

Ghosting Patterns Linked to Visualization

Purpose

I have demonstrated a ghosting pattern which can be developed during this current lock-down period. The purpose of this exercise is to get players to understand the link between their movement and racket work. Each component links to the next and needs to flow into one fluid action. I believe best practice is to visualize yourself playing when you are training these ghosting patterns. The ghosting needs to have a purpose and replicate what you are trying to achieve in a match. As a coach, one of the most common faults I find amongst players is simply repeating the coaching pattern with no relevance or link to actual match play. This in my opinion just reinforces a negative. Ghosting should be purposeful and with actual relevance to what you want to achieve in a match. Learning to visualise when training will also have a positive impact on other parts of your game; from warming up to forming game plans. As stated previously this time we currently have affords the players the opportunity to understand their game better. As stated previously, this time we currently have affords players the opportunity to better understand their game. This simple exercise will help reinforce to reinforce the importance of visualisation.

Demonstration Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d74S4d_NXg0

Action

7 cones are required (paper stuck to the floor if you haven't got cones) and a racket. Ideally you want the cones a couple meters away from your T cone.

Set Up

- Two cones in the front right and left corners
- Two cones in the back right and left corners
- Two cones, each cone 2 meters from the T position on the right side & left side in line with the T
- One cone in a central position which is used as the T

Pattern

- Ghost front right corner / you're playing a straight drive
- Return to the T position
- Ghost a volley onto the left-hand cone from the T position / try to move forward onto the volley / attacking volley to a length
- Ghost front left corner / you're playing a straight drive
- Return to the T position
- Ghost a volley onto the right -hand cone from the T position / try to move forward onto the volley / attacking volley to a length
- Ghost back right corner / you're playing a straight drive

- Return to the T position
- Ghost a volley onto the left-hand cone from the T position / try to move forward onto the volley / attacking volley to a length
- Ghost back left corner / you're playing a straight drive
- Return to the T position
- Ghost a volley onto the right-hand cone from the T position / try to move forward onto the volley / attacking volley to a length

Coaching Points

- Start with racket in a neutral carry position. This enables you to react and adapt quickly to any shot your opponent plays. If your racket is too low, you risk not being able to react to volley opportunities and if you carry too high you risk getting caught out by low balls.
- Let your racket preparation lead your movement. This ensures good timing into the ball, your racket preparation is linked to the shot you would like to play, ensures you have enough space to execute your shot and will give you greater options.
- Ensure you're balanced on the shot
- Flow into and out of the shot. Use your follow through to maintain momentum when moving off the ball.
- Avoid start / stop movement as this is not efficient. Just like in a match you want timing in your movement so you're never stationary. This will sometimes involve slowing down so you reach the T at the optimum time. If you rush to quickly you end up waiting statically on the T, this will make it a lot harder to react, use more energy and slow you down. Just like a car you're at your most inefficient when you're stationary.
- Use your swing to transfer your body weight through the ball, this will help you move off the shot and ensure a better-quality ball strike.
- Don't rush the ghosting you're after being as smooth and efficient as possible. Get your footwork patterns right before injecting more pace.
- Just like a match practice, varying your pace onto the ball, this greatly affects your opponent's movement.

Match Example

Great example of two players using their style of play and physical attributes to form their movement styles. These two players are renowned for their movement and volleying abilities. What I hope this video illustrates is how their racket prep enables them to be able to move efficiently, powerfully and creates the volley opportunities they seek. I believe both players have a complete understanding of how their racket work and movement complement each other. Watch how both players are using their movement linked to their racket work to try and dominate the T position with volleys.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkDNC-oN3NQ>

A good example is how Nick Matthew cuts off the forehand volley from the T-position. If you watch the match you can see Nick takes the racket head to ball in his first movement of the T. This enables great reach, takes the ball at the earliest opportunity, creates huge space on the court and enables Nick to control the T. This to me demonstrates complete understanding of how your racket prep / work forms your movement and fits into your style of play. Ghosting and visualizing will help you get a better understanding of how your movement fits into your style of play.

Homework

Devise a ghosting pattern and explain how that pattern is going to help you improve your movement and racket work.