



DEVELOPING YOUR TACTICAL AWARENESS



Take a look at some of these tips to improve your tactical awareness

Why important?

'The objective of tactical information is to provide the athlete with the strategic knowledge required to effectively execute the skills they have acquired'.

(Bompa, 1999 – Sports Psychology & The Theory of Sports Training)

Tactics can often be a neglected part of a player's development yet in essence can be the difference between winning and losing matches.

What to do?

GENERAL TACTICS	PLACEMENT	SPEED	SPIN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vary Spin, Speed and Placement. Avoid playing to 'Power Zones'. The greater the Technical, Physical and Psychological abilities of a player then the more tactical options are available to them. General tactics against all opponents involve being able to play with variation to stop opponents getting into a rhythm and anticipating. The more accomplished players become, the greater choice of executing a variety of tactical options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice playing into the crossover Point. Topspin's are more effective played deep/wide. Develop a range of short or long pushes. Lines of play (where you play the ball to determines recovery position). Half long balls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Playing attacking shots with speed reduces their organisational time. Change of pace can be effective especially against defence or half distance players. Don't let opponent dictate the pace of the game! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observing your opponents' spin by watching contact and trajectory of ball. If unsure of spin select slightly later timing point. Use good variation and disguise of spin especially on service.

HOW TO PLAY DIFFERENT STYLES	TACTICS V DIFFERENT KINDS OF RUBBERS	SERVICE/RECEIVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When playing counter hitters use both heavy backspin/topspin and avoid playing to Power Zones – Crossover is effective placement. Patience is required against defenders. Varying topspin and using short drop shots especially to F/H. Also, fast topspins to the middle are effective. Against blockers be prepared to vary the topspin especially slow heavy topspin followed by a fast attack to crossover. Against aggressive spinners try and initiate the first attack and avoid pushing passively to the Power Zones. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Pimples usually used by defenders or attacking players who play counter-hitting style close to the table. They are good for controlling heavy spin and defenders can use to good effect to vary amounts of backspin. Often players who use short pimples on one side will use the reverse rubber to impart more spin on service. Long pimples are basically spin reversal and are referred to as a 'Parasite' rubber as can only work with the spin that is given to them. Generally used by defenders on the B/H where the more topspin on the ball the more backspin comes back! General tactics against long pimples is to serve long or short with backspin or no spin which allows a strong 3rd ball attack. If it is returned, then the ball will have backspin so push the return and start the cycle again. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service is a crucial part of tactics as allows one to plan point to exploit own strengths and opponent's weakness. A varied service game with ability to change direction, spin, and speed (also with disguise) keeps opponent from anticipating. If a particular service is effective, then perhaps save for important situation. Players should be able to receive and play against a variety of serves and in general try play most attacking option. Being able to read and play half long serves is an important part of the game as players develop as it can take servers initiative away.