



COACH FORUMS

2025



**A WARM
WELCOME!**

HOUSEKEEPING



ORDER OF PLAY

Times	Session	Length
9.00 - 11.30	Doubles Net Play: Red to Tour On-court session Group photo	2hrs 30mins
11.30 – 12.00	Networking break Refreshments	30mins
12.00 – 13.00	Addressing Coach Shortages Off-court session	1hr

STAFF AND TUTOR INTRODUCTIONS





OUR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- Large amount of experience in the room
- You get out what you put in
- Engage constructively and with curiosity
- Thank you for investing in yourself



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the importance of training doubles net play early for children
2. Be able to develop confidence in your players at the net and be 'fearless at the front'
3. Understand court positioning and how to cover the court to attack and defend at the net
4. (Off court) Understand ways in which you as a programme lead can address local coach shortages and recruitment challenges



DOUBLES NET PLAY FROM RED TO TOUR

ON-COURT UNIT (2HR 30MINS)



CONTRIBUTORS



Rob Smith

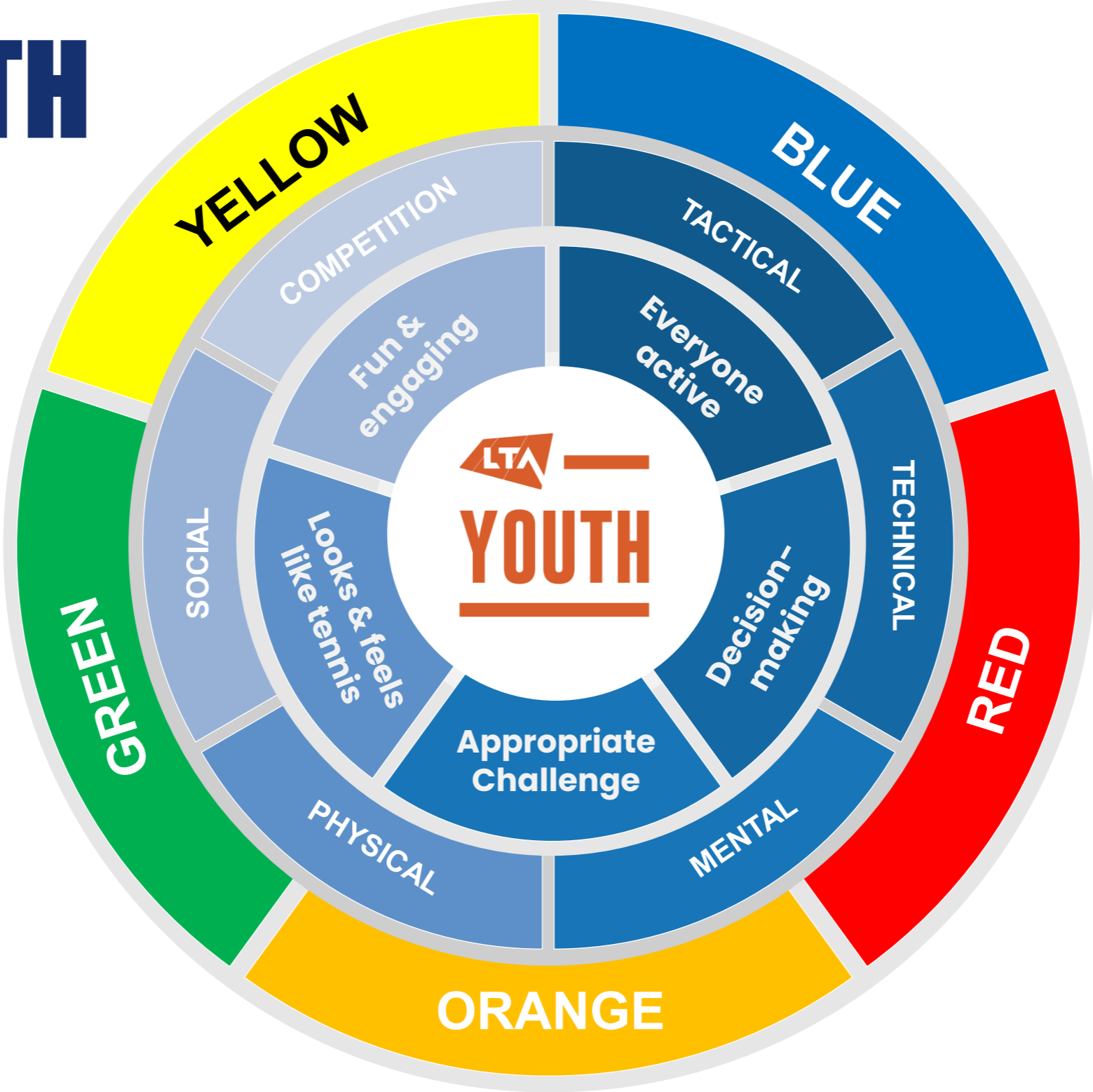
- LTA Accredited + Master Performance Coach (Level 5)
- International travelling coach
- Former coach to Dom Inglot 18 ATP and WTA players
- LTA Qualification Tutor & Coach Mentor



Matt Smith

- LTA Accredited + Master Club Coach (Level 5)
- Previous LTA Coach of the Year
- Former Head Coach Bath University. International High Performance Centre
- LTA Development & Learning Manager

