

ISSUE- August, 2016

THE ACADEMY

INSIGHT

www.racquetacademy.in



NEW BADMINTON DIRECTOR
MR. RAJESH YADAV

NEW INTRODUCTIONS
IN SQUASH

ACADEMY BRINGS
SPORTS PSYCHOLOGIST

PLAYER INTERVIEWS



PLAY LIKE A PRO

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TENNIS



Director of Tennis
TODD CLARK

PERIODIZATION - PLANNING FOR SUCCESS.

Professional coaches not only spend countless hours on the tennis court but they also spend many hours in front of a computer screen organizing a players schedule to ensure peak performance at the major events of the season. Periodization is a method of organizing the training activities of an athlete so that the chances of overtraining are minimized and the chances of achieving peak performance are optimized. This results in the coaches having to balance competition, rest, practice and physical training throughout the year.

On the professional tour players aspire to peak and deliver their best performances at the Grand Slam tournaments. These occur four times a year. As such 4 "seasons" of periodization occur:

Stage 1 – Pre season	30% - practice	30% - competitive match play
	30% - physical training	10% - rest
Stage 2 – In Season	50% competitive match play	25% practice
	15% physical training	10% rest
Stage 3 – Peak	70% competitive match play	10% physical training
	10% practice	10% rest
Stage 4 – Rest	30% rest	30% physical training
	20% competitive match play	20% practice

Each of the four "seasons" makes up a CYCLE.

These cycles can then be divided into the following:

Micro cycle – 1 week. This will include the week's plan, the day's plan, the session plan and then each individual drill.

Meso cycle – weeks/months

Macro cycle – 12 months (annual plan).

In a full year you may go through 3-4 CYCLES

Peaking (when a player plays his/her best) is the ultimate objective of periodization. The peak is at the height of the competition phase. Generally 4-5 peaks per year.

There are many considerations that a coach must take into account when designing a periodized plan for a player: Considerations include:

- Individualization – specific to the players needs (gender, age, strengths, weaknesses, objectives)
- Specificity – a training program should be player specific.
- Rest - when to give the player rest and how much. Active rest is encouraged.
- Flexible and Adaptable – relative to player performance, injuries etc
- Comprehensive and Detailed – the phase plans (technical/tactical/physical and mental)
- Varied and Fun
- Evaluative – provides invaluable feedback for future planning/development.

Other Factors to consider:

1: The age of the player – this will determine what aspects of the player's development (technical, tactical, physical and mental) are needed from a time perspective.

2: Stage of development – is the player an Under 12's player or an Under 18's ITF junior player? This will determine how many tournaments/number of matches is recommended.

Ahmedabad Racquet Academy recommends the following number of tournament matches:

14 and under – 40 matches per year

16 and under – 60 matches per year

18 and under – 80 matches per year

Professional tennis players are averaging 70-80 singles matches per year. Last year Novak Djokovic played 88 matches (winning 82 and losing 6, a new ATP calendar year record). Djokovic played 24 tournaments last year leaving a remaining 28 weeks for rest/practice.

3: Types of tournaments

1: Play through tournaments – this is where no disruption in the player's day to day program occurs.

2: Peak tournaments – a specific plan will be made in order to ensure peak performance. Generally a player will plan to have 4 to 5 peak tournaments per year.

DESIGNING A PERIODIZED PLAN

1: Select the major tournaments that you wish to "peak" in.

2: Decide how many other tournaments that the player will play.

3: If the schedule permits plan for 4 cycles per year.

4: Discuss with other associated staff including the fitness trainer, psychologist and nutritionist. This is essential to ensure that the schedule allows for continual development throughout the year and that coordination between these specialists compliments player's improvement.

5: Plan backwards from here. Macro cycle, meso cycle and micro cycle.

It is important to note that a periodized plan is regularly reviewed and amended due to injury, poor performance, exceptional performances and player rate of improvement. The key message is to ensure that the player has a detailed plan for both tournaments and training. This increases the likelihood of more consistent success.



