Coaches Corner

Defence and attacking swing preparation linked to perception

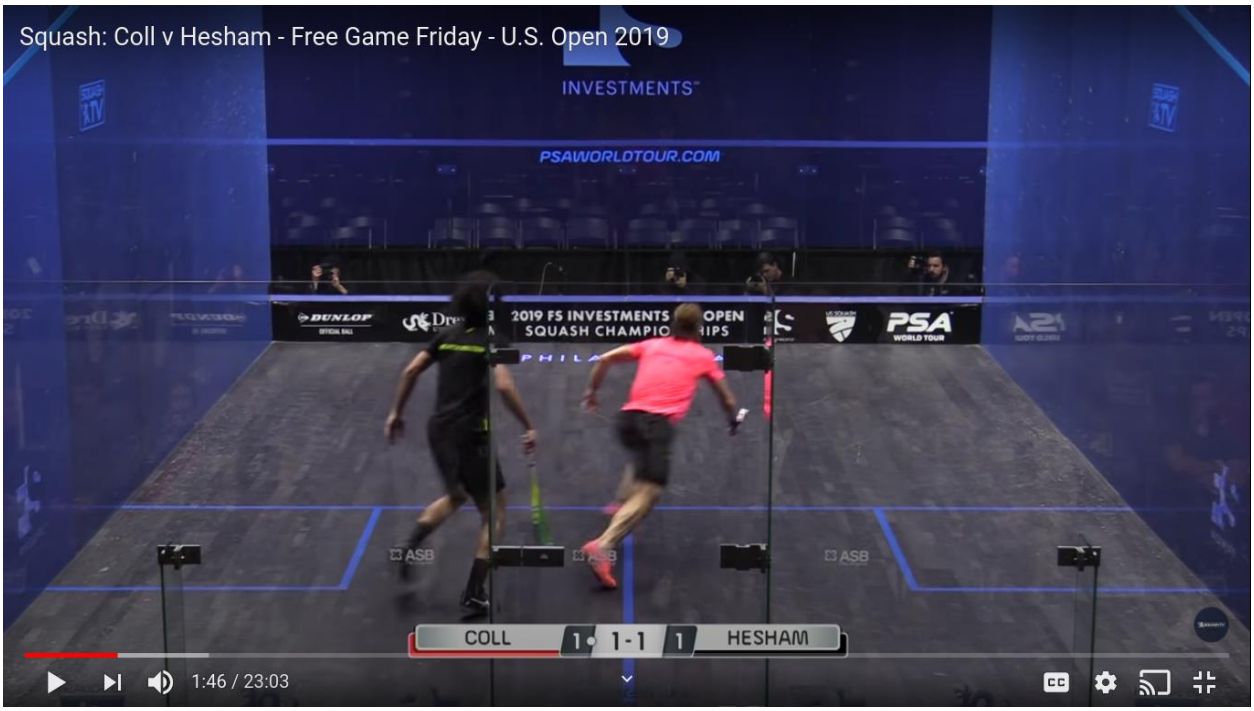
Game example https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXo8DepHJvs .

Perfect example (1 minute 46 seconds) of both swing preparations contained in one rally. Clearly demonstrating a very good defensive lob by Paul Coll off an attacking boast which in turns creates an attacking option off the loose which Paul Coll cuts the ball back across his opponents with a three-quarter swing disguised crosscourt. Clear distinction between both swings and it's the ability to see both shots off your perception which creates the opportunities to hit both defensive and attacking shots.

