

Lesson Theme: Intermediate Singles (3)

Objectives: Introduce Strategies for Singles Play

Skill Level: 3.0 / 3.5

Duration: 90 minutes

Equipment Needed: Balls



Mins	Activity	Details	Teaching Points	Comments
5	Meet & Greet	Welcome, names, housekeeping		This lesson is meant as a follow-up to Intermediate Singles (1)
7	Technical Warm Up	Select activities from the WARM-UP MENU.		Warm-up should include volleys, groundstrokes, serve and return.
10	Play & Observe	Real Singles Points w/o restrictions	<p>Remind players that, just like in doubles pickleball, it is important to return serve and come to the net in singles. Moving forward applies pressure by taking away the opponent's time to react.</p> <p>We also give ourselves the chance to volley, and to use angles we can't use from the back of the court.</p>	This is assuming these players took part in Intermediate Singles (1) and Intermediate Singles (2) in which these teaching points were covered.
3	Collect Balls & H2O			Make it quick!
2	Debrief / Observations	<p>Praise effort and focus.</p> <p>Explain that while you were watching the points as a whole, there were some things that stood out. We will address them in a systematic way.</p>	.	
3	Direct Instruction	What to do if a third shot drive doesn't make sense?	<p>In singles, it should be the first thought to drive the third shot past an opponent.</p> <p>But drives don't always make sense. If the return is very low, very deep or if you are out of position, a drive can be ineffective. This is where a drop comes in.</p>	

5	Activity: Play Real Points – with restrictions.	Server must attempt a third shot drop.		Returners must still return serve and come to the NVL.
2	Debrief	Emphasize the good effort. Comment that while we don't prefer to drop, we sometimes need to. And we should make plans for this reality.		
3	Direct Instruction	Purpose of the drop.	We are primarily trying to prevent our opponents from hitting an offensive shot (volley) into the open court. A drop limits their ability to hit hard and gives us time to get back in position.	Remind players that unlike the preferred option (drive), the drop is about <i>preventing</i> trouble rather than causing it.
8	Activity: Serve, Return, Drop.	Player A serves. Player B returns the serve and approaches the net. Player A attempts a drop with the goal of forcing an upward hit. Player B catches the 3rd shot from around the NVL and indicates whether it would have forced an upward hit. Switch roles after 5 attempts.	Good drops can be thought of as slow drives - they still travel fairly low. Hitting crosscourt gives the person playing the drop more room to work with, and a lower net.	Difficulty can be adjusted by making the return of serve easier or harder.
2	Debrief & H2O			
5	Activity: Real Points with Drops	Play Real Points, but the server must attempt a drop.		If one player is dominating the game, they will have a disproportionate number of drop attempts. Be prepared to balance it out with artificial sideouts.
2	Debrief		Hitting drops when on the move is challenging, but with practice can be improved.	
2	Direct Instruction	Recovering after the drop.	If the drop is poor (i.e. too high/fast), the player will need to play defence immediately. If the drop is good, the player should move forward to apply pressure, intercept high ball or receive a dink.	
10	Activity: Drop, Predict, Move	Player A serves. Player B returns and comes to the net. Player A must attempt a third shot drop. If they believe it is good, they call out "yes" and recover forward. If they think it is poor, they call out "no" and prepare to play defence. Switch roles after 4 attempts.	A "yes" drop is one that will force an upward hit. A "no" drop is one that will not.	Once players get the hang of the activity, encourage them to make their prediction sooner. The sooner they can predict the quality of the shot, the sooner they'll know where to move.

2	Debrief & H2O		Reinforce that when the returner stays back, they are not applying any pressure. So this is a chance for the server to apply some of their own.	
14	Play Real Points	Play Real Singles Points.		While no new teaching points, reinforce the idea of making the net player stretch with the third shot drive.
5	Wrap Up	Summarize key points	When a player comes to the net in singles, there is a good opportunity to drive the ball past them. We have to be aggressive and send low and well-directed balls in order to do this. And if a player doesn't come in off the return, we need to take advantage of the opportunity by making them move and taking control of the net.	Use this wrap up to identify improvement, encourage practice, and promote future lessons or events.

Instructor Notes: