

Coaching Program

“Mastery of Sports Mental Toughness”

for

Tennis Players

No building is better than its structural foundation, and no man (woman) is better than his (her) mental foundation.

John Wooden (Basketball Hall of Fame, 10 Time National Champion Coach, UCLA)

Background:

There is more to sports than physical ability. The mental aspect of the game is often what makes the difference between winning and losing. Regardless of its importance, mental toughness is often overlooked or passed by all together. There is usually more opportunity to develop one's backhand or second serve than the mental part of the game. This is often due to insufficient access available to impact this area. As a result, many people are left unsupported in the mental arena of sports, causing them to be deprived of the full potential of satisfaction, effectiveness and victory available.

Mental Toughness:

Mental toughness is the ability to generate being “in the zone” and operate consistently at peak performance by maintaining focus and being in a winning mindset regardless of circumstances, results or other external factors.

Intention of the Course:

Gain the ability to generate outstanding mental toughness on demand, giving players the ability use the mental aspect of the game as a tool to win.

Results from Gemini's Mental Toughness Training:

- **The average participant increased their ranking by 25% within 2 months and 45% within 6 months**
- Playing as well in competition as in practice
- Peak performance at crucial moments and in challenging or high stakes situations
- Increased tenacity, confidence and motivation
- Freedom from pressure, anger and upset
- Ability to avoid ‘choking,’ maintain the lead and make a significant comeback
- An entire team be operating on the same page
- The freedom and power to be in the moment, fully engaged in the game
- Greater ease and speed in learning the physical components of the game
- Increased enjoyment and satisfaction while playing the game

Coaching Program Outline with Specific Outcomes: *(preliminary)*

The Coaching workshop will address issues specific to the players regarding the mental game of tennis. The workshop will consist of some strategy, but will mostly entail an in depth inquiry into the realm of what the participants do not know, revealing blind spots that are barriers to their reaching the next level in mental toughness. In uncovering these “blind spots,” players will cause a breakthrough in their mental game, and develop tools and capacity for toughness and rigor, allowing them to begin the mastery of mental toughness.

In David's "mental toughness" seminar the participants discovered that it is not inevitable that they will get nervous, frustrated, angry or distracted while competing in their tennis matches. But that in fact they can choose to react differently in these previously stressful situations, opening up for themselves a whole new realm of freedom, power and joy when competing.

Graham Stilwell, Former ATP Top Ten in the World; Pro, 4 Star Tennis Academy

- **Focus and Clarity:** One’s head is filled with various worries, concerns and stray thoughts before a match. Unaddressed, they remain in the background and have a detrimental effect on a player’s performance, causing tightness, lack of concentration and avoidable mistakes.
 - **Participants will gain the tool of becoming ‘clear’ before a match, allowing players to dissolve anxiety and nervousness before a match and start the first point at peak performance.**
- **Controlling the Momentum:** Match momentum is mostly seen as a phenomenon that is out of the hands of the players, shifting back and forth seemingly uncontrollably but often dictating the results of the match.
 - **Players gain a heightened awareness of match momentum, and the ability and skill to manipulate, regain and control the momentum in a match.**
- **Maintaining the Lead and Mounting Comebacks:** Choking is one of the most common and dangerous pitfalls in competitive tennis, causing enormous upset, frustration and letdown for players who lose a hard-earned lead.
 - **Participants gain the ability to not only maintain the lead and avoid choking, but also learn to leverage this former pitfall to gain an expanded ability to make a significant comeback.**
- **Staying In the Zone:** Players often go on the court and hope to play ‘in the zone,’ while peak performance appears to be a random or uncontrollable phenomenon.
 - **Players gain access to consistently generating peak performance and being in the zone, allowing for reliable high performance and consistent play.**
- **Playing Full Out:** Everybody has a relationship to winning and losing, oftentimes one that is not empowering. Undistinguished, players easily become attached to the results, get tight and playing far worse in competition than in practice.
 - **Participants will distinguish their hidden relationships to winning and losing, providing them with the ability to effectively execute their game plan, play full out and perform up to their full potential.**

