

# **Kids Squash Lesson 1 for 11 year olds, Part 1 of 3**

# Coordination and differentiation

## **Catching drills**

1 - 2 children are face to face, each in a service box. One holds a squash ball in each hand. He throws the balls from below and simultaneously to his partner who has to catch them on the fly with each hand. And so on.

The throw has to be perfectly dosed to increase chances of catching each ball. Evolutions:

- a) Vary trajectories height and speed.
- b) Use a different ball (squash, racquetball) in each hand to increase the challenge.
- c) Vary throw distance to increase or decrease the challenge.
- d) Throw one ball to the floor (one bounce) and the other in a bell. This type of throw is an exercise in itself (differentiation). Successful throws and interceptions increase the duo cohesion.
- e) Catch the balls with a badminton shuttlecock in each hand.
- f) Catch 2 table tennis balls thrown simultaneously on the floor with a badminton shuttlecock in each hand. The child is entitled to as many bounces before each ball rolls on the floor.
- g) Same as f), throw one ball after the other towards each side of the catcher.
- h) Same as g), shorten distance between the 2 children.

## **Educational object**

Improve its orientation, coordination and differentiation with a moving object through the air

## **Equipment**

Various balls (squash, racquetball, foam, table tennis), badminton shuttlecocks.

# Coordination and differentiation

## **Catching drills**

2 - 2 children are face to face, 3 m apart. One is holding a badminton shuttlecock and a ping pong ball in each hand. He first throws the badminton shuttlecock from below and in a bell to his partner who has to catch it on the fly. The shuttlecock not yet being caught, the table tennis ball is thrown from below and in a bell. His partner catches the ball with the badminton shuttlecock. And so on.

Each throw has to be perfectly dosed to increase chances of catching each object.

3 - Same as 2 for positioning but the thrower simultaneously throws 2 squash balls in a bell towards the opposite hand of his partner. And so on.

## **Educational object**

Improve its orientation, coordination and differentiation with a moving object through the air

## **Equipment**

Various balls (squash, table tennis), badminton shuttlecocks.

# **Squash training for 11 year old kids - 2**

# Positioning

## **Mid-court self distribution drills**

1 - The educator hangs 3 balloons in the middle and just below the service line.

Starting from the left serving box, the child throws the ball for himself and hits it in forehand straight after the 1<sup>st</sup> bounce at T level. He tries to reach the balloons on the 1<sup>st</sup> shot.

From the first shot the child will naturally learn to control the ball to get into a favorable position for the second shot.

This is a very motivating exercise for the child because he will learn to control the ball, position himself correctly and develop a relaxed swing.

Another important point is the racket preparation when the child moves on his 2<sup>nd</sup> shot.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> shot can be used simply to aim the ball and learn to control the ball.

At a better level, trying to touch a ball is more instructive for the child who is looking for a compromise between power and control to reach his target, which translates well into a real squash stroke. There must always be a balance between power and precision.

Fundamentals of good movement are reinforced and are necessary to reach the balloon.

## **Educational object**

Development of positioning, ball control and relaxation on hitting .

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast or blue squash ball, balloons.

# Positioning

## **Mid-court self distribution drills**

2 - Same as 1 but starting from the right service box. From this place, the child often learns to back up naturally.

Hit forehand and backhand.

3 – Same as 2 but hit the 1<sup>st</sup> forehand shot in a bell towards the side wall, then from the 1<sup>st</sup> bounce hit the 2<sup>nd</sup> shot in forehand straight to reach the target.

The child focuses on positioning and ball control.

## **Educational object**

Development of positioning, ball control and relaxation on hitting.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast or blue squash ball, balloons.

# **Squash training for 11 year old kids - 3**

# Control

## **Hitting exercises in drop shot from different angles**

Install a golf chipping net (or equivalent) towards the front left corner of the court.

Place 7 to 8 balls on the floor, 0.4 m apart, from the center and to the right of the midline.

Sensitize the child on the different required angles to hit the ball towards the net, depending on where he shots.

From the middle of the court, the ball is hit further to the side of the player, towards the side wall, the ball is hit further in front of the forward foot.

Child moves from left to right, picks up each ball, positions himself correctly, throws the ball for himself and adjusts the contact point to hit a forehand cross volley drop toward the net.

The exercise will be done the other way, from the right side wall to the center of the court.

