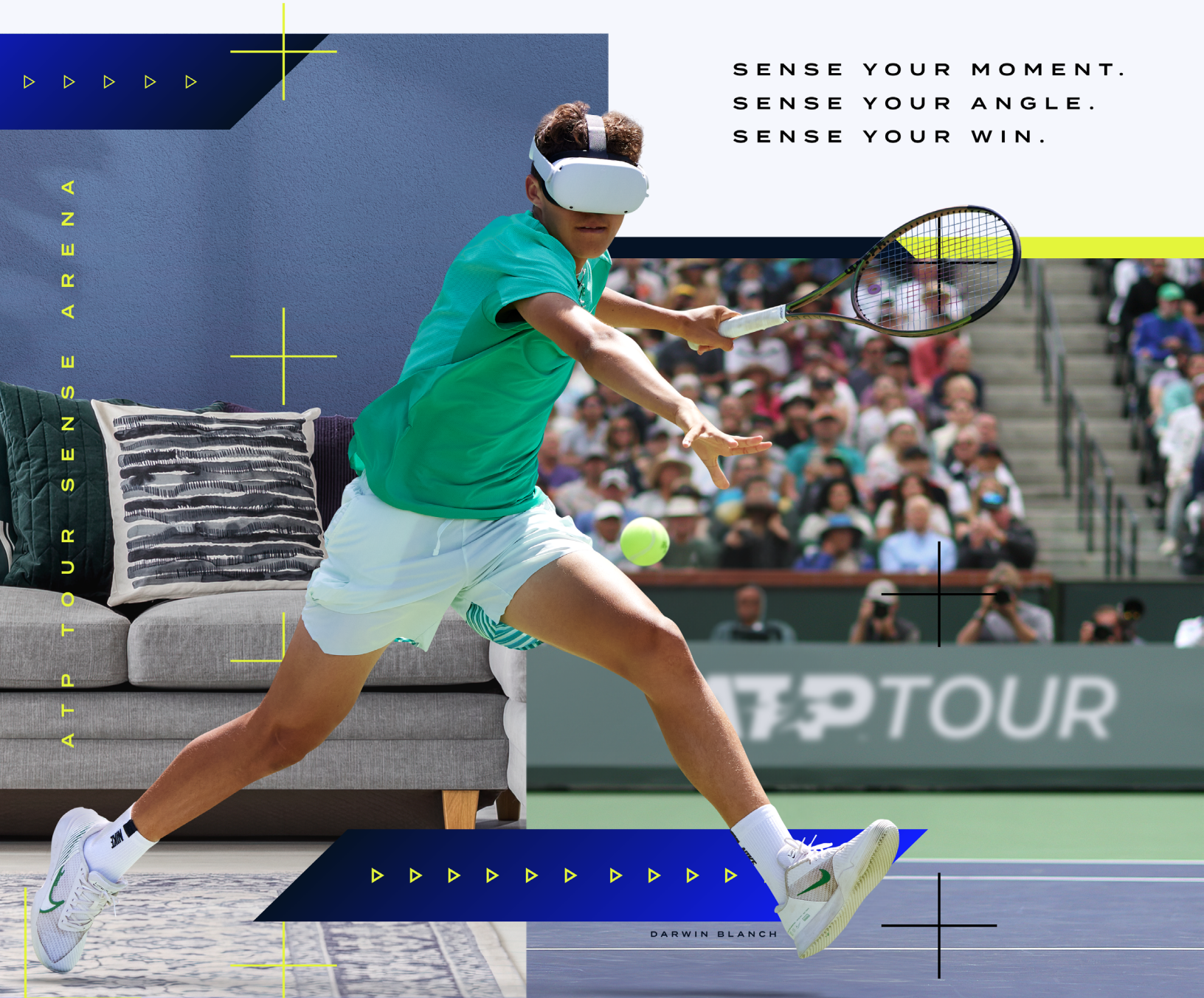
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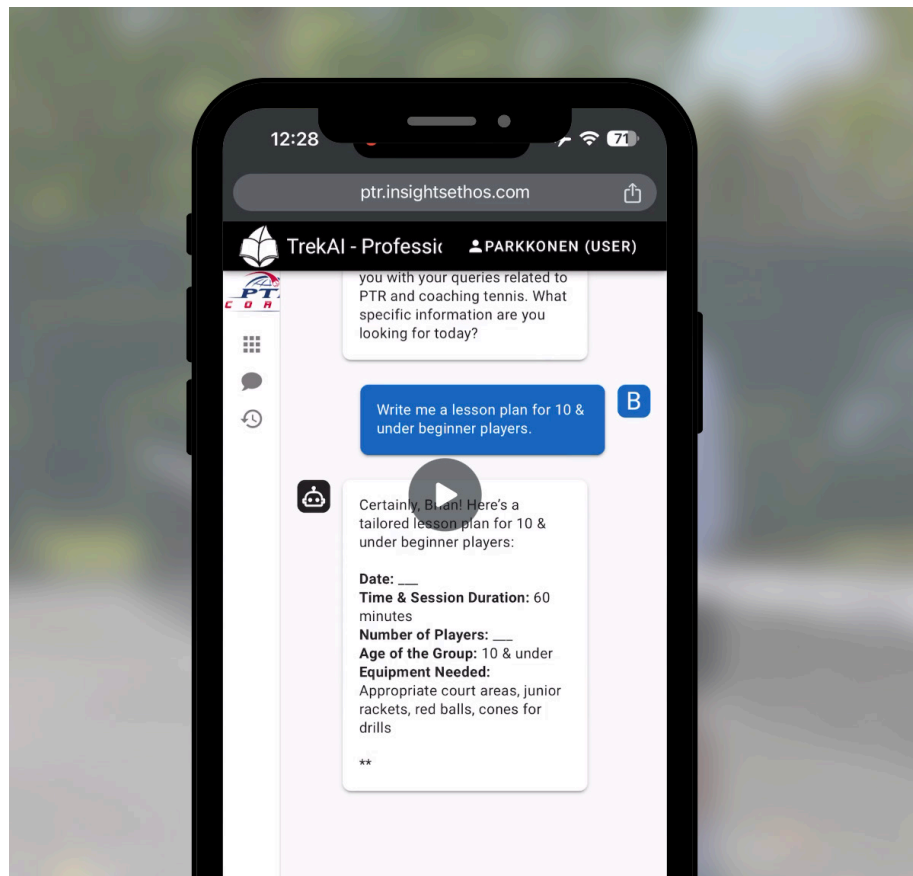
Revolutionizing Tennis Coaching with PTR's AI Platform Powered by TrekAI