- **Stopping Upsets:** Something can happen in a tennis match to upset a player, and he or she can continue to be upset, hampering performance for the next couple points, games or even sets.
 - **Players will give up being upset on the court and learn to leave past mistakes in the past, allowing for the ability to start each point with a fresh frame of mind and full concentration.**
- **Eliminating the Blame Game:** Athletes commonly blame teammates, coaches, playing conditions, equipment or other circumstances for losing or poor performance, unknowingly decreasing their own ability to be effective, play at a high level and win.
 - **Players give up the paradigm of blame in practice and competition and become responsible for their own results, giving them the say in the matter of generating high performance and victory.**

My relationship with David transformed from teacher to student during my run to win the 5.5 Nationals. He cleared my head prior to big matches locally and supported my leadership at Nationals with his cutting edge coaching philosophy. I was able to accept and stay present to the situation while other players were losing their heads.

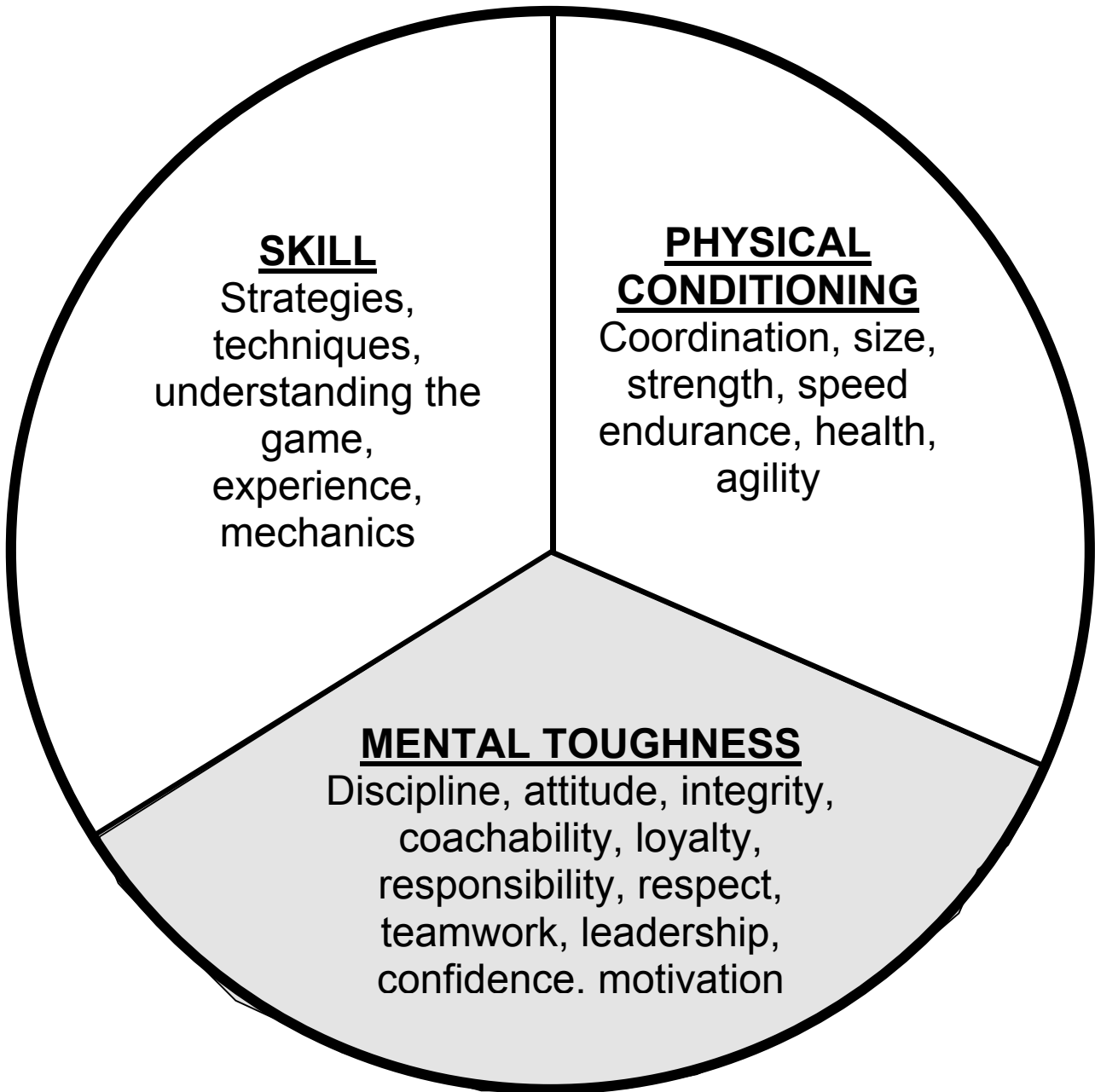
Harris Rosenblatt; USTA 5.5 League Champion, 2006; USTA Certified Pro