## **Educational object**

Ball control development.

## **Equipment**

Racket, black balls, chipping net (or equivalent).

# **Squash training for 11 year old kids - 4**

# Control

## **Catching exercises with a heavy ball in the racket to feel the wrist firmness**

The educator and the child are facing each other (4 m). From an opened racket head, the educator hits the ball forehand in a bell to the child. The ball is caught on forehand by the child on the racket after the first bounce, he hits the ball forehand to the educator, and so on.

The educator adopts various trajectories to move the child sideways.

The wrist should be firm enough to absorb the ball kinetic energy.

Alternate forehand and backhand including the moves. Evolutions:

- Catch the ball on the fly.
- The educator and the child are facing the front wall and hit cross shots. The interception takes place after the 1<sup>st</sup> bounce.

## **Educational object**

Racket control development.

## **Equipment**

Racket, light plastic hand-ball.

# **Squash training for 11 year old kids - 5**

# Control

## **Rallying with 3 players to appreciate and improve ball control**

Children play a 3 players game on the court. They each take their turn.

The goal is to hold the rally as long as possible.

The ball is hit above the service line and the bounce is in front of the midline. This allows children to move around the back part of the court and to position themselves without hindering themselves.

Encourage children to shorten and slow the swing, then to adopt good follow-through in order to keep the ball in play.

Evolution: play on half court, lengthwise.

## **Educational object**

Ball control development.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast or blue ball.

# **Squash training for 11 year old kids - 6**

# Positioning

## Mid-court hitting drills for positioning improvement

1 - The child stands on the T.

The educator is positioned between the midline and the right service box. He distributes straight cross which bounce before the left side wall 2 - 3 m from the front wall.

The child moves 2 steps and hits in backhand cross towards the back of the court. His ball has to touch the right side wall, behind the service box.

Frequently, the child places himself too close to the ball and adopts a bad position to hit correctly.

The child put his forward foot behind the ball to be able to hit correctly a cross shot.

The child avoids compensating for a bad positioning to hit a cross shot. Evolutions:

- The educator distributes slightly faster balls.
- The educator distributes cross shots directly to the side wall, the child hits after the 1<sup>st</sup> bounce.

The tendency is to follow the ball, to go too far forward and not be able to get behind it.

Vary depth of the cross distribution to make the child aware of its positioning.

Check the child is looking at the ball, hits with an opened racket, using the height of the front wall, it's easier to send the ball to the back part of the court.../...

## Educational object

Development of positioning before hitting the ball.

## Equipment

Racket, fast ball.

# Positioning

## **Mid-court hitting drills for positioning improvement**

Accelerated distribution requires the child to prepare a racket faster to be able to hit the ball in front of him. The less time the child has, the more he will tend to move in the wrong direction.

- The educator slowly distributes a forehand attack boast.

Ask the child to take as few steps as possible in order to stay relaxed close to the ball.

Encourage the child to walk towards the ball rather than run, so as to feel his movement speed to reach the ball.

Improved timing leads to a much better position to hit the ball.

Show the child, with a ball on the floor, the correct positioning for hitting a backhand cross.

- The educator distributes a forehand defense boast, with an angle allowing the ball to bounce towards the middle of the court.

The child moves on 1 step and hits in backhand cross towards the back of the court. His ball has to touch the right side wall, behind the service box.

## **Educational object**

Development of positioning before hitting the ball.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast ball.

# Positioning

## **Mid-court hitting drills for positioning improvement**

2 - The educator hits on the back wall in forehand straight volley, along the left side wall. The ball falls back into the left serving box.

The child moves backwards and positions himself to hit in backhand cross towards the back of the court. His ball has to touch the right side wall, behind the opposite serving box.

A ball from the back wall is ideal for positioning as it is difficult to judge and slows down children.

## **Educational object**

Development of positioning before hitting the ball.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast ball.

# **Kids Squash Lesson for 11 year olds - 7**

# Positioning

## **Games with 2 continuous shots for positioning improvement in various situations**

The child stands in front of the midline on the front left quarter.

He hits a backhand straight for himself in a bell, then he continues after the 1<sup>st</sup> bounce by a backhand cross towards the front right quarter, where is the educator who hits a forehand cross.

The child learns a slow swing with a short preparation, useful later to hit a good drop shot.

