



PLAYER DEVELOPMENT



PLAYER DEVELOPMENT JOURNAL

Game Styles

This journal belongs to:

| Game Styles | Characteristics | Tactical Patterns* |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Counter-puncher | <p>Counter punchers are able to hit their targets with a high percentage of first serves. It is important that they are able to serve well enough so they are able to start each service point in a neutral position. They tend to utilize a good three-quarter first serve in order to keep their first-serve percentage high. Gilles Simon and Caroline Wozniacki are two counter-punchers with good serves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very consistent from the baseline (solid from both sides) • Great mover on the court, especially in a defensive capacity • Patient and persistent, with great ability to read opponents • Redirects pace (uses opponent's power) • Absorbs power well • Changes pace very well to throw off an aggressive player's rhythm • Possesses effective passing shots and is able to mix in the offensive lob | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Half X" — short angle deep cross-court, deep cross-court short angle • Keeps the ball deep and moves the opponent side to side; mixes in shots behind • Cross-court to cross-court, then recognizes the short ball and redirects it down the line • Serves into the body, first ball high and heavy, to push opponent back off the baseline • Slices BH shorter cross-court, high heavy back behind (keeps opponent off balance) |
| Aggressive Baseline | <p>Aggressive baseliners tend to hit a bigger first serve in order to win free points. Their main goal is to use effective serve-plus-one patterns (serve wide, first ball open court; serve "T", first ball behind). Aggressive Baseliners like to start each service point in control of the middle of the court. Novak Djokovic and Victoria Azarenka are two aggressive baseliners with strong serves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses the FH to dictate points • Covers 2/3 of the court or more with the FH • Looks to take ground and take time whenever possible • Able to give ground when necessary • Likes to play when holding a lead • Very solid BH with the ability to mix in an effective slice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to take the cross-court rally ball and change direction down the line with different spins and height with excellent control • Multiple inside-out FHs to set up an inside-in FH or BH down the line • Aggressive cross-court BH to set up a FH inside-in • Takes time on the BH side by driving the ball down the line to set up the FH that can go back down the line or cross-court • Starts the point with an aggressive middle ball that pushes the opponent back, so they can then take the short ball to either side • Serves wide first ball to open the court • Serves T first ball behind • Serves plus FH |
| All-Court Player | <p>All-court players are able to hit big serves to precise targets. They are able to keep their opponent off balance by mixing up the speed, spin, and placement of their serves. They are looking to take control of the points and apply immediate pressure. This is all set up with efficient and effective serving. Roger Federer and Serena Williams are two great examples of all-court players with dominant serves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes the longest time to develop, as more skills are required to be truly effective in all areas of the court • Has excellent continental grip skills (volley, half volley, slice BH, overhead, serve) • Efficient and effective mover; likes to take ground and give ground with good diagonal movement • Great court position which allows to attack short balls effectively • Mixes up pace (speed, spin, height) • No apparent weakness; comfortable, confident, and competent in all parts of the court • Great composure on the court, which leads to good decision making and problem solving • Out-of-the-air skills: swing volley from mid-court, or close on the shorter volley to drive from the mid-court area • Most adaptable player; is able to adjust to different styles of opponents and different conditions • Very effective at attacking second serves to gain control of the points | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moves opponent around the court to expose their weakness • Mixes up the speed, spins, heights, and depth on the ball • Big inside-out FH, then take the ball out of the air to the open court (with slower players) and/or behind (faster players) • Short chip to BH side the hits a deep ball to the other side • Drives the opponents deep and able to step inside the court and to disguise the FH drop shot • Serves and volleys as a surprise tactic or when they are up in a game (looking to close out the game) • Serve plus FH patterns |

*These tactical patterns assume that two right-handed players are playing against each other.

Game Styles

Game Styles

| Style Variations | Characteristics | Tactical Patterns |
|---|---|---|
| Serve and Volley | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More comfortable in the front court, finishing points off at the net Looking to put instant pressure on the opponent's return Hits spots on serve very well and volleys to the appropriate spot on the court Playing match on your terms and at your rhythm | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serves wide, first ball to open court Serves T, first volley behind First volley deep, second volley short First volley to weaker side Defensive volleys keep deep and in front of you Volleys deep middle to take away the angles for passing shots |
| Chip and Charge / Hit and Charge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong slice BH Putting instant pressure on the server to make them come up with a passing shot Great at taking your time away Takes the ball early with very strong racquet skills (controlling the racquet head on balls that have different speeds and spins) Compact swings and good on-the-rise skills Good timing on split step and loading on the outside leg, which allows them to have a strong first step toward the net | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deuce court taking a kick serve down the T and penetrating it down the line or down the middle Drive the FH/BH to BH corner and attack Deuce: run around FH down the line and attack Ad side: chip down the line and charge Ad side: FH inside-out to BH and attack |

| Game Styles | Counter-puncher | Aggressive Baseline | All-Court Player |
|------------------------|---|--|--|
| Counter-puncher | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be patient Comfortable playing extended rallies (make fewer mistakes) Play with big margin to big targets Early part of the match sets the tone Create angles Use the short slice to draw the player into the net on your terms Start out moving the player to the open court; once the open court has been established, hit behind to catch the opponent off balance Gain advantage by attacking the second serve | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be patient and consistent Mix up the pace Make them generate their own pace (give no pace at times) Depth is key; they will look to attack short balls Be able to use their pace and redirect the ball down the line to the open court off a cross-court exchange Look to make them play in parts of the court where they are not comfortable (usually the net) Try to keep the ball out of their strike zone (either high and heavy or chip low with slice) Slow down the pace of the match; they like to play with the lead and at a higher tempo Half X: deep cross-court (high and heavy) to short angle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depth is key Move your opponent (don't let them get comfortable) Be able to use their pace and redirect the ball down the line to the open court off a cross-court exchange Serve a high percentage of first serves as they will attack your second serve Serve body, then first ball high and heavy to open court to get them off the baseline Return deep middle to eliminate giving them any angles off first ball Two-shot passing shot combos; mix in the lob early to get them off the net |

