



Updated Sport Psychology Program for the USTA 12 Zonal Championships

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INTRODUCTION

- The objective of the sport psychology educational programs offered at the 12 Zonal Championships is to offer players, parents, and coaches a thorough introduction to sport psychology in the early stages of the players' tennis participation.
- These programs have been given by experts in the field of sport psychology and tennis, and have been well-received by the tournament attendees. However, there has also been feedback that the information provided at the different Zonals has not been consistent.
- In addition, emphasis in the programs has been more on the personal development of the players and less on an introduction to the aspects of sport psychology that are more commonly associated with performance enhancement.
- This summary reviews the purposes and rationale for the study as well as covers a selection of topics covered in the *Be the Best You Can Be: Winning in the Game of Tennis and Life* program developed for the USTA 12 Zonal Championships.

GOALS OF THE STUDY

The purposes of the project were the following:

- To build on the value offered to players, parents and coaches by the educational programs currently presented at the USTA 12 Zonal Championships.
- To enhance the quality of information provided to the audience.
- To identify and train presenters who will offer the best possible substantial and stylistic product, thereby allowing tournament attendees to gain the greatest benefits from the program.

YEAR PERFORMED 1997

WHAT DID THE STUDY FIND

The following are excerpts from the updated sport psychology program presentation: *Developing the Mental Edge for Competitive Junior Tennis*

- Prime Tennis: Playing at a consistently high level under the most challenging conditions.
- A, E, F & I will determine whether or not you play Prime Tennis.

Attitude

- Believing in your physical, technical, and mental abilities.
- Knowing you can play your best consistently.
- Responding positively to adversity and pressure situations.
- Walking the walk and using positive body language.

Effort

- Giving your best effort in all aspects of your tennis training: physical, technical, tactical, and mental.
- Being totally prepared for every match.
- Never giving up, no matter what the score is.

Focus

- Focusing only on the present, not they past or future.
- Focusing only on the process of playing well, not the outcome of you do play well.
- Focus on the progress you are making, not comparing yourself to others.

Intensity

- Knowing your prime intensity.
- Maintaining prime intensity during practice.
- Adjusting your intensity as needed during matches.



COACHING IMPLICATIONS

- The updated sport psychology educational program will provide clearer and more in depth information that will have practical value to your players as they enter the USTA Player Development system.
- These benefits will include a greater understanding of how tennis can impact your players as young people and what psychological information and skills can be used to improve the quality their training and competitive performances.
- The revised program will also benefit parents new to tennis by educating them about their influence (both positive and negative) on their children's development as athletes and people.
- Both of these advantages will have long-term value in players' pursuit of their competitive and personal goals, and to the USTA in terms of more mature players who are better prepared for the rigors of high level junior-elite tennis competition