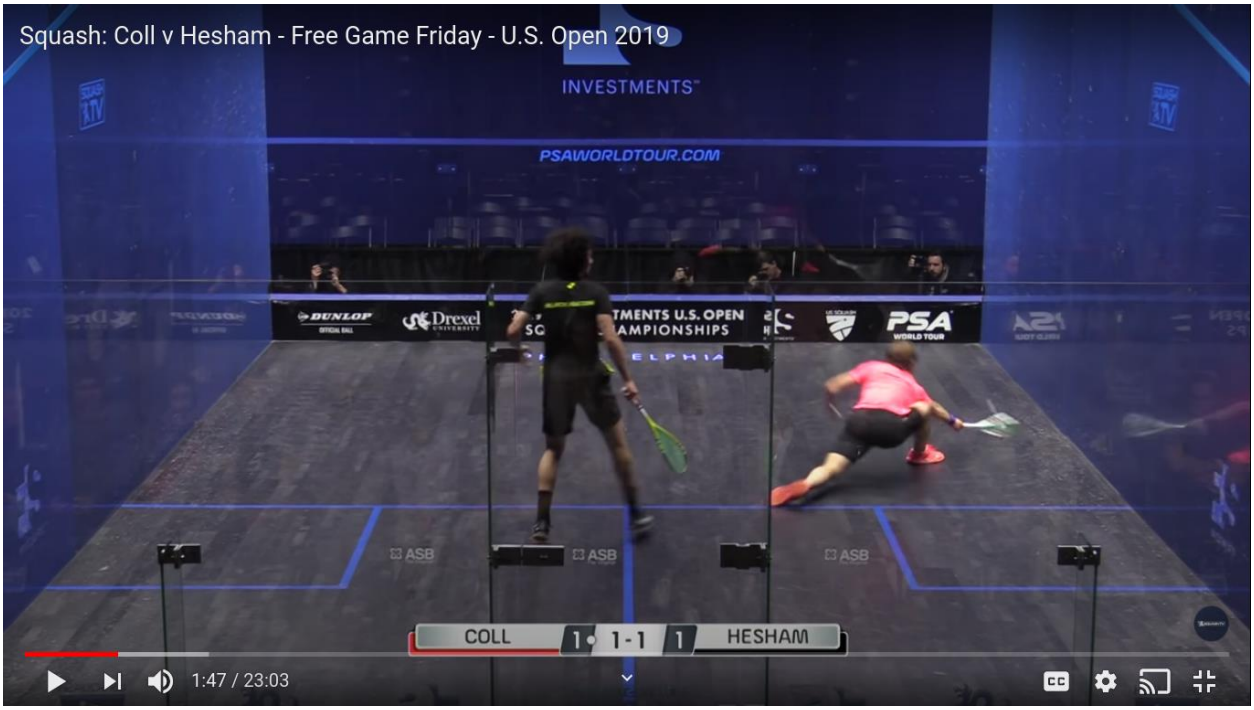
Breakdown of the two shots above:

Paul Colls Lob

- ➔ Actually steps into the backhand channel to begin with, but crucially keeps his eye on the ball which is perfectly synced to his racket preparation and movement. This enables Coll to adjust accordingly
- ➔ Picture example below. See how the racket preparation is leading the movement, giving the player every opportunity to reach the ball