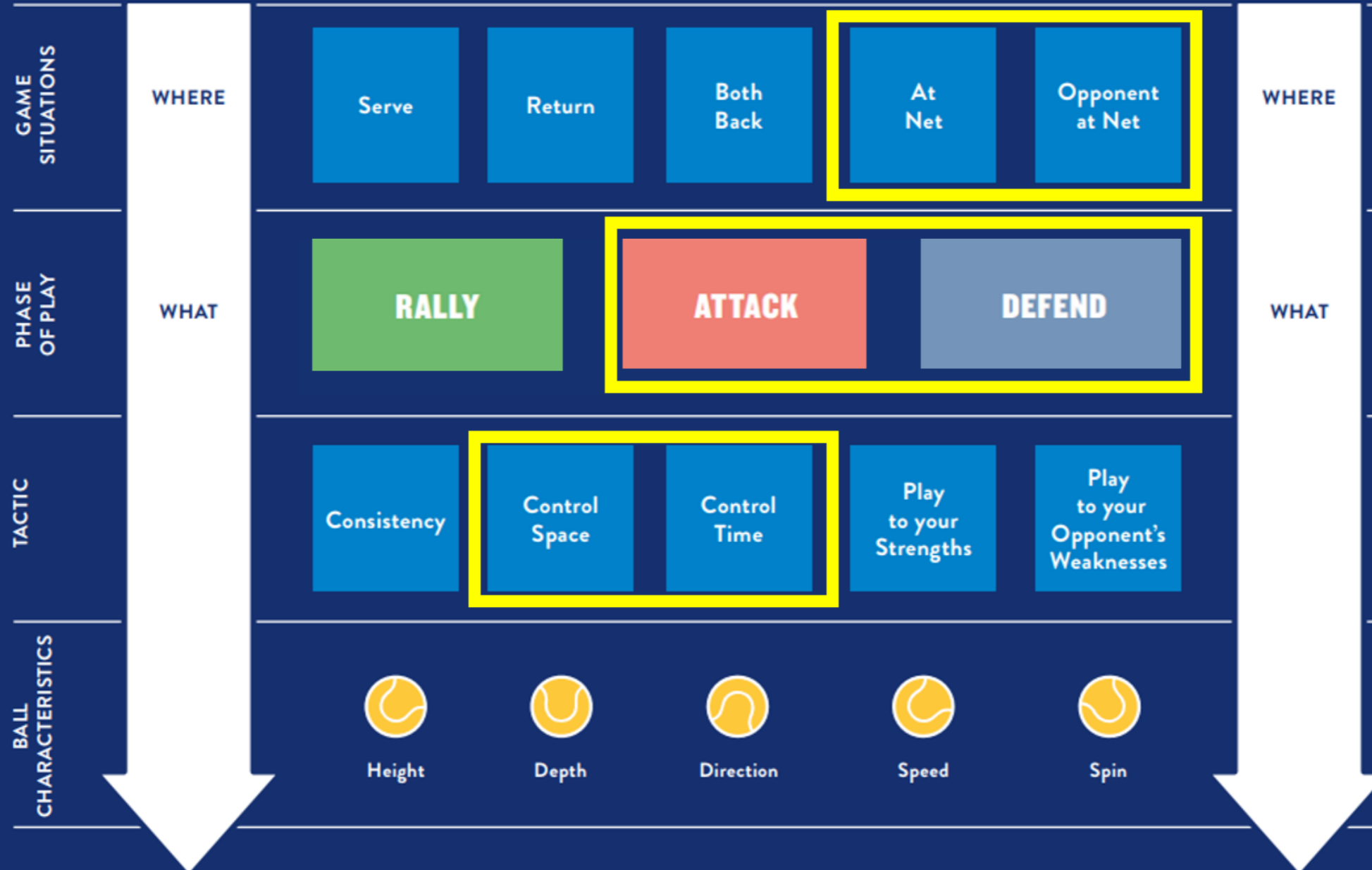
LTA YOUTH



FEDAL



TACTICAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



WHY DOUBLES

1. Doubles is a huge part of club and venue culture and social experience
2. 62% of people who play in parks, play doubles*
3. Only 28% women are likely to compete individually, when 45% opt to compete when a team-based competition**
4. 55% of BJKC Finals went to a doubles decider (6/11)***

*2025 LTA Park Players Survey

**The Economic Journal (September 2011 - Can teams help to close the gender competition gap?)

*** LTA Performance Department – 2024 BJKC



DOUBLES SUCCESS

1. 7 men's doubles players in ATP 30 (23%). #1 in world*
2. 4 women's doubles players in WTA top 100*
3. No.1 men's wheelchair doubles pair in the world

* As of ATP/WTA world rankings August 2025





GROUP DISCUSSION

Why are doubles skills important at a young age?

What skills are important to have?

Discuss in groups of 3 or 4 for 2 minutes.

MOTOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT

At/approach the net, players can learn to:

- Attack high balls and overheads to take time away
- Defend & control the tempo
- Create sharper angles
- Play low half-volleys
- Drop the ball into the short court

Opp at/approach net, players can learn to:

- Anticipate and receive volleys & overheads
- Find solutions and develop shots under pressure
- Grow vision and skill to pass, play low and/or lob.

"

Doubles 'doubles-up' net skills!
Through this, young players can develop future
proof net skills that also transfer to singles,
thanks to a court space that's easier to manage.

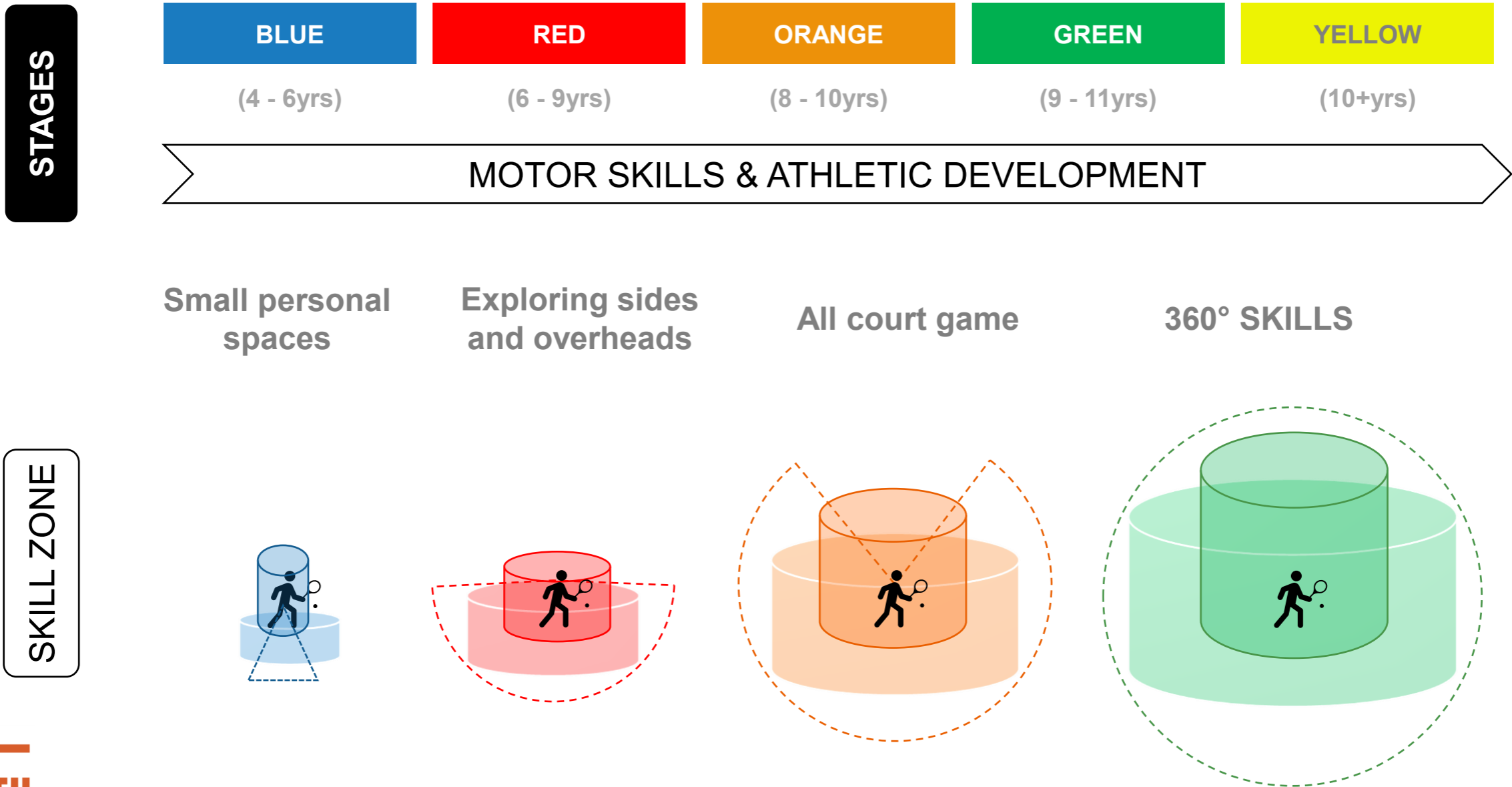
"

Kenneth Bastiaens, international motor skill development expert, 2025



Coach2Competence.com

SKILL DEVELOPMENT & PLAYER CENTERED APPROACH



LET'S GET PRACTICAL

SAFETY POINT

Lots of us on-court today. Adults on a red court playing doubles. Please be space aware

BALLS

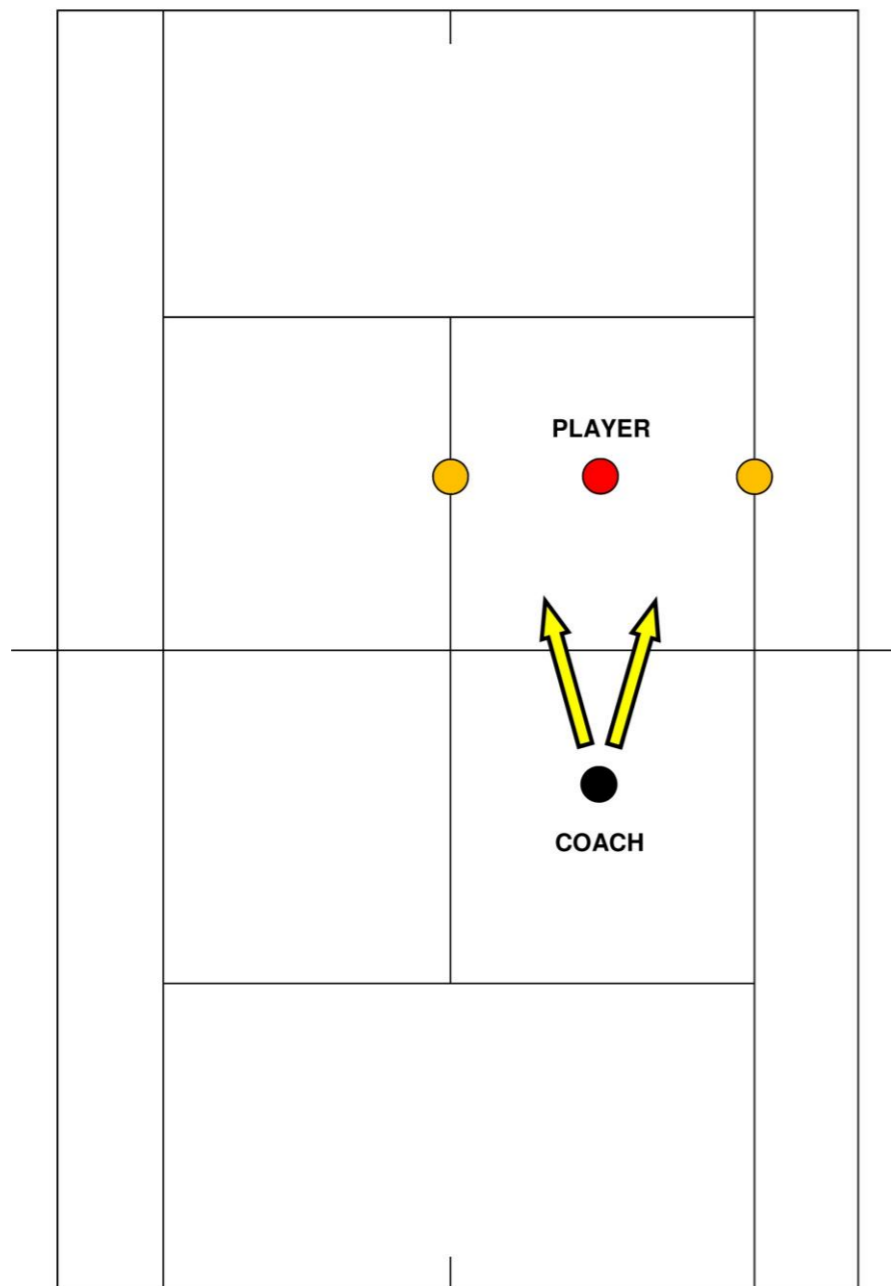
You can use red balls rather than sponge balls at your venues for the activities

