

Important skills/techniques needed

Squash is a Game which requires skill and fitness to be able to play at a good standard. You also need to be able to move your opponent around the court so your final shot is too good that they can't get.

To be able to achieve this, there are many smaller aspects which also contribute to making your game better. They are co-ordination, speed, power, movement, agility, flexibility, balance, racket control and a quick reaction.

Awareness of where your opponent is on the court and patience to win the rally are also critical.

Both open and closed skills are necessary. You can place the serve where you want and practice this daily but the rallies are varied. The courts can differ so adaptation is essential.

Analysis of your shots and when to play the shot from your coach will guarantee improvements.

Strengths

Power is my main attribute especially on my forehand crosscourt. Also my volleying is quick and accurate because of good timing.

My strengths are my drop shot, lob and my crosscourt from the back forehand corner. I also have good fast court movement and I can finish a rally if my opponent plays a bad shot. I also have a delayed crosscourt from the front which can send an opponent the wrong way.

My desire to do well motivates me on court and assists when things are not going to plan.

Weaknesses

My forehand drive needs improving as it is not very close to the wall and in my backhand corner I don't give myself enough space causing my drive to be worse. I also need to improve on my boasts as they always go in the tin.

My shot selection needs working on as too often I try for a winning shot when my opponent is on the 't' and can reach most shots. This puts me under pressure. Certain shots have standard replies and I fail to play these enough.

Training Programme

In my Training programme I will do three sessions a week for six weeks with the time increasing for each individual activity as the weeks progress. Also before every session there will be a warm up, and after every session there will be a cool down consisting of :

Warm up

A light jog up and down the court then stretches concentrated more on the neck, arms, back, hips, groins, quads, calves and ankles as these are the parts most under strain. Then, a half pace run up and down to resemble match conditions, and finally a deep stretch so that at the first lunge you don't pull a slightly tight muscle.

Cool down

Depending on how hard the match was you should do 5-10 minutes of light jogging/walking to remove lactic acid, and then 5-10 minutes of stretching the same muscles you did in the warm up, depending again on how hard the match was.

Week 1

Session 1: Forehand & backhand 15mins straight drive each side.

Forehand & backhand 10mins volleying each side.

Session 2: Consistant jogging 20mins.

Press-ups 30second set 1min rest. 9mins

Sit-ups 30second set 1min rest. 9mins

Stretching/flexibility exercise 10mins.

Session 3: Drop shot backhand & forehand 10mins each side.

Lob backhand & forehand 15mins each side.

Week 2

Session 1: Boasting backhand & forehand 15mins each side.

Crosscourt backhand & forehand 10mins each side.

Session 2: 5 sets of 15 court sprints. 2mins rest between sets.

Press-ups 30second set 1min rest. 9mins.

Sit-ups 30second set 1min rest. 9mins.

Stretching/flexibility exercise 10mins.

Session 3: Play a match against a player roughly the same standard. 45mins.

Week 3

- Session 1: Forehand & backhand 15mins straight drive each side.
Forehand & backhand 10mins volleying each side.
- Session 2: Consistent jogging 25mins.
Press-ups 30second set 1min rest. 12mins.
Sit-ups 30second set 1min rest. 12mins.
Stretching/flexibility exercise 10mins.
- Session 3: Drop shot backhand & forehand 10mins each side.
Lob backhand & forehand 15mins each side.

Week 4

- Session 1: Boasting backhand & forehand 15mins each side.
Crosscourt backhand & forehand 10mins each side.
- Session 2: 6 sets of 15 court sprints. 2mins rest between sets.
Press-ups 30second set 1min rest. 12mins.
Sit-ups 30second set 1min rest. 12mins.
Stretching/flexibility exercise 10mins.
- Session 3: Play a match against a player roughly the same standard. 45mins.

Week 5

- Session 1: Forehand & backhand 15mins straight drive each side.
Forehand & backhand 10mins volleying each side.
- Session 2: Consistent jogging 30mins.
Press-ups 30second set 1min rest. 15mins.
Sit-ups 30second set 1min rest. 15mins.
Stretching/flexibility exercise 10mins.
- Session 3: Drop shot backhand & forehand 10mins each side.
Lob backhand & forehand 15mins each side.

Week 6

- Session 1: Boasting backhand & forehand 15mins each side.
Crosscourt backhand & forehand 10mins each side.
- Session 2: 7sets of 15 court sprints. 2mins rest between sets.
Press-ups 30second set 1min rest. 15mins.
Sit-ups 30second set 1min rest. 15mins.
Stretching/flexibility exercise 10mins.
- Session 3: Play a match against a player roughly the same standard. 45mins.

Factors affecting performance

High rewards should bring out the best performance but this does increase the pressure to perform. Peak physical and mental health is necessary but highly tuned muscles can often be pulled and too heightened motivation can lead to anxiety. Support from your family is paramount to success so if they are not there then your performance can be below par.

Improvement made after 6 weeks training programme

After the 6 week programme I have noticed that my forehand drive has become very consistent and tight to the wall. My boasts now die in the corner and don't go in the tin much. The match has improved my shot selection so I now move my opponent further around the court. My core stability has improved a lot so I can twist, turn and move better on to the ball. My volley, lob, crosscourt and drop shot have just become more consistent and accurate. Most of all my stamina has improved a lot so I can now play my best for the full five games instead of three. But I still sometimes get slightly close to the ball in my backhand corner, causing the ball to come back towards me and give away points.

Views of 6 week programme

I think that the training programme went very well, with all the areas that needed improvement being improved upon. The amount of training I did a week was perfect; I could give 100% in each session because the training was not every day, giving me a rest. The training was also specific for the areas which needed improvement. My coach also said that my all round game has improved, so the training programme has been a success.