

Shankill Tennis Club Common Integrated Approach to Coaching

Overview

The Common Integrated Approach (CIA) to coaching is a comprehensive coaching pathway designed to bring a member from beginner to advanced player, it is person-centred. The pathway will develop a player within the best of his/her ability, imparting technical, tactical, physical and psychological tennis skills as well as nurturing interpersonal and competitive skills. It is underpinned by the Shankill Coaching Policy and the desire to establish a first class coaching pathway for all members in Shankill TC.

Objectives

The objectives of the CIA are to

1. act as a syllabus, detailing the key skills to be learned at various points on the pathway
2. meet the different coaching needs of STC members from teeny tots to adults
3. ensure there is progression for those members who are availing of coaching
4. act as a tracking system allowing any player to be identified on the pathway and recognise his/her particular developmental needs and progress to date
5. assist coaches to identify individual members' coaching requirements
6. ensure members receive quality coaching and value for money

Management of the CIA

The CIA is managed by the Head Coach with the assistance of his/her coaching team. Supporting the Head Coach is a coaching subcommittee chaired by the Coaching Coordinator. The Coaching Coordinator is the main communication link between the Head Coach and the Executive Committee; this feedback loop ensures that coaching receives the attention and support necessary to safeguard its success.

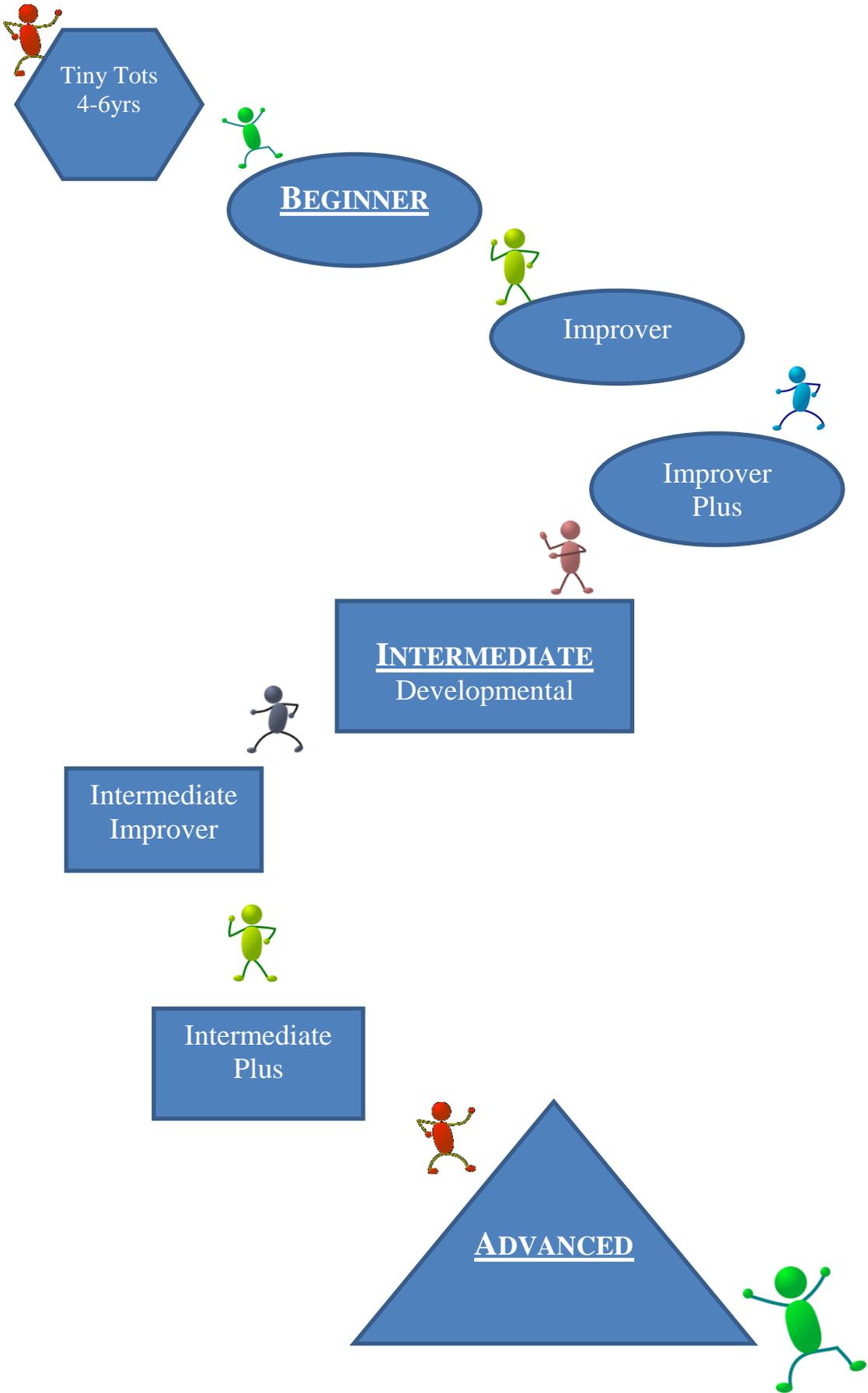
In addition, there is a second communication link – the **Weekly Coaching Report** (WCR). Each week, after consultation with his/her coaching team, the Head Coach provides a report to the coaching subcommittee about coaching issues that have arisen during the week, for review and action if necessary. By these 2 communication lines, Shankill TC will assist the Head Coach and his coaching team to operate the CIA.