INTERVIEW



ZEEL DESAI

Zeel Desai became the first player from Gujarat to participate in the Juniors category of **THE CHAMPIONSHIP WIMBLEDON** and here she shares with us some of the insights from her Grand Slam experience.

1. How was your overall experience of the Grand Slam?

Ans : *It was really good meeting all new players and going to new place, different atmosphere and all. Not many players get a chance to play the Grand Slam "60" which is why I am more happy.*

2. What's was the atmosphere at the Grand Slam?

Ans : *They never make you feel like you were playing Juniors category, they treat everyone like a professional player and the hospitality is amazing.*

3. What were your feelings when you entered Wimbledon?

Ans : *I was happy to see my name in The Wimbledon draw. It made me feel so proud because I am the first person from my state to play the Grand Slam.*

When I entered the court to play the match I said to myself "I want to give my 100% doesn't matter what happens".

4. When you entered to play the match what were your feelings?

Ans : *When I entered the court to play my first Grand Slam match I was really excited and happy. There was a little crowd to see the match which made me feel like I am playing the Grand Slam match.*

5. Would you work hard to enter in main draw next year?

Ans : *Yes! Definitely. I want to enter main draw directly and not by qualifier rounds. So for that I need to win other higher grade tournaments for which I will and work really hard.*

6. How do you rate your match?

Ans : *My match was really good. I think it was one*

of the best match from the qualifier draw. We both gave our 100% (I don't know about her but I did) and I lost only by few points. To win such matches, I need to be more mentally strong which I will be next time.

7. Who are your all-time favorite players?

Ans : *Men – Djokovic & Federer
Women – Radwanska & Serena.*

8. Who are your Idols?

Ans : *Djokovic, Federer, Serena*

9. Did you eat the famous strawberry & cream at Wimbledon?

Ans : *Yes, I did. They were so yummy and I want to go back in that time.*

10. How supportive are your parents towards your Tennis Career?

Ans : *My parents support me so much and they always keep me motivated. They take care of everything. My Coach and my Dad take decisions for me.*

ATHLETES IN THE MAKING



Mr. KUSH PATEL

DOB : 29/06/2003

BATCH - ADVANCE

PLAYING TENNIS SINCE 5 YEAR

SEMI-FINALIST IN THE DOUBLES EVENT

KHEL MAHAKUMBH RUNNER UP IN 2016

**RUNNER UP IN STATE RANKING
TOURNAMENT**



Mr. RISHI KRISHNA

15 YEARS OLD

BATCH- HIGH PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

PLAYING TENNIS SINCE 8 YEAR

WON U-14 CS7 SINGLES TITLE

RUNNER UP IN U-16 DOUBLES

U-18 DOUBLES FINAL RUNNER UP AT MADURI AITA IN 2015



Mr. FARHAAN PATRAWALA

DOB : 10/03/2003

BATCH - ADVANCE

PLAYING TENNIS SINCE 3 YEAR

SEMI-FINALIST IN AITA TALENT SERIES

RECENT PLAYER'S ACHIEVEMENTS



ADITYA VASISHT

Won Championship series at AISA, Ahmedabad Runner up in National series



SHWETA RANA

Won Women's Doubles Title of ITF \$10K held in Egypt, Sharm el Sheikh. Runner up in Women's doubles of ITF \$10K held in Egypt, Sharm el Sheikh



KUSHAN SHAH

Won singles title of Talent Series held at Surat



SHRIJAY SHAH

Won Green ball Tournament held at ARA



Team "Kenya" (Aditya Vasisht, Farhaan Patrawala, Prasham Modi & Ansh Raina)
Won the Junior Davis Cup

PSYCHOLOGIST ARTICLE



KAUSTUBH TAMBHALE

While coaches and trainers focus on maximizing an athlete's physical potential, the aspect of mental preparation for a game, though crucial, can often go unnoticed. The field of Sport and Performance psychology studies the various psychological factors that are related to athletic performance and the developmental, social aspects of sport participation. These include motivation, confidence, motor learning, emotion control, leadership, team building, stress,