NET NINJAS

Be a goalkeeper

WARM UP

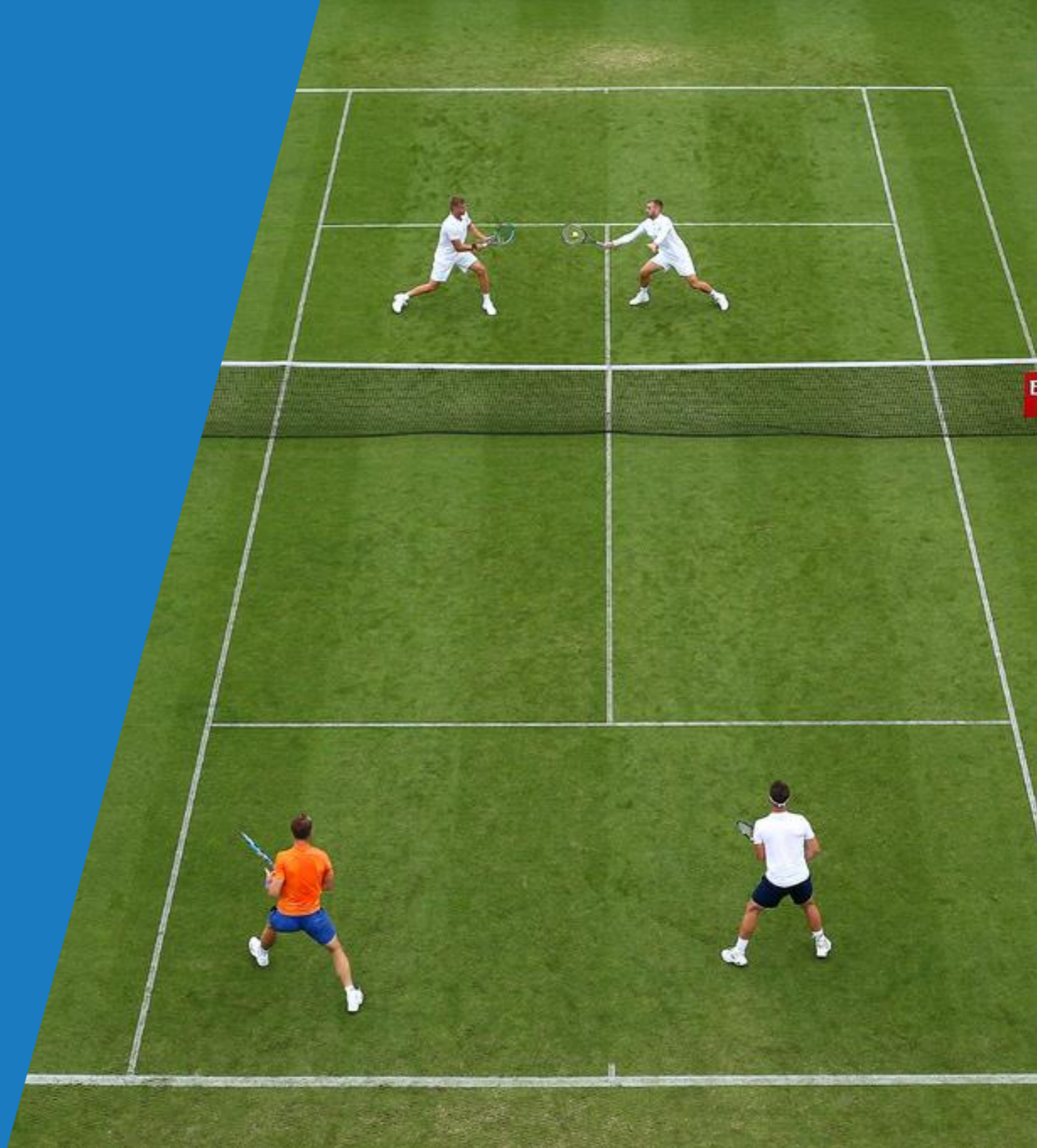


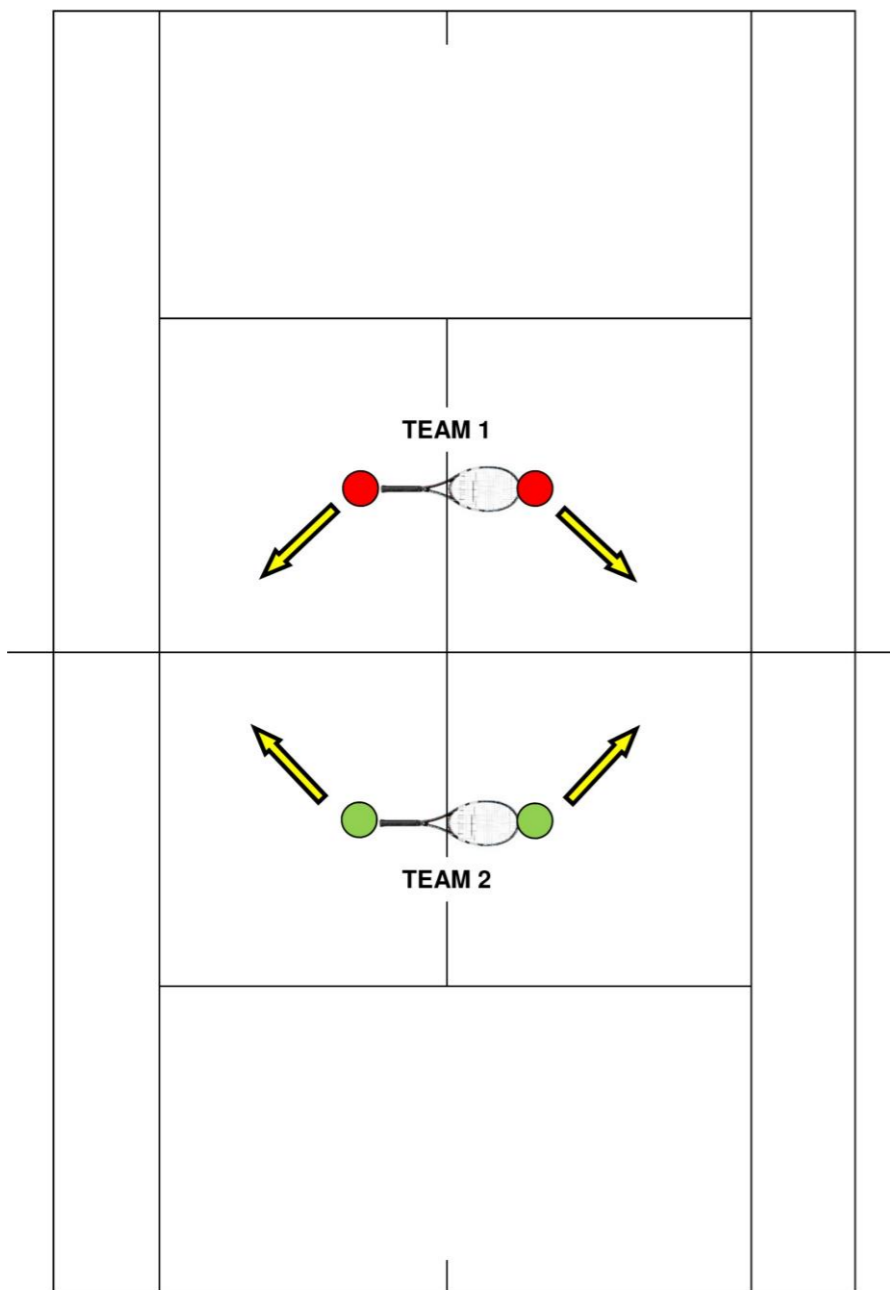


COURT SET-UP

DOUBLE TROUBLE

BODY & BALL





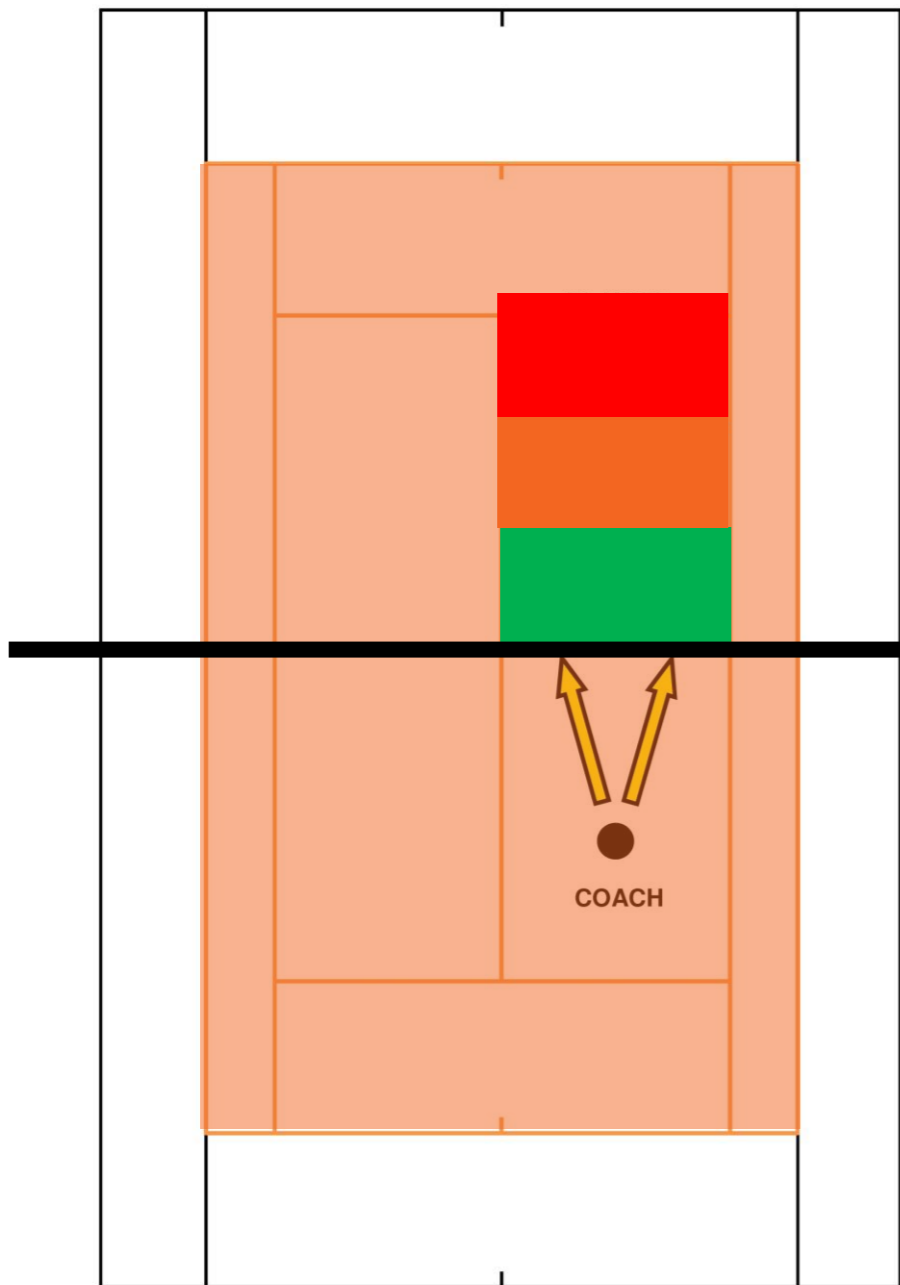
COURT SET-UP

FEARLESS AT THE FRONT

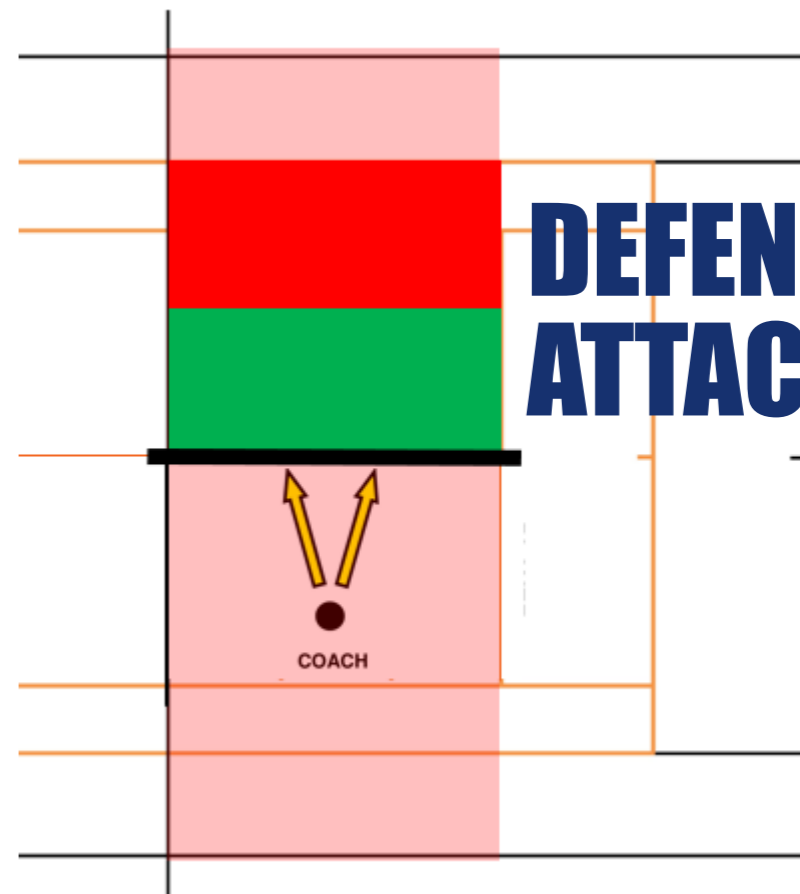