by the TrekAI Team

We are thrilled to announce that the Professional Tennis Registry (PTR) has partnered with TrekAI to introduce the first-ever AI-powered platform specifically designed for tennis coaches. This groundbreaking collaboration makes PTR the first organization in the tennis industry to embrace AI technology, setting a new global standard for coaching education and

professional development.

In today's fast-paced tennis world, staying ahead is essential. Whether you're a seasoned pro or just starting your coaching journey, PTR's AI platform delivers smart, intuitive solutions to help you achieve more with less effort. By leveraging advanced AI technology, the platform simplifies complex



tasks, and allows you to focus on what truly matters—developing players and expanding your coaching success.

- **Save Time:** Automate administrative tasks, allowing you to focus on coaching and player development.
- **Improve Coaching:** Access personalized programming suggestions that adapt to your players' progress.
- **Build Relationships:** Communicate more quickly and effectively than ever to stay connected to players, parents, and staff.
- **Grow Your Business:** Use powerful marketing features to reach new clients.

YOUR AI-DRIVEN COACHING COMPANION

Imagine being able to design coaching plans specifically tailored to each of your student's abilities and goals with just a few clicks. By simply entering your student's skill level and objectives, the AI generates customized training sessions, freeing you from the time-consuming task of manual lesson planning.

But the benefits don't stop there. TrekAI also helps you build and grow your coaching business. It's like an assistant that can streamline your client communication, advertising strategies, and more with AI-powered tools handling these tasks efficiently.

