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The Parent's thoughts

Tennis is a sport discipline discussed in various books and publications. There will be many more to read year after year. You can go through the entire tennis book collection, but still the actual training and practicing of this discipline will raise the questions and riddles, which solving might be compared to the fascination of the new lands discovery.

This part of our magazine is probably not directed to all of our readers but for the encouragement, I will say that getting more deeply into the subject of the professional sport makes the viewing of sports tournaments more pleasurable.

In our series Parents thought's, we want to present tennis from the parent's perspective - the most important person present in the career of each athlete, including tennis players.

It is obvious that parents play the most important role in child development. However, this is less obvious in sport, especially in professional sport.

In my 8-years old career as a tennis player's parent, only at the beginning, roughly when my son was 7 years old, I have met parents who treated tennis only as the activity for their children. The most of parents want, probably more than their children, success and career path for them. It may be because tennis is considered the elite sports discipline, or because of the high earnings for champions or ,finally, due to the volume of tournaments and level of competition from the youngest years.

As in mathematics, I will ask the questions and review the statements every parent most likely considers. Furthermore, I will try to analyse them all and in contrast, to mathematics, there might be more than one answer or solution. Some, not without reason, will say there might be as many answers as children- players. I will try not to be a know-all. My aim is to share my thoughts- the parent's thoughts.

In the second part of this article, I will ask questions, I've asked myself many times:

- Can my children play professional tennis?
- Can they succeed?

This question is asked more often and louder - remaining in the nomenclature of mathematics - proportionally to the number of lost matches.

Also, there are repetitive questions asked statistically so often by others, friends and family. Let me start with the most common:

- Who wants a career of a tennis player more - a son, or daughter or you, a parent?
 - The second question is not better:
 - Do they have the talent?
- In further publications, I will move on to

the bigger challenges.

- Should there be the so-called intuitive serve allowed and whether or how often to change, or to moderate it?

To answer this question, I will analyse Djokovic's training of the serve and the meaning of 'smooth and simplify'.

- How to coach the defensive or the offensive player? Whether and how to coach an 'all court player'?
- Whether to allow screams or a loud gasp that is a natural healthy reflex, or eliminate these habits?

I will collate aggressive tennis with relaxation, speed and technique. The distinction between strength and speed is an important issue here.

How many forehand strokes are there? It's biomechanics. So, let's look for answers within the fields of physics' authorities:

- concerning Newton's rules - there are 11
- concerning Maxwell's rights - there are 33
- concerning Einstein's theory - it is infinite

I'll try to give the answers, taking as a basis the forehand strokes, which need to be trained due to the variety of different hitting techniques.

The professional tennis has started to be a science for me. Within eight years, I have undergone a transformation from being a passive fan of this discipline, through the state of a careful observer to an analyst of this discipline. To show the magnitude of the subject, in this first article, I will announce more aspects and areas that we will touch upon.

In the sphere of training:

- The number of training hours
- The amount of fitness related, general development training in relation to the amount of practice on court.
- The importance of mobility and, therefore, the training with control and improvement of the heart rate -(HR).
- Aerobic training in relation to tennis training
- Training rules for shots techniques, defence, and running on the court on different surfaces.
- The essence of tennis shots - and hidden keys.
- The cooperation of both hemispheres of the brain and the nervous system.
- The importance of balance, and a lower centre of gravity
- The gradual implementation of tactics
- The importance of training periodization
- Routines
- The importance of preparatory training, also without the use of a tennis racket
- The threat of overtraining
- The importance of equipment choice, tension, the selection of shoes, etc.

In the area of health:

- The athlete's diet, especially during high-intensity activities : more than 2000 kcal a day
- Hydration and fluid therapy
- The use of supplements
- Breathing (proper oxygenation) of the organism, the philosophy of "long breath-long life", and the level and improvement of aerobic capacity

- Recovery or the importance of regeneration, rest periods and frequency
- Energy management
- Periodic tests and control of parameters, e.g. weight and height, bilirubin, proteins, etc. in the blood, plus cardiovascular research
- The inevitability and harmfulness of muscle soreness, and counteracting it
- The importance of preventive training that strengthens ligaments, and tendons, improving joint mobility
- PRICE - protection, rest, ice, compression, elevation - treatment of injuries
- Quickly respond to all body signals

The importance of the statistics in tennis:

- The average number of rallies in a game
- The probability of hitting in the field with risky strokes, and working out a percentage rate
- The repetitiveness of various techniques and actions
- The problem of time (lack of it) and, consequently, the need for training selections
- Training awareness - wise choice from the range of dozen possible strokes
- Why were Connors and Borg different than other tennis players?

In the psychological and social approach to the tennis training of your child:

- High ranked here is so-called 'Parents pathology' - and educating parents through a child
- Differences in training an amateur, professional and candidate for a champion
- The choice of the coach and the evaluation of his/her competence
- A strong sparring partner - an important element of the training
- The building of the mental strength without pharmacology and psychologists
- Comfort zone - how it works against player
- Jumping rope as a tool to build concentration and willpower

The awareness of the player development phases over longer period, such as:

- Child 3-7 years old - fun, coordination and relax.
- Child 8-12 years old - the beginning of tournament competition, looking for dominant abilities and features such as peace, aggression, speed, strength.
- Child 13-15 years old- working out a decision about progress into professional tennis, the know-how of losing or criticism of winning, The exam for parents - time for serious decisions. During this period, finance starts to play a role.
- Above 16 years old- the end of fun and full dedication to the professional sport, the gradual increase in tournaments over the training; last time to eliminate the lack of technique, as a Polish proverb says, "What Johnny does not learn that John will not know." The finance as in the cycling peloton quickly becomes the significant part of the tennis player's career path.
- The adulthood - the deserved rest for caregivers, tennis player takes over but still costs commitments are on the parents.

And much more.

We invite you to read and share your comments.