- **Existence and Practice:** Mental toughness is a muscle like any other. However, most people do not exercise it nearly as much as physical endurance, so their mental toughness and ability to perform fades relatively early into a match or at crucial junctures.
 - **Players gain the knowledge and muscles to keep mental toughness strong and alive throughout an entire match, allowing for a strong inner game from start to finish, and in high stake situations.**
- **Eliminating Burnout:** People bring a great deal of significance to playing tennis, winning and losing, often forgetting it is a game. This significance causes players to drive themselves to become burned out, exhausted and dissatisfied.
 - **Players will get in touch with what inspires and excites them about tennis and competition, not only preventing burnout, but also causing them to be motivated, inspired and enlivened about playing and practicing.**
- **Intention and Visualization:** During crucial points, players often just tell themselves to concentrate, do not mess up or try really hard, which has a limited amount of effectiveness.
 - **Participants will gain the tool of visualizing an intended outcome and mental state, causing a greater capacity to powerfully getting their head in the game and be focused at important junctures.**

The Mental Toughness class was amazing! David is a great coach and it has made my ranking go so high- from 207 in the Mid-Atlantic to number 64! Everyone should take it. It will make you a greater player and it is a weapon like a big forehand or fantastic serve. Thanks David!!!!

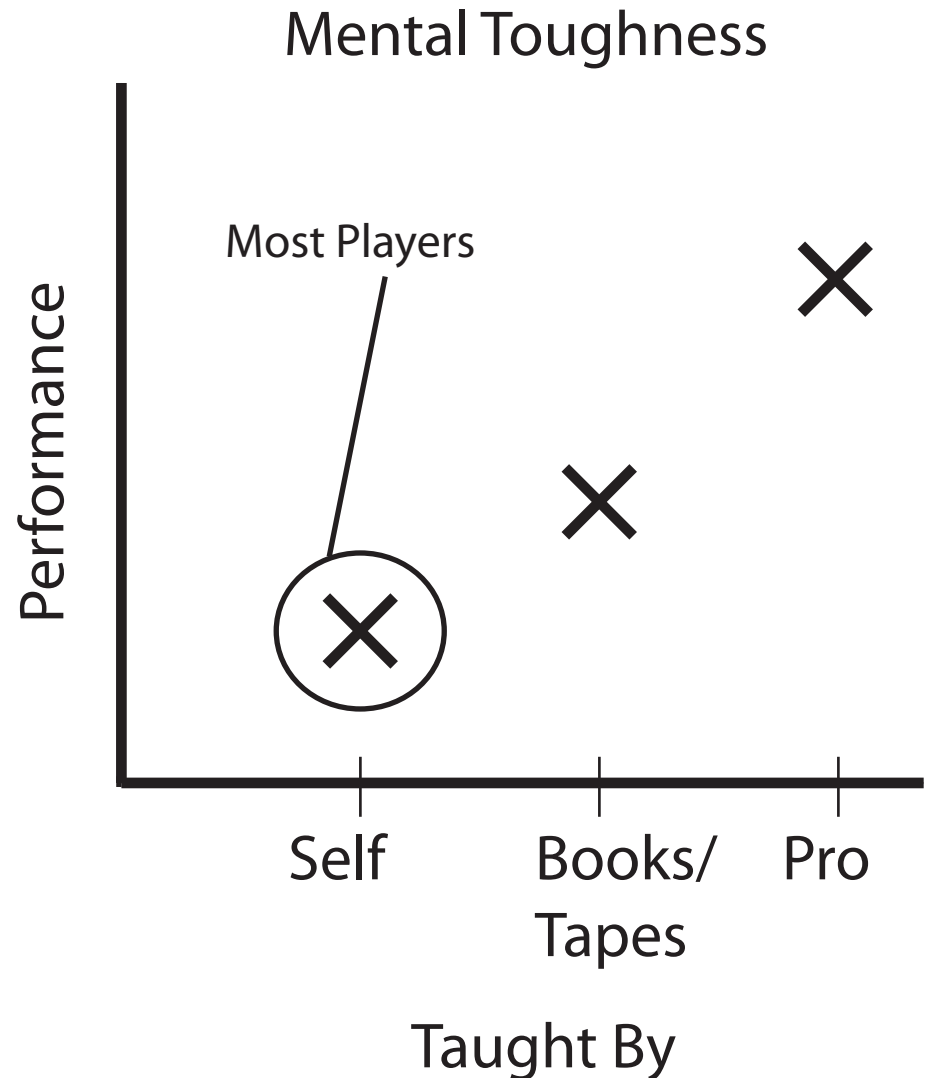
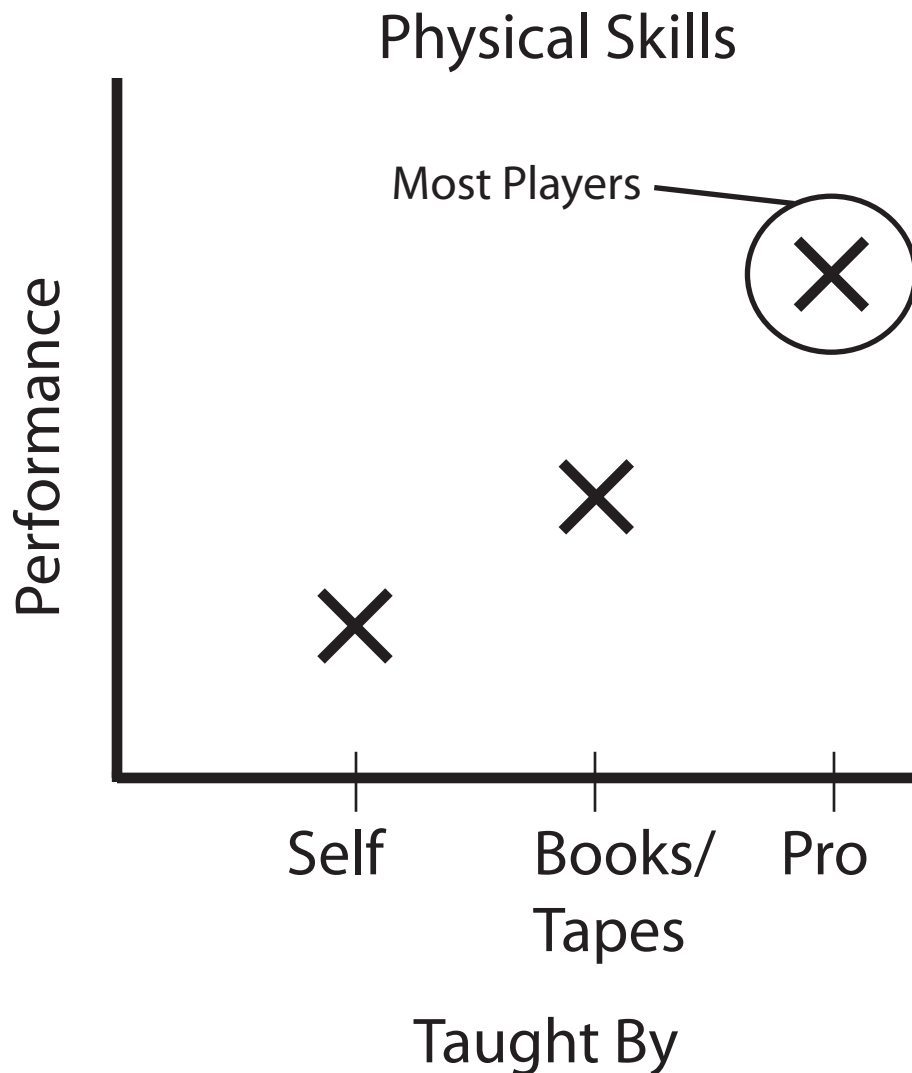
Seth McNair, 11 Years Old

Overall Ability



Self vs Pro Taught

The vast majority of players have self-taught mental toughness, synonymous to being self-taught in the physical skills of tennis, giving equal levels of performance and effectiveness.



Sports Training Areas

Sports Training Areas