INTRODUCING PLAYERS OF RANKING GUARANTEE PROGRAM



LEFT TO RIGHT - DIVYA RAVAL, MOHIL GURJAR, CHAVANNA SRINATH & KANISHKA SRINATH

anxiety and many more. Sport psychology experts apply knowledge of psychological principles of human performance to help athletes at various sporting levels to consistently perform at higher levels of their capabilities and potential. They work with athletes to help them enhance performance through the use of various mental skills (e.g. positive self talk, relaxation techniques, goal setting and visualization), cope with the pressures of competition, recover from an injury or competition loses. Strategies such as relaxation and mental rehearsal that athletes learn from sport psychologists are also helpful beyond the sporting context such as in education and the workplace too. Further, sport psychology professionals work with parents and coaches (especially those working with young athletes) so as to educate them on promoting healthy attitudes, motivation towards sports and participation, offering support to athletes and making coaching/ practice most efficient. In my recent visit to the Ahmedabad Racquet Academy, with the help of their coaches, I have begun working with tennis athletes of various age groups to help them

include aspects of mental preparation in their practice so as to enhance performance. Further sessions with these athletes are to address various emotional and technical aspects from both on and off the court that influence their performance. It is our belief that good habits of mental skill practice and application if inculcated in young athletes at the developmental stages of their sporting careers, would go a long way in helping them achieve their goals. Kaustubh A. Tambhale Msc. Applied Sport and Exercise Psychology (Bangor University, UK).

■ GREEN BALL TOURNAMENT





BADMINTON



Director of Badminton
RAJESH YADAV

As we all know it's a game of "mastery". Mastery in the sense of technique of movement and stroking, tactical understanding of oneself and opponents playing behavior on court, physical maneuvering of load under stressed condition, besides developing psychological stress on opponent with finer aspects of the strokes / rallies / point / game / match / surrounding / audience etc., besides stay focused under all favorable and adverse conditions to win the match and perform the best.

CHANGING TRENDS OF BADMINTON

Getting the mastery requires 12 to 16 years of systematic training or more. Still very few can effectively use their mastery and become champions.

Since the introduction of competitive badminton under tournament guidelines, no changes have taken place in court dimension and still the use of court to defeat opponents has become a trend setter by champions. Their trend was to use the front and back court and use multiple combination of strokes. That was the Era of long rallies and focus on stamina (new name endurance) of legs – lungs – hands and determination to keep playing.

Then the trend changed to the use of side lines along with front and back court combinations, there were further changes with the use of 'long smash' and

'half smash' to bend the opponents further, to delay recovery for next stroke and open up space. Here the endurance in hands with speed and agility is required in the game.

Next change was more use of 'net play'. Starting with low serve to force the opponent to play small strokes so that they can be finished without coming to long back boundary lines. Here the requirement is high endurance-speed-agility combined with reflexes.

Drastic change was seen in badminton when system was changed. This change made the game more agile and reaction oriented in terms of body, court coverage, angular strokes and racket moving

With changing trends in badminton, its training has also got more complex.

ATHLETES IN THE MAKING



ISHITA SHAH

BATCH - INTERMEDIATE

WINNER OF
KHELMAHAKUMBH U-13
WON U-15 GIRLS SINGLES
TITLE

RECENT PLAYER'S ACHIEVEMENTS



MISS. SRIYA MEHTA

DOB : 22/11/2001

PLAYING BADMINTON SINCE
3.5 YEARS

BATCH - INTERMEDIATE

WON 3 SILVER MEDALS - 2ND
IN WOMEN'S DOUBLES, 2ND IN
U-17 DOUBLES & 2ND IN U-17
SINGLES AT USA IN NORTH
CAROLINA OPEN

WON BRONZE MEDAL IN U-17
GIRLS DOUBLES AT ADANI
SHANTIGRAM



MR. BORNABH GOGOI

DOB : 10/10/2004

PLAYING BADMINTON SINCE
3.5 YEAR

BATCH - INTERMEDIATE

WON 2 MEDALS, 3RD IN U-13
SINGLES AND 2ND IN U-13
DOUBLES @ ADANI
SHANTIGRAM ON

TEAM OF COACHES



Introducing the new Badminton Director Mr. Rajesh Yadav (Centre) with his team of coaches-
Left to right- Swadesh Shah, Alfred Christian, Romit Dodeja & Jyotraditya Singh



SQUASH



Director of Squash
AMIT CHAVAN

Manage Your Mind to WIN.

Squash is a very mental game. The player who commands their mental powers in the correct ways wins more and gains more satisfaction.

Try to create a scenario where you concentrate for five minute spells very intensely. Avoid just hitting the ball in any odd way and thinking about dinner the same time. Make every shot you hit severe and purposeful. Shorten the session if you like, but once in

THE MENTAL GAME OF SQUASH

the court do the best that is possible from you. Give it all you can.

Every session has to be about being better than the last. Think about the shots or play that let you down in your previous match and work on them by making your concentration like that that you may have in a match. It's not easy to do and requires immense efforts. I have said it before that anyone can practice badly, conversely though, if you are training hard, make time for some sessions which are easy, not mentally taxing, get into a group and simply enjoy it. That is good for improvement too.

Squash helps in these four ways to improve yourself:

1. Squash is suitable for all ages

Squash is a game that can be played at any age. It is easy to learn and there are customized drills and equipments to suit

every size and skill level. Squash can be played for leisure as well as a competitive sport. It can be played alone and in group.

2. Health Benefits Of Playing Squash

- In squash, a player can use a lot more energy than most other sports. Squash helps to improve cardiovascular health. A game of squash can see you running, leaping, diving for the ball.
- Increase strength & fitness
- Maintaining and reducing weight
- Increase flexibility and strength of body core
- Promote good co-ordination, agility, flexibility and build hand-eye co-ordination.

3. Other Benefits Of Playing Squash

- Improved general & psychological well being
- Greater Self – confidence & self Esteem
- Better Social skills & an opportunity to make new

- friends
- Improved Concentration
- Stress Release
- All weather activity – as an indoor sports, weather conditions don't prevent you from playing.

One can improve so much from hard practice, training and putting in the hours yourself. World class coaches, facilities and equipment are helpful but not essential. Hard work costs nothing but your time and energy and you need lots of that if you want to get better at squash. Practicing with technical fault is not ideal but there are plenty of world standard players who have reached high levels with what some experts might call dodgy technique. If you were to study the top 20 squash players in the world you would notice that no technique is the same. There is no right way to play the sports

because so many have done it so well so differently.

SQUASH AT ARA

We are aiming to make, mentor and guide players who can compete at international level, not at once but over a period of time. Whether you are aged 15 or 30, there is no limit to play at any level, till you can compete and be a great at the sport.

By creating a standalone facility for Ahmedabad in squash, which earlier was only limited to the clubs, now we can include people who are really interested in learning and playing the sport more often. We don't want to limit the sport to just a lifestyle game, we want to see players from Ahmedabad representing the academy, the district, the state and ultimately, the country. In the past few months, we have seen some tremendous talent among kids, teens and adults

who can play competitively and win. We are glad to have them and we are working to develop them to play for themselves and the academy.

We aim to have home tournaments, for players from within the circles of the academy, every three months. Every six months, there will be a district tournament inviting all the clubs from Ahmedabad who can prove their mettle. We aim to bring official WSF – SRF - ISP certified national tournaments at the academy, every year. We will be certified by the official bodies in due time and build a great squash environment in Ahmedabad.

We Invite you and your friends to have a free try out for Squash and work with us to build the sport. Fun guaranteed!

ATHLETES IN THE MAKING



MR. YUVRAJ KOTHAWALA

DOB : 18/09/2007

BATCH - ADVANCE

PLAYING SQUASH SINCE 1 YEAR



MR. HARSH MEHTA

DOB : 14/11/1995

PLAYING SQUASH SINCE 7 YEAR

BATCH - ADVANCE

WON INTRA CLUB TOURNAMENT HELD IN RAJPATH CLUB IN 2010

PLAYED NATIONAL LEVEL TOURNAMENT HELD AT PUNE AND IN 2011



SQUASH FOR ALL

New sessions have started and we would like to invite all to treat themselves to a few lessons of squash. Age is not a bar for anyone who is willing to learn and grow their abilities. Sessions can be arranged for individuals, pairs or small group. So if you want to learn how to play squash or improve your game : Join ARA!