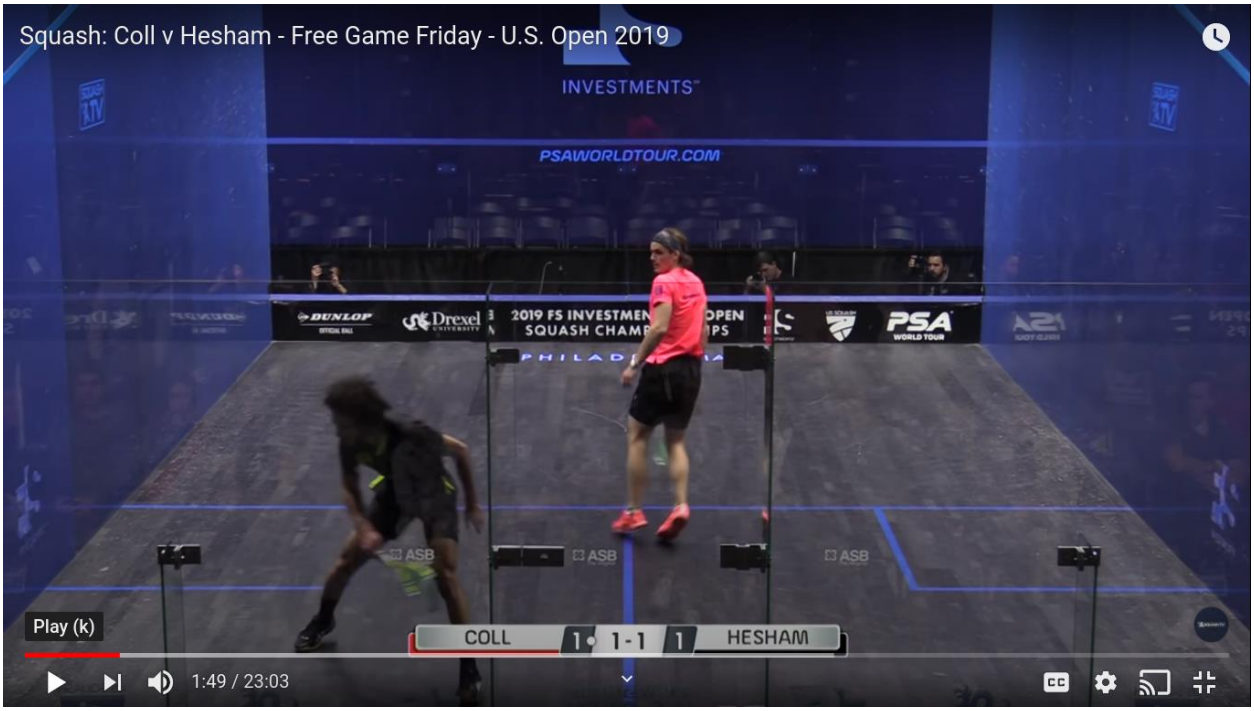


- ➔ Picture example below. See how the racket preparation is now at maximum extension, creating exceptional reach and giving the player the opportunity to hit below the ball. As a result the player even at full extension has the opportunity to lift the ball and create time from a defensive position



Paul Colls attacking cut crosscourt

- ➔ Defensive lob has created an opportunity to attack the resulting loose boast. It's Paul Colls perception which creates the opportunity which is perfectly synced to his racket preparation and movement
- ➔ Picture below shows the player watching the ball and using perception to identify a possible attacking opportunity



➔ Picture example below. Clearly shows the player in a prime position to execute an attacking shot. Strong body position synced with an attacking racket preparation above the ball creating multiple options



Conclusion
Everyone realises how important it is to be able to attack and defend on a squash court. What this example shows is the importance of transitioning between the two and actually turning defensive into attack. The role perception and awareness plays in this is crucial, without the awareness you might well be able to play an attacking shot or defensive shot but without the ability to implement these skills in a match situation.

Visualisation Ghosting Exercise Pattern

https://youtu.be/ZtWlSgaUDSs

Coaching Tip
Focus on trying to be efficient and smooth, just like being on a squash court you want to move effectively and try to minimize start / stop movement as this slows you down and uses up more energy. Link the components together and see them as a continuation of each other and this will ensure your efficient and smooth. Try not to see the components in isolation as this will make your movement very erratic.

Example
Purpose to work on turning defence into attack and linking the two options together. It is imperative to visualise all the shots and visualise yourself playing the game. This will reinforce the learnings and give the training purpose and context.

- ➔ Four cones, front right & left corners, right & left cones one stride length off the T position
- ➔ Visualise your opponent hitting and attacking boast, play a forehand defensive crosscourt lob off the boast
- ➔ Visualise your opponent hitting a weak straight backhand drive, play an attacking straight volley deep
- ➔ Visualise your opponent hitting a weak boast into the forehand front corner, hit an attacking option (mix the attacking response up during the ghosting exercise)
- ➔ Repeat pattern on the opposite side remembering to mix up the attacking shot off the weak boast