Structure of the Coaching Pathway

The coaching pathway consists of 3 main transitional **stages**, beginner to intermediate to advanced, each of which are divided into different levels as per the diagram.

At each **level** of the pathway, the Head Coach has specified a coaching programme detailing the skills to be taught and the expected learning outcomes. These coaching programmes are underpinned with **lesson plans** stipulating how the specified skills will be taught and the learning outcomes achieved.

Shankill TC Coaching Developmental Pathway



3 Coaching Stages

There are 3 coaching stages to the CIA: beginner, intermediate and advanced. For a player to be recognised as having reached any one of these stages they must have acquired a certain skill level.

Beginner Stage

The aim at this stage is to get the beginner playing games as soon as possible, which means rallying, serving and volleying as soon as possible. To encourage this, some of the basic technical elements underpinning ground strokes, volley and serve will be taught. As the players' competencies increase, other technical elements will be gradually introduced and skill acquisition base expanded to include tactics and footwork.

To assist players to develop hand eye coordination and correct technique, the Tennis 10s coaching methodology will be used i.e. especially designed coloured balls and courts sizes.

Prior to the formal stage of Beginner, younger players aged between 4 & 6yrs can be coached under the Tiny Tots programme. This programme concentrates on teaching hand eye coordination, ball control, hitting the ball up, step by step leading to rallying between players before rallying over the net. The red ball is used and as the player improves s/he proceeds to the next stage of the more formal beginners programme.

Intermediate Stage

Progressing into this stage the focus is on cementing in the skills acquired in the beginners stage and increasing the range of strokes available to the player e.g. jump, slice and flat serve. By the time a player graduates from this stage his/her skill level will not only include a variety of strokes but also correct patterns of movement and beginning to acquire tactical know how.

Advanced Stage

At this stage technical stroke correction should be complete. The emphasis here is on tactical know how and competition. This involves having an understanding of play 'patterns', being able to select the correct strokes at the right times to counter 'patterns' and how to impose his/her own game in competition through good decision making and strategies. Finally, graduating as an 'all rounded' player.

Coaching Programmes

Within the 3 stages there are different skill levels to be achieved before a player can progress to the next stage. Tennis skills are acquired incrementally, as a player perfects one element of a skill, another element of that skill is introduced and so on. Within the CIA, these elements of skill acquirement are reflected in coaching programmes which have been developed by the Head Coach. The coaching programmes specify **what** is to be taught and the expected learning outcomes at each level of the coaching pathway. They are blue prints highlighting progression through the coaching pathway.

Each coaching programme is reinforced by lesson plans. A lesson plan details **how** each element of a skill listed in a coaching programme will be taught. Lesson plans are devised by the coach tasked with teaching a player or a group at a particular level on the coaching pathway and are provided to the Head Coach for approval before implemented. Lesson plans ensure that the skills specified at each level of the coaching pathway are taught.

By using coaching programmes underpinned by lesson plans, the CIA ensures that all members availing of coaching progress continuously on a recognisable defined coaching pathway.

Assessment Process (see also Appendix 3)

To ensure the effectiveness of the CIA it is necessary to assess players as they develop along the coaching pathway. There are several reasons for this, chiefly to ensure

1. the coaching programmes and lesson plans are effective and learning outcomes are being achieved,
2. players progress as they reach each milestone/level on the coaching pathway
3. coaching represents 'value for money'
4. the identified coaching requirements of players are been addressed
5. the Head Coach and his/her coaching team are supported through highlighting any failings in the CIA.

The Head Coach is tasked with assessing players against specified learning outcomes which are detailed on each coaching programme.

In addition, the Head Coach will assess any player wishing to access coaching whether requested directly by the player, a parent or on request from any member of his coaching team. If there is any dispute as to where a player is best placed on the coaching pathway, the Head Coach's decision is final.

This coaching pathway (including appendices) is reviewed annually by the Head Coach and Coaching Coordinator. Any changes to it must be approved by the Executive Committee.