Building confidence at the net

RACKET & BALL

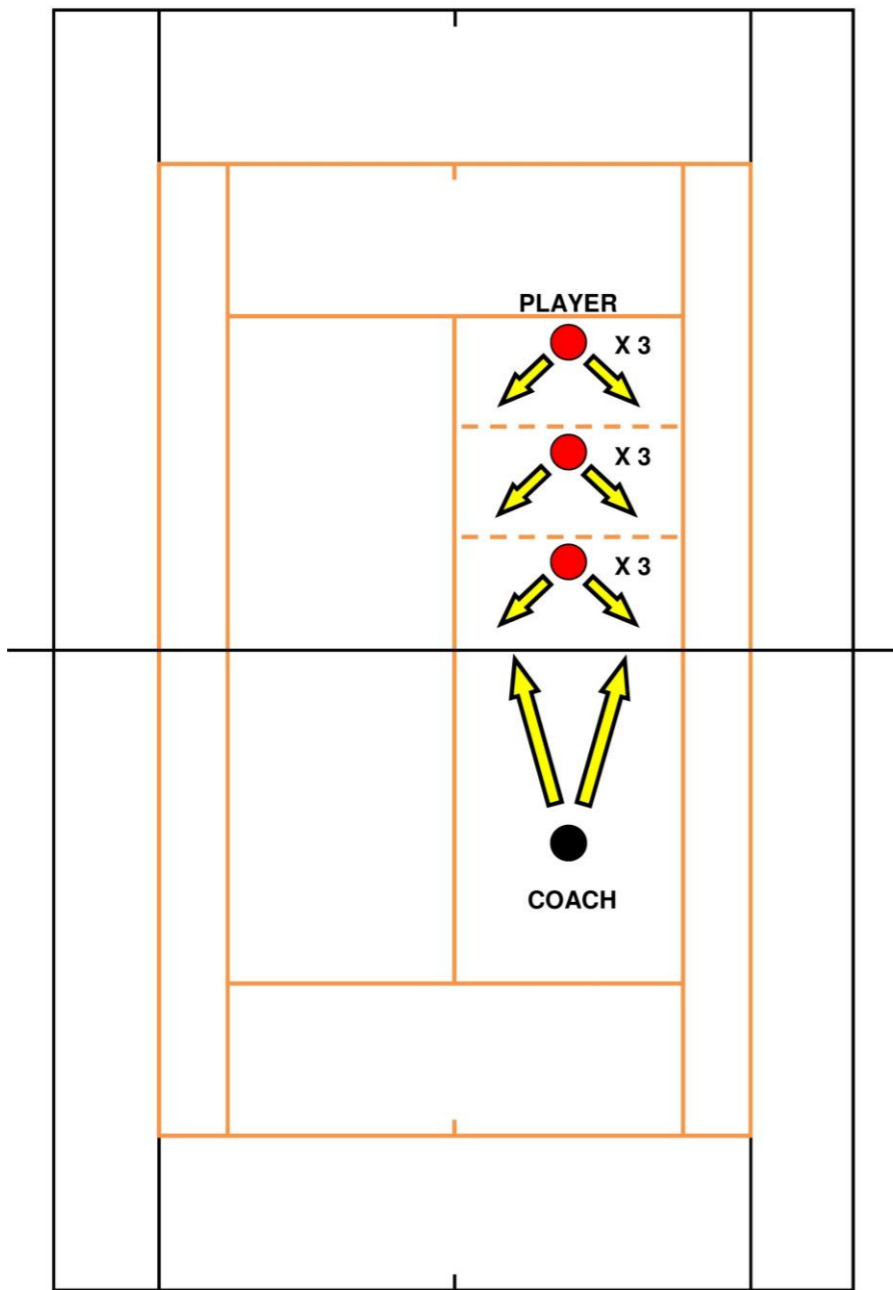




**DEFEND
NEUTRAL
ATTACK**



**DEFEND
ATTACK**



COURT SET-UP

TIME TO GET CREATIVE

On your court as a team of 4...
Can you progress or regress the drill to
help build confidence at the net