COACHING FOR WOMEN

- > Best Aerobic Conditioning
- > Cardio Respiratory Workout
- > Muscle toning of arms, legs, hips & Abdomen.
- > All round Flexibility
- > Highest Calorie Burnout rate – 600 to 800 calories in 30 mins
- > Improves Concentration Reduces Stress, depression and anxiety

BEGINNER KIDS

- > From 0-6 years; Boys & Girls can be engaged in daily active play through play & movement, they develop.
- > The fundamental movement skill that will provide the foundation for learning fundamental sports at older ages

ADULTS & PRO ADULTS

- > Is an active life style game

> Can be fun in a relaxed and controlled environment.

- > You don't have to have played it before Increases stamina and agility

Description	Ages(years)	Timings	Fees
Beginner Kids	0-6	7 am to 8 am, 4 pm to 6 pm	11,500
Women	All Ages	9 am to 10 am, 5 pm to 8 pm	11,500
Adults	18 & Above	8 am to 10 am, 6 pm to 7 pm	11,500
Advance Intermediate Professional(pro adults)	5 to 18 & above	7 am to 10 am, 6 pm to 8 pm	11,500

For More Details Contact 079-65454222



TABLE TENNIS



Director of Table Tennis
NILAY VYAS

The world of sport is continually changing over the years, and the use of technology is just one of those areas that has made an impact on many sports in the modern days. Anyone who has played a game of Table Tennis knows that on the surface that sport itself is very simple.

To fully understand how much Table Tennis has evolved over the years however, one must

ADVANCEMENT IN TABLE TENNIS

look at the impact of advancement in technology, which in the past few decades has allowed Table Tennis to reach its fullest potential.

In the past Table Tennis paddles did not have any fancy sponges or sticky rubber. The wooden "bat" only had a thin, fine-grade sandpaper cover that allowed for very little friction with the ball, resulting in practically no spin during matches. Thus, Table Tennis players relied on strategy rather than speed and power. Rallies were consequently longer, as the ball moved at significantly slower speeds.

Today, a typical Table Tennis bat looks dramatically different, often consisting of one red side and one black side. The differentiation of the two side allows for a very versatile bat, one side may have spin-heavy

rubber, while the other side may have no spin at all. The game has changed to a competition of athletic reflexes and superior agility. Thanks to the constant innovation of new technology, an added spin component, increased speed, and greater hitting power have revolutionized Table Tennis forever.

The most important component when it comes to playing Table Tennis is the surface of the bat used to hit the ball. In a game where the table is only 9 feet in length but the ball moves at speeds of close to 70 mph, having a powerful rubber-surface is phenomenal to winning games. The ply itself is made with a high-friction surface to increase the sideward force between the bat and the ball. The spongy-sub layer located on the ply

for increased contact time and contact area. Consequently, this combination of greater force and delayed time makes for excellent spin on the ball, which forcefully speeds up the game to dramatic levels.

Of course, the bat would not be so powerful without a solid foundation, which is found in the specialization of the blade. Table Tennis bat were designed so that the type of blade used could be changed according to the personal preference of the player, which would result in many significant changes in style of play.

The traditional celluloid Table Tennis ball has diameter of 40 mm and weighs approximately 2.7g. The ball's

large volume-to-mass ratio means it is far more susceptible to aerodynamic forces than most other sports balls, making it easier to spin and drag, but also hard to react to. A standard serve by an elite Table Tennis player can make the ball move at rotational velocity of over 3000rpm, which is equivalent to twice the speed of a curve ball thrown by the average MLB pitcher. Many players train hard in order to utilize this sensitivity to aerodynamic forces, and as a result, they are able to perform many series of dazzling rallies and acrobatic moves. Additionally, the ITTF (International Table Tennis Federation) had decided to replace the long-term celluloid ball with a new ply-plastic prototype in competitive

matches; this is because the regular celluloid ball moved so fast that it was considered 'not viewer friendly' enough. Just like that, a change of just the material of the ball has changed the game forever.

