

ELM PARK TENNIS CLUB

SINGLES TACTICS



Singles Tactics for your matches

Look for your opponent's weakness. This could be technical (shots), physical (movement / fitness) and mental (are they getting annoyed after losing a point or game). It can sometimes take a few games to see a weakness but you might be able to see a technical weakness in the knock up before the match starts.

When Serving...

When serving, try to get your first serves in with good pace. This puts pressure on your opponent to hit a good return and less pressure on you having to hit too many 2nd serves.

A simple pattern of play is to hit a wide serve, then hit your next shot into the open court.

When Returning...

Always try and get the ball back into play. If it means blocking it back that's ok as long as your opponent is not able to attack off the next shot.

A good place to return a difficult first serve is often deep down the middle of the court. Step in and attack softer 2nd serves so your opponent is on the defensive straight away.

If your opponent has a hard serve, don't be afraid to stand further back from the baseline as the serve will have slowed down by the time it reaches you. Just be careful if you are getting caught on angled serves if you are standing too far back.

In a Rally situation...

Most of the time hit crosscourt. The net is lower in the middle and the court is longer. If looking to attack more you can hit down the line if you are hitting from inside the baseline.

Look to hit short angles. Angles can move your opponent off the court, giving you a chance to hit your shot into the open court or behind the player (wrong footing).

Mix up your shots. Hit with different spin, power and height. What spin works best against your opponent, topspin, backspin, sidespin or flat shots? Does your opponent prefer when you hit it harder or softer? Or if you hit high over the net or low?

When hitting deep from behind the baseline, try to hit the ball over the net at least twice the height of the net (preferably with some topspin). This will keep your opponent further back.

Try to stay close to the baseline so you are taking the ball early and looking to control the point. This gives your opponent less time to react to your shots.

When approaching the net...

If coming into the net off a short ball (approach shot) most of the time go down the line as you don't have to recover as much and is easier to cover your opponent's shots.

A guide for your positioning is to recover to the same side of the court that you have hit your approach shot to.

If volleying from nearer the service line try to a nice controlled deep volley and move forward to half way up the box. This gives you a chance to move forward for a 2nd volley or move back to hit a smash (covering the lob).

If your opponent is approaching the net...

Look for gaps in the court to pass

Try to keep the passing shot low to not give your opponent an easy put away shot

If they are too close to the net you can look to lob

Rob Cherry