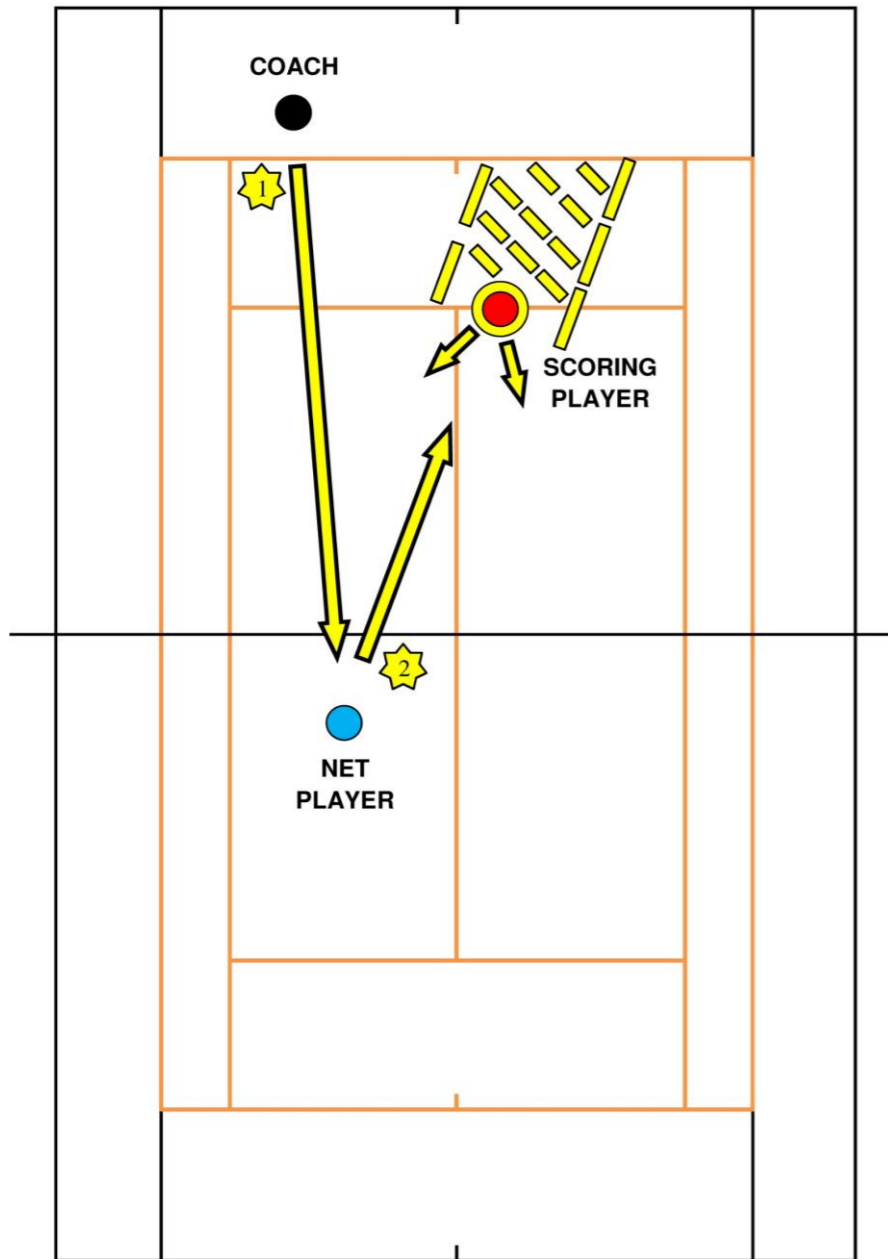
Altering the:
Space, Task, Equipment and/or People

MIND THE MIDDLE

Net coverage / court positioning
when attacking & defending

RACKET & BALL





COURT SET-UP

TIME TO GET CREATIVE

In your groups, can you adapt the task, decision making or scoring system to either:

- Encourage attacking at the net

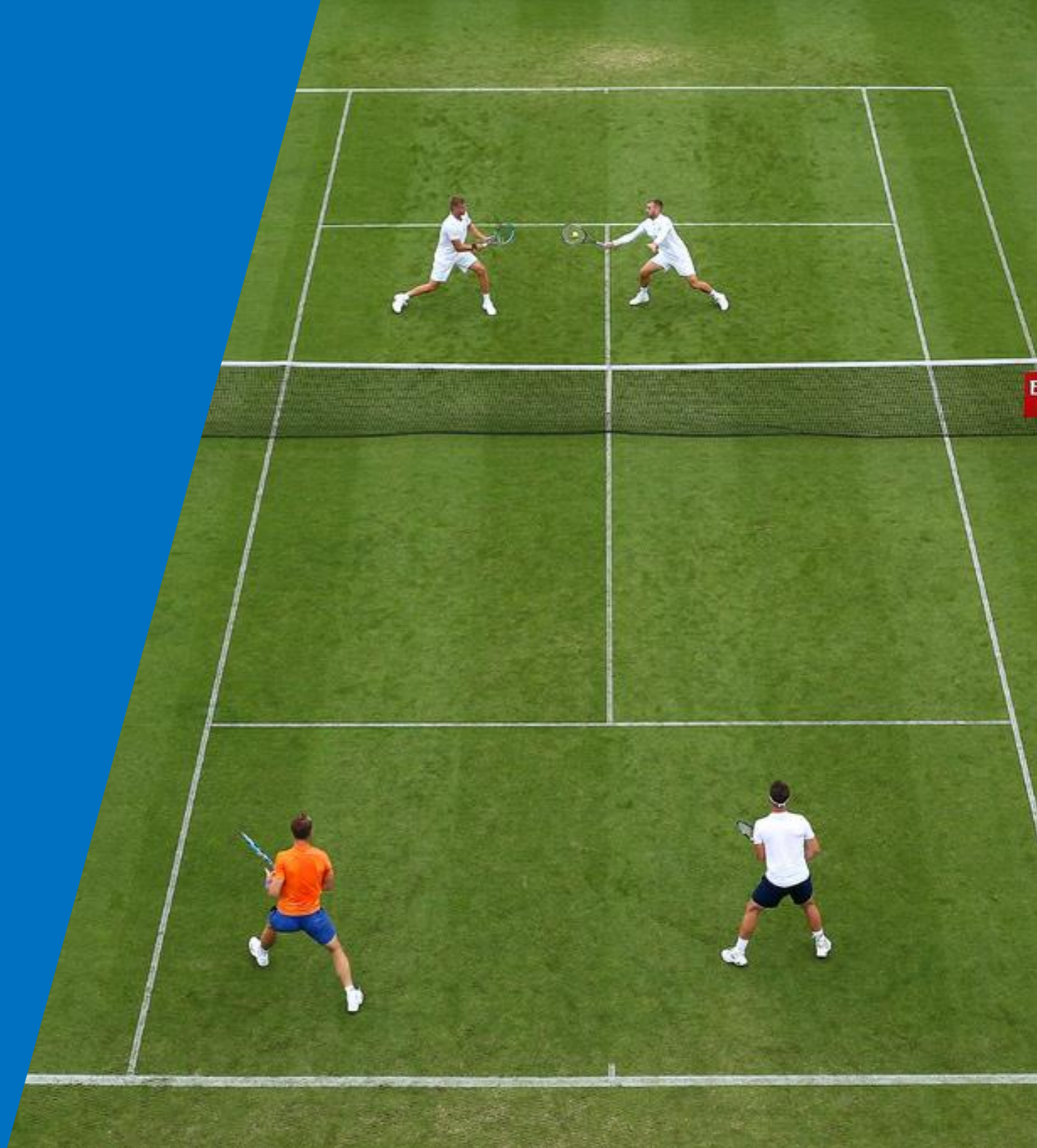
And/or

- Reward the defending player

POINTS FOR PLAYS

Encouraging positive
behaviours

GAME



'POINTS FOR PLAYS'

Tie break scoring, first to 10 points

1 coach per court awarding +/- side quest mini points for:

- Successful cross the middle attempt (court position) and volley
- Successful defend at net attempt (mind the middle)

Win the tug-of-war side quest to earn an extra point in the tiebreak!

'POINTS FOR PLAYS'

Other ideas for bonus points:

Protecting the middle	= 1 Point
Moving close to the net & touching the ball	= 1 Point
Crossing the Centre Line & touching the ball (at net)	= 2 points
Crossing the Centre Line, touching the ball & making it	= 3 points
Crossing the Centre Line, making the shot & hitting a winner	= 5 Points

Extra rules:

- 1) The coach must see it happen
- 2) If you appeal you lose all of your points!

CONCLUSION & SUMMARY

TOP TIPS

FROM ROB SMITH

1. Play 'doubles' (closing the net, crossing the centre line, protecting the middle)
2. Encourage the players to want the volley
3. Give your players the ability to volley in the attack, neutral and defending zones at the net

TAKE HOME MESSAGES

1. Add doubles into your programme to help develop skills (e.g. within coaching sessions, social match play, team challenge)
2. There are attacking, neutral and defending positions at the net. Not just standing still
3. Don't be afraid to experiment and try different things to help build confidence and make it fun
4. The kids will love it!

**Many of these LTA Youth exercises & drills today are in your Coach Hub...
That you can now filter by age, stage and game situation!**



ALL ON-COURT RESOURCES

Filter

Age

Junior

Programme

Red (Age 6-8)

Game situation

At the net

Apply filters



ENJOYING TODAY'S CONTENT?

UPCOMING CPD WORKSHOP: "PRINCIPLES OF DOUBLES"

Developed by forum content creator Rob Smith and Ex WTA professional Lorna Woodroffe:

- Explore how the formative skills of doubles are different to singles.
- Describe and apply the key pillars of Teamwork, Positioning and Roles in doubles.
- Introduce practical drills that develop skills specific to each doubles role.

Launching Q1 2026



TEAM PHOTO

FOR SOCIAL MEDIA AND SHARING





BREAK

TEAS/COFFEES & PASTRIES
(30 MINS)

ADDRESSING COACH SHORTAGES TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS

OFF-COURT UNIT (1HR)





OUR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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- Thank you for investing in yourself

IS THERE A SHORTAGE OF COACHES?

Research in 2024 revealed a national shortage of 1,000 coaches and 2,000 activators

One in four (25%) of head coaches report needing an additional part-time or full-time lead coach.

Group Discussion 1: Do you/will you need more coaches? What are the main challenges to attract and retain coaches in your programme/team?



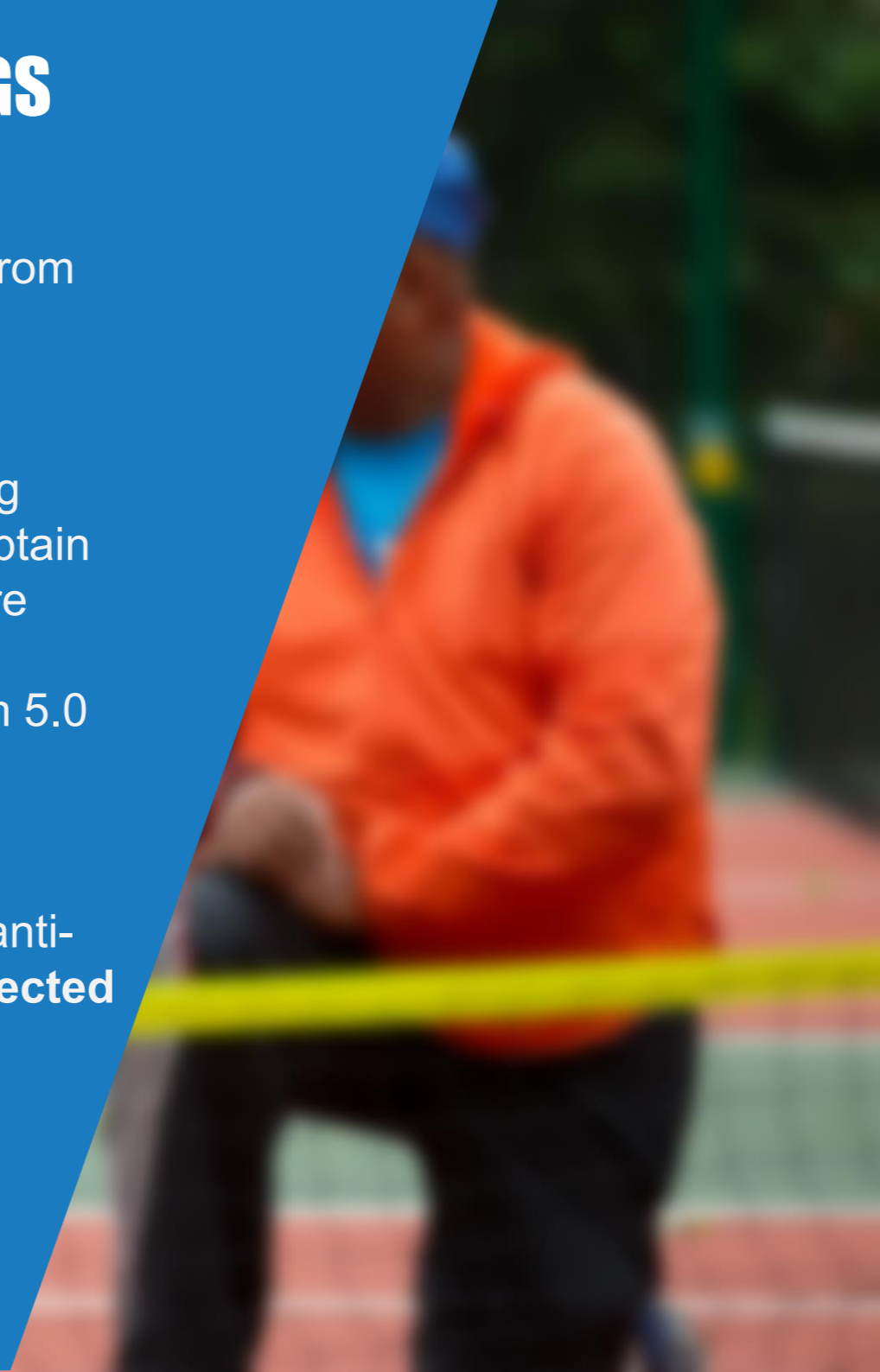
In pairs. 2 minute discussion. 10 minute sharing of discussion.