Table Tennis will always remain as a game that is constantly influenced by modern day technology. In a sport where players are so close to each other and millimeters can be the difference between a loser or winner, these small differences in technology are more important than ever and will continue to play a big role as Table Tennis increases in popularity.

■ TABLE TENNIS DIRECTOR ACHIEVES ITTF COACHING CERTIFICATION

Mr. Nilay Vyas, Table Tennis Director of the Academy successfully achieved ITTF level 1 certification



ATHLETES IN THE MAKING



MR. KAAVYA PUNJABI

DOB : 24/03/2007

PLAYING TABLE TENNIS SINCE 1 YEAR

BATCH - INTERMEDIATE

PLAYED U-12,U-15,U-18 STATE LEVEL
TOURNAMENT AT AHMEDABAD RACQUET
ACADEMY



MR. KRISHNA THAKKAR

DOB : 12/01/2005

PLAYING TABLE TENNIS SINCE 1 YEAR

BATCH - INTERMEDIATE

PLAYED U-12,U-15,U-18 STATE LEVEL
TOURNAMENT AT AHMEDABAD RACQUET
ACADEMY

TABLE TENNIS TOURNAMENT STATE



SECOND OPEN GUJARAT MAJOR RANKING TABLE TENNIS TOURNAMENT 2016
ORGANISED BY TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION OF AHMEDABAD
UNDER THE AEGIS OF GUJARAT STATE TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION
VENUE: AHMEDABAD RACQUET ACADEMY, SINDHU BHAVAN ROAD, THALTEJ, AHMEDABAD
DATE: 7 TO 10 JULY, 2016

Devesh Karia of Income Tax Bhavnagar wins Men's title while Frenaz Chipia of Surat won double crown with the Women's title; Youth Girls Title on the concluding day of the Second Open Gujarat Major Ranking Table Tennis Tournament played at ARA Ahmedabad. In the Men's final Devesh struggled in the beginning but emerged as the ultimate winner in the end by beating Jignesh Jayswal of SBI, Bhavnagar 10-12, 9-11, 11-6, 11-5, 11-7, 5-11, 11-8. In the Women's final Top Seed Frenaz Chipia got the better of Second Seed Divya Gohil of Bhavnagar 11-8, 11-6, 11-7, 11-9. Second seed Soham Pandya of Bhavnagar defeated Gujarat's Junior International top seed Manush Shah of 12-10, 17-15, 9-11, 11-6, 14-12 to claim the Junior Boys Title. In the Junior Girl's final, second seed Aarushi

Nandwani of Surat got the better of Fourth seed Kausha Bhairapure of Ahmedabad 9-11, 11-3, 11-9, 14-12, 7-11, 10-12, 11-6. In the Youth Girl's final, top seed Frenaz Chipia of easily beat second seed Hely Shah of Ahmedabad 12-10, 11-5, 11-4, 7-11, 11-8. While in Youth Boys final, top seed Harsh Sachanandani of Surat defeated Second seed Manush Shah of Baroda in thrilling seven games 11-8, 11-4, 11-8, 4-11, 7-11, 8-11, 12-10. While in the Sub Junior Girls final Local Girl second seed Kausha Bhairapure stopped the fine run of unseeded Hetvi Raval of Bhavnagar 11-7, 11-4, 11-6, 11-5. In the semi final, Frenaz beat fourth seed Dwijal Trivedi of Bhavnagar 11-9, 11-8, 11-3, 11-9 while Divya defeated sixth seed Hely Shah of Ahmedabad in seven exciting games 6-11,

11-6, 8-11, 11-8, 8-11, 11-4, 11-6.

FOLLOWING ARE THE ALL FINAL RESULTS

- Cadet Girls Final: Rutva Kothari(BVN) bt. Bhairavi Mistry(BVN) 5-11, 12-10, 11-8, 12-10, 7-11, 12-10.
- Cadet Boys Final: Burhanuddin Malubhai(SRT) bt. Harsh D Patel(AHD) 11-7, 12-10, 7-11, 11-3, 11-9.
- Sub Jr. Girls Final: Kausha Bhairapure(AHD) bt. Hetvi Raval(BVN) 11-7, 11-4, 11-6, 11-5.
- Sub Jr. Boys Final: Dhairya Parmar(AHD) bt. Harshil Kothari(BVN) 12-10, 11-7, 11-4, 11-7.





FOOTBALL



Director of Football
ANIL PATEL

When it comes to youth soccer clubs, ask yourself this question:

Is the primary focus on what the club can do for the young player, or what the young player can do for the club?

Unfortunately in our culture, we idealize winning as the sole marker of success. Many clubs

THE CULTURE OF WINNING HURTS PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

are driven by an insatiable appetite for winning, instantaneous gratification, and a premature focus on what is best for the team instead of focusing on the development of each individual player."

A quick perusal of the majority of local clubs' facebook / websites — plastered with photos of their teams holding trophies, boasting of goals totals for elementary school kids — will confirm this observation.

Believing these clubs must be doing a good job, parents are happy to drive their children great distances and freely open their wallets to provide the best opportunities possible. What

they fail to realize is this culture of winning can have a significant negative impact not only on their children's enjoyment of the sport, but ultimately on their development as well. It is a vicious cycle pushing clubs to advertise their trophies rather than their retention and improvement of players' abilities.

In their publication "Foundations of Sports and Exercise Psychology," Robert Weinberg and Daniel Gould explain the critical factors contributing to the early withdrawal from a sport is the lack of enjoyment, excessive pressure and an overemphasis on winning. In fact, if you ask young soccer players for

reasons why they enjoy playing soccer, "winning" isn't even in the top 10 most common answers. As adults, we hijack their experience to satisfy our purposes.

All too frequently, games represent the 'big stage' and are overhyped by parents and coaches. For instance, listen to pregame 'pep-talks' and you'll too often hear coaches saying things like: "This team is really good, you guys are going to have to bring your A-game if you want to beat them." Or, "Remember, if we don't play smart out there, they're going to punish us." Or, "If you don't work hard, I'm going to sub you out." Or, "Last time we played them, they beat us on a bad penalty call. We owe them this time!"

The great majority of young soccer players already want to do their best; they don't take the field with the plan of playing poorly.

The optimum environment for learning occurs when the brain is pushed just beyond its comfort zone. However, in an overly pressured, competitive environment, tension and anxiety build to the point that performance, fun and learning suffer. In soccer, children need to have the freedom to be courageous and try new skills they have not yet mastered. They need to exercise their circuits that allow them to think creatively and develop their on-field problem solving. Instead, the pressure placed on them by adults to produce a win shapes their play into avoidance of mistakes as the primary goal rather than accomplishing difficult feats.

The pressure doesn't end with

the final whistle. Many coaches sit players down for extended periods to go over their individual mistakes and what they could have done to win the game. Further, parents continue this dissection in the parking lot and car ride home. Children are clear that these postgame assessments do nothing but suck the last drops of fun from their experience.

What do players like Maradona, Gerrard, Messi, Ronaldo and Suarez have in common with each other and so many other soccer greats? During their early soccer careers, they all regarded a soccer ball as a toy, rather than a tool. The street ball environment of mixed ages and abilities, without coaches, parents and trophies, allowed these youngsters the freedom to be creative. By having fun, they were happy to play for hours and hours without getting burned out. Research on elite athletes confirms these champions only began to approach competition from a more serious perspective in their later stages of development (often as teenagers).

What is the purpose of games then, if not winning?

Games at this stage of development should be used primarily for learning. This is not just the musing of one idealistic pediatrician. It is supported by elite soccer clubs and coaches throughout the world. Well-informed coaches realize success is not equivalent to winning. Studies on top-level youth academies in England showed, "Despite the elite nature of the programs, winning was de-emphasized; no scores or league positions were kept. The focus was on improving

and developing individual players rather than the team's win/loss record."