For those looking to advance their coaching career, TrekAI is an invaluable resource for preparing for PTR certification. The AI offers personalized study plans tailored to your needs, helping you get ready for any level of the PTR exams. Access to a variety of exam-style questions allows you to test your knowledge and readiness, ensuring you're well-prepared when exam day arrives.

MAXIMIZING THE AI RESOURCE: SIMPLE PROMPTS TO GET YOU STARTED

- **Personalized Beginner Lesson Plan:** "Design a two-week lesson plan for a beginner to improve forehand and backhand strokes, including drills and activities."
- **Intermediate Serve Enhancement:** Create a training session to help an intermediate player increase serve speed and accuracy with specific exercises.
- **PTR Certification Preparation:** Provide a study plan and key topics to focus on for my upcoming PTR certification exam. Then quiz me on those topics.
- **Growing My Coaching Business:** Help me with a practical marketing plan to attract more students and expand my coaching practice."
- **Club Scheduling Assistance:** Using this schedule (copy and paste your schedule), help me organize a weekly court plan balancing private lessons, group sessions, and free play.

A TRANSFORMATIVE PARTNERSHIP

This partnership between PTR and TrekAI is more than adopting new technology—it's about transforming how you coach and run your business. By combining PTR's decades of coaching expertise with TrekAI's innovative tools, we're empowering coaches like you to reach new heights. Simplifying your operations means more time to focus on your passion for coaching.

The future of tennis coaching is here, and we invite you to be a part of it. Visit our website or contact us to discover how PTR's AI platform powered by TrekAI can transform your coaching experience. Empower yourself with the most advanced tools to inspire and elevate tennis athletes.

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Evolving Member Expectations in the Racquets Industry: Navigating Change in Private Member Equity Clubs

by Len Simard

The racquets industry is undergoing a significant transformation, particularly in private member equity clubs. These clubs, often steeped in tradition, now face evolving expectations from their members due to changing demographics, technological advancements, and the increasing popularity of emerging racquet sports. Directors of Racquets are at the forefront of these changes and must adapt to meet the needs of a diverse, tech-savvy,

and wellness-focused membership.

THE CHANGING FACE OF CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Traditionally, private member equity clubs catered to an affluent, multi-generational membership base that valued exclusivity and tradition. However, today's members bring new perspectives. Gen Z and Millennials, who will make up the majority of

club members by 2035, prioritize flexibility, inclusivity, and diverse experiences that offer personal development and a sense of community.

The modern private club member expects more than just a place to play tennis. They seek a well-rounded experience, from social events and wellness activities to lifelong learning opportunities. This shift opens exciting possibilities for Directors of Racquets to create innovative programs that cater to varied interests. Programs blending competitive play with social engagement can attract a broader member base, helping clubs remain relevant and engaging for future generations.

Younger members also value convenience and are willing to invest in experiences that offer personal fulfillment. Programs that cater to different skill levels and interests, along with flexible options like drop-in classes, competitive leagues, and family-friendly events, ensure all members feel included and engaged.

THE RISE OF NEW RACQUET SPORTS

The explosive growth of pickleball, padel, and platform tennis is reshaping the landscape of racquet sports, particularly in private clubs. While tennis remains a cornerstone, these newer sports have gained significant traction, especially among younger members seeking a more social, fast-paced experience. Clubs that incorporate these sports see higher member engagement and satisfaction.

Pickleball, for example, has brought fresh energy to clubs by attracting members who may not have previously participated in racquet sports. Directors of Racquets must not only integrate these sports into their offerings but also create dedicated

spaces, reallocate resources, and train staff to meet demand. The challenge lies in balancing tennis's legacy with the growing enthusiasm for these newer sports.

Expanding racquet offerings not only appeals to a broader age demographic but also fosters a more inclusive environment, positioning clubs for long-term growth and relevance.

TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED EXPERIENCES

Technology has become an integral part of modern club life, with members expecting seamless digital experiences that enhance both convenience and performance. From online court bookings to AI-powered tools that enhance training, today's members—especially younger generations—want tech-forward clubs.