WHY DO WE HAVE A SHORTAGE: NATIONWIDE FINDINGS

1. **Increased Participation:** Annual adult participation has grown 40% from 3.9M to 5.7M since 2019. Club membership has grown 19% also.
2. **Park Facilities have improved** after the LTA/HM Government £30M investment in recent years. These facilities need programmed activity
3. **Rise of padel and pickleball:** has created more demand for coaching
4. **Post Brexit Visa Issues:** Grass roots coaches from the EU cannot obtain a VISA to work in GB as the occupation of 'coach' has no roles that are eligible for sponsorship through the Skilled Worker immigration route.
5. **Post COVID effects:** UK Self-Employed population has dropped from 5.0 million at the end of 2019 down to 4.2 million (ONS).

These new challenges co-exist alongside EXISTING challenges such as **coach venue relationships**, the **challenging nature of coaching** (e.g. anti-social hours, cold winters) and **perceptions that coaching is not a respected career**.

Source: LTA Workforce Shortage Insight (2023)



WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?

Group Discussion 2: What solutions can you put in place to attract and retain coaches to work in your programme & business?

- Part-time
- Full-time

In groups of 5. 5 minute discussion. 15 minute sharing of discussion.



IDEAS TO CONSIDER

Idea 1: Grow your own & always have a succession plan

Idea 2: Be willing to invest in upskilling your teams

Idea 3: Consider Activators (play facilitators) and Leaders

Idea 4: Work collaboratively with venue management/committee

Idea 5: Promote the career and benefits of being a coach



COACHES SAID:

“We should promote a career or role in coaching”

LTA DID:

“Created A set of marketing assets for head coaches, venues & operators to showcase a role or career in coaching”

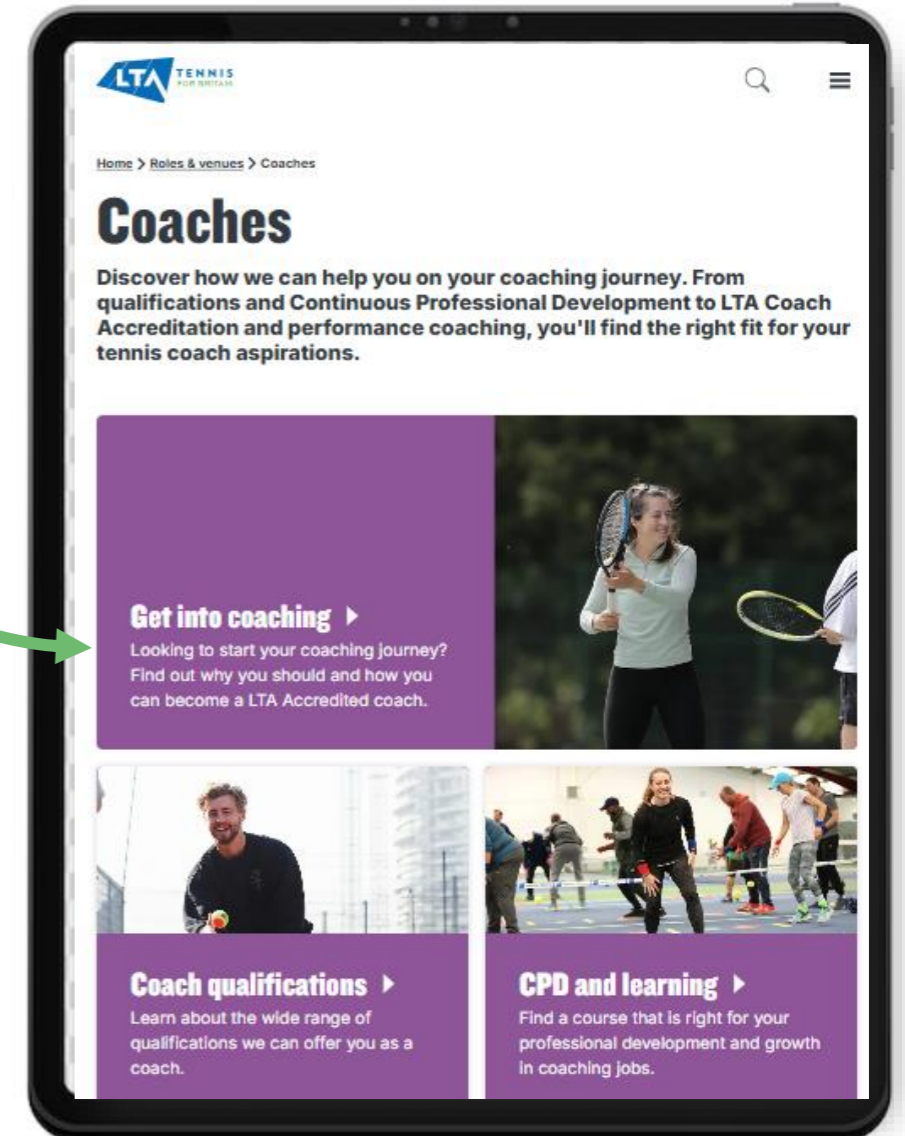
ASSETS FOR HEAD COACHES, VENUES & OPERATORS



Images. There are A4 posters, pull up banners, 3m fence banners, email signatures, and social assets.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS WITH THE CAMPAIGN

1. **Head Coaches** - Take a poster and download the video from the [LTA Coach Hub](#)
2. **LTA** will publish the video and campaign information at www.lta.org.uk/roles-and-venues/coaches/becoming-a-coach/
3. **Counties** will receive the assets to promote the role of coaching e.g. to players and parents via the County Communication Hub
4. **Venues** will have access via MyTennisToolkit so they can order prints to put up in their notice boards:
<https://www.mytennistoolkit.com/print/>



Visit CoachHub



LEARNING SUMMARY: WHAT HAVE WE COVERED?

1. The importance of training net play in doubles early for Youth players
2. Confidence in your players at the net and be 'fearless at the front'
3. Court positioning to attack and defend at the net
4. The workforce shortage and how to support in growing the number of on-court workforce

**ANY
QUESTIONS?**



**FILL IN YOUR
FEEDBACK FORM**

**FOR A CHANCE TO WIN
A £200 AMAZON VOUCHER**

**PLEASE SCAN THIS QR CODE
YOU WILL ALSO GET A FOLLOW-UP
COMPLETION EMAIL WITH A LINK AND T&CS**



THANK YOU FOR INVESTING IN YOUR CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Safe trip home!