| Game Styles | Counter-puncher | Aggressive Baseline | All-Court Player |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Aggressive Baseline | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggressive swings with margin to big targets; they can't hurt you with any one shot, so patience is key Make the extra ball; focus on playing very good defense Use the big inside-out FH combo to set up the FH inside or BH down the line (aggressive with margin) When the ball is in the middle of the court, look to take time away with strong ball recognition and your feet; then drive the ball to the weaker side Side to side, then look to go behind them when the time is right (counter-punchers are typically pretty fast players and run to the open court) Serve plus FH patterns Look to attack the second serve and dictate with the FH | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High and heavy to the weaker side Make the opponent move with good change of directions (control the cross-court rally and change direction to get opponent on the move when you are ahead in the point) Keep the ball deep in the court; don't allow your opponent to step up and control the middle of the court Use the BH cross-court to open up the inside-in FH Serve patterns: serve wide, first ball open court; serve "T", first ball behind. Return big middle on first serves, more aggressive targets on second serve returns Serve plus FH look to dictate 2/3 of the court with the FH | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the ball deep and moving Serve plus FH; dictate with the FH Look to control the middle of the court (must win that battle) Be aggressive on 2nd serve returns; look to dictate High percentage of 1st serves Take the ball on the rise; look to take time away with good recognition and your feet. Get them out of their comfort zone Half X: use angles when appropriate to open up the court and look to play aggressive to the open space |
| All-Court Player | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take the ball early: give the opponent less time, create greater angles to open up the court Play high and heavy to the weaker side Be patient but attack whenever a good opportunity presents itself Look to take balls out of the air when the opponent is on the defensive Short chip to the BH side to draw them into the front court, where they are less comfortable Attack the second serve (can come in behind if it is the right ball) Approach deep middle to take away the angles on the passing shot or keep the ball in front of you (down the line) Serve and volley in games where you have the advantage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix up your shots Slice BH shorter in the court to draw opponent out of their comfort zone Change the speed, spin, height, and depths of the balls to keep opponent from establishing a good rhythm Vary how and when you attack the net; aggressive baseliners like a target so keep them off balance When attacking, mix your volleys between open court, behind, and short. Serve big into the body so they cannot extend their arms Mix in serve and volley as well as serve and staying back to keep the opponent guessing on their return Be willing to play defense and make them hit one more ball Work to get as many serves back and challenge them on each service game; keep the pressure on | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put pressure on your opponent by take control of the point early and looking to attack short balls Play to the weakness to draw errors and shorter balls Have the ability to play to the strength to open up the weakness Controlling court position is key; look to take time with good ball recognition and strong footwork to establish better court position; this will allow you to control the tempo of the match Be willing to run and defend to force opponent to play closer to the lines Keep your opponent moving and off balance (hitting behind) Two-shot passes; pass in combinations if a clear passing lane doesn't present itself Concentrate on high-percentage tennis; aggressive with margin, with big shots to big targets Serve plus FH combos work well to win points or gain advantage |

Player Journal

Player Journal

Post-Practice Evaluation

Rate the following:

1. Engagement (listening to the coach, trying to execute the drill the correct way, making good technical and tactical decisions)

1 2 3 4 5
Poor Excellent

2. Energy Level & Effort (run for every ball, look to do your best)

1 2 3 4 5
Poor Excellent

3. Attitude (use of positive emotions)

1 2 3 4 5
Poor Excellent

4. Character Quality

1 2 3 4 5
Poor Excellent

Two take-aways from practice:

1. _____

2. _____

What I can improve tomorrow during training & match play:

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Post-Match Evaluation

Opponent Name: _____

Date: _____ Conditions: _____

Tournament: _____ Surface: _____

Round: _____

Outcome: _____

Score: _____

| Tactical game plan set prior to match | Rate of Achievement |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | / 5 |
| 2. | / 5 |
| 3. | / 5 |

| Mental/emotional goals set prior to match | Rate of Achievement |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. | / 5 |
| 2. | / 5 |
| 3. | / 5 |

Rate the following:

- Effort / 5
- Overall satisfaction / 5

| Positive adjustments made during the match (technical, tactical, and competitive) | Rate of Achievement |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. | / 5 |
| 2. | / 5 |
| 3. | / 5 |

| The positive areas of the match are: |
|--------------------------------------|
| 1. |
| 2. |
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| The areas to be improved: |
|---------------------------|
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If you had to play the match again, what would you do differently?

Player Journal

Player Journal

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Player Scouting Report

Opponent Name: _____

Birth date: _____

Style of Play (Counter-puncher, Aggressive Baseline, All-court Player):

Hands - Technical

Strengths: _____

Weaknesses: _____

Feet - Movement

Can they change direction? _____

How well do they get into and out of the corners? _____

Good balance? _____

Square up and split before every ball? _____

Tactical

Strengths: _____

Weaknesses: _____

How do they defend? _____

Ball recognition (Do they look to take time away by moving up into the court and taking the ball early?)

Court position (Do they play really far back, or do they look to play closer to the baseline?)

Execute under pressure: How do they compete when the match is on the line? (Do they have a game plan and are they committed to execute the game plan during the defining moment of the match?)

Player's Notes

Player Journal

Player Journal

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Player's Notes

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT JOURNAL



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usta.com