Directors of Racquets can harness this demand by integrating various technological tools into the club experience. Video analysis, fitness trackers, and smart courts offer real-time insights that allow members to improve their game while staying engaged. AI-driven ball machines, such as the VOLLEY ball machine, bring an interactive element to training sessions, elevating the coaching experience.

Platforms like TrekAI leverage AI to transcribe and analyze coaching sessions, offering members personalized feedback directly to their smartphones. Meanwhile, Universal Tennis (UTR) and Dynamic Universal Pickleball Rating (DUPR) systems introduce a new level of fairness and data-driven insights into competitive play, helping standardize tournaments and foster a more engaging experience.

In addition to performance technologies, clubs should enhance their presence on social media platforms like Instagram and



Facebook. Sharing tips, promoting events, and showcasing staff helps build stronger connections with members and extends the club's reach to potential new members.

WELLNESS AND COMMUNITY

The modern private club is no longer just a venue for sports—it has become a hub for overall wellness and community engagement. Racquet sports are increasingly seen as part of a broader wellness approach, encompassing physical fitness, mental well-being, and social interaction. Members now expect clubs to offer comprehensive wellness programs, from yoga and meditation classes to fitness and injury-prevention workshops.

Directors of Racquets can incorporate wellness programming to meet these expectations. Programs like RacquetFit, a subcategory of the Titleist Performance

Institute (TPI), offer personalized coaching to improve members' health and mobility. Additionally, injury prevention programs—such as group stretching or mobility classes—can help members stay on the court longer and avoid common injuries.

Drop-in fitness classes also appeal to members with busy schedules, allowing them to engage with the club on their own terms. Offering flexibility without long-term commitments enhances the member experience, providing convenience alongside value.

Building a strong sense of community is equally important. Events like social mixers, friendly tournaments, and racquet sports festivals can foster a sense of belonging, which strengthens member loyalty. Directors of Racquets can lead these initiatives, creating a vibrant and welcoming culture that extends beyond the courts.

Congratulations

YEV SUPEKO, Director of Racquets, Colonial Country Club, Fort Worth, TX

BRYAN FOX, Director of Racquets, Lake Shore Country Club, Chicago, IL

BRIAN PILLAR, Director of Racquets, Algonquin Golf and Country Club, St. Louis, MO

COLIN BRAUN, Director of Racquets, Tiburon Peninsula Club, Tiburon, CA

MARSHALL CARPENTER, Director of Racquets, Congressional Country Club, Bethesda, MD

KEEGAN BARKLEY, Head Racquets Professional, Lakeside Country Club, Houston, TX

CAIO BARDAVIL, Head Pickleball Professional, Bonita Bay Club, Bonita Springs, FL

A NEW ERA FOR RACQUET SPORTS

The racquet sports landscape in private member equity clubs is evolving, and member expectations are higher than ever. As Gen Z and Millennials take center stage, flexibility, inclusivity, technology, and wellness have become essential pillars of the modern member experience. Directors of Racquets must lead the charge in balancing their club's rich traditions with the forward-thinking demands of today's members.

This era of change presents exciting opportunities for growth and innovation. By

embracing new racquet sports, integrating cutting-edge technology, and fostering a culture of wellness and community, clubs can not only meet their members' expectations but also position themselves as leaders in a rapidly changing market.

For clubs to thrive in this new era, Directors of Racquets must take proactive steps to evolve their programming, adopt technological advancements, and create a welcoming, inclusive environment that resonates with a diverse membership. The future of racquet sports in private clubs is bright for those who are ready to adapt, innovate, and lead the way forward.



Len Simard,
Kopplin, Kuebler and Wallace
Search and Consulting Executive
PTR & USPTA Master Professional

Len Simard oversees all racquet sports, fitness, wellness, and GM/COO searches for the firm's club clients. Len is an industry leader in racquet facility consulting, performing evaluations, compensation reviews and providing solutions to all types of racquets facilities and organizations throughout the Country. Len has been directing, teaching, and coaching at well-respected country clubs throughout North America for more than 40 years and is regarded as one of the country's leading racquets directors and managers. Len has hired, trained, and worked with hundreds of professionals in his career and is extremely proud that more than 50 of his former assistants are leading prominent clubs in the U.S. and Canada.

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