As Dean Whitehouse, a youth coach at Manchester United, puts it:

"It is crucial that everyone understands that games should be utilized for learning, and players feel that they have the freedom to express themselves. We realize that the final score is not as important as learning at this moment. If young players are pressured to win every time they step on the field, they will not receive the opportunities that are vital to their development, nor will they feel confident about practicing and implementing new skills or ideas."

This is how elite coaches approach games. Their egos are tough enough to accept a losing record in favor of a win for their players' development. Even though many coaches understand this sentiment, the cultural pressure to perform is too great, and they resort to quick fixes for short-term results.

Games provide children powerful opportunities for learning and enjoyment of soccer. If we want players to continue their involvement in soccer and unlock their potential, we must use games for learning. When clubs place an emphasis on winning as the ultimate goal, children bear the burden of adult egos at the cost of their personal development.

Summary

The culture of winning can have a significant negative impact not only the children's enjoyment of the sport, but ultimately on their development as well

■ ADFA JUNIOR & SENIOR LEAGUE

- The Academy were the host for the Ahmedabad District Football Association league which was held for the season 2015-16 from 11th to 23rd June, 2016.
- The ADFA Senior League was won by the Police Team
- The ADFA Junior League was won by the St. Xavier's college



Action from the final match between Police team (Orange kit) v/s Claris Team (Yellow kit)



EVENTS

THAT HAPPENED AT THE ACADEMY

■ JGIS SCHOOL VISITED THE ACADEMY IN JUNE, 2016



■ REDBRICKS SCHOOL VISITED THE ACADEMY IN JULY, 2016



UPCOMING EVENTS

TENNIS TOURNAMENTS

ORANGE BALL TOURNAMENT

DATE: Saturday 27th August

START TIME: 5:30pm

FINISH TIME: 7:30pm

Players will play round robin.

Limited to **32 players**.

Trophies and prizes awarded.

COST : Rs.250

PARENT/CHILD NIGHT

START TIME: 7:30pm

FINISH TIME: 9:30pm

Parent/Child round robin + parents Vs Child fun games.

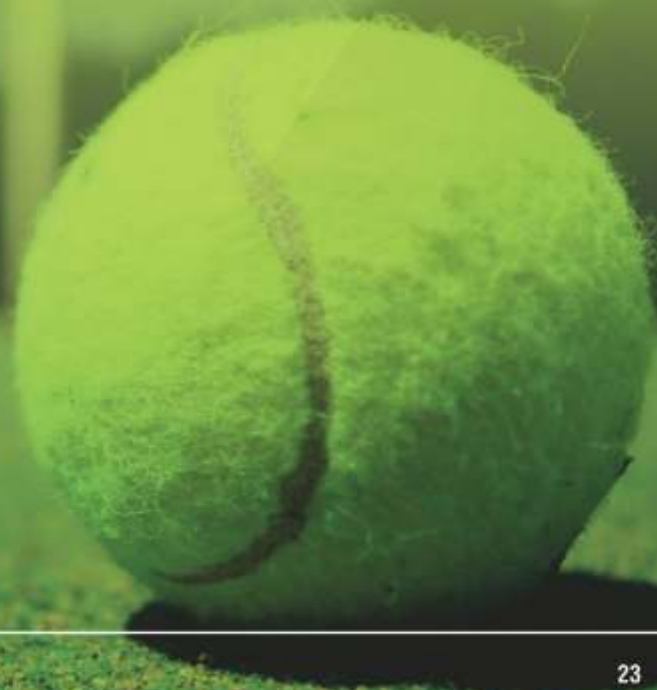
Prizes awarded. Evening snacks provided.

COST : Rs. 300 per pair

ARA CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES

DATE : 12TH TO 17TH SEPTEMBER, 2016

EVENTS : U-14 & U-16 BOYS & GIRLS



PLAY LIKE A PRO



Play like a pro

AHMEDABAD RACQUET ACADEMY

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