

Public Tennis Special Olympics Youth Lesson Plan #3

Learning Objectives

Today's tennis word is Footwork.

For athletes in chairs and standers, this may mean assisted movement (positioning). For others, it means anticipating where the ball is going, and getting there to hit it!

WarmUp

Coaches choice of warmup. Suggestions as follows: (Pick One)

- Simon says (share the lead ... who's our next Simon)
- Weave through a series of cones, spots, agility ladder. Vary footwork and speed, possibly lay out two courses for two levels of speed.

Skills, Activities

We will work on skills at three "stations" on three courts. Three 15-minute rotations. Level your groups, if possible, so that the station activities can be adjusted to skill level (to the extent possible). Split the athletes into 3 groups. Rotate the groups through the stations -- approximately 15 minutes per station.

Station 1 will be hitting over the net and "rallying".

Station 2 will be footwork. Practice footwork skills initially in partners by throwing/catching while moving (side steps, forward/backward steps). Progress to volleying at net while on the move. If possible, hit over the net using footwork to balls fed 2-3 steps away from player. Alternatively, "walk and hit" exercise (see our feeding training video).

Station 3 will be racquet skills. (Balancing balls, exchanging balls racquet to racquet, tap ups, traps, etc.)

Note that stations 1 and 3 can have a lot of skills in common, including: rolling, throwing/catching, trapping, tap-ups, etc. In both cases, encourage throwing/hitting "up" instead of "out" to make progress toward rallying.

Game

Time permitting! (Stations may use up the full hour)

Modified Version of Human Handoff chain team competition (from week 1): Two teams, mix of athletes, lined up from baseline to net – same court and same side, but **on left and right doubles sidelines (to make safety room for a ball-striker in the nearby service box)**. First team to handoff 20 balls from baseline to net wins **BUT with the last person hits the ball over net from a short court coach feed. After hitting, the hitter leaves the racquet (only one needed per team) in the service box, and then rotates to end of line, so that ALL athletes get a chance to be the hitter, with coach assistance as needed, and with teammates cheering for hitter success**. Wait for a ball to go from baseline to net before introducing next ball. Pick team names (quickly). **Go Team (NAME)!**

Safety note: Maintain racquet swing spacing for the "hitter" position. Only one racquet needed per team.

Optional: Hitter serves (self toss or coach aided) from short court position over net.

Review & Cheer

Review and cheer:
footwork, rallying, racquet skills (3 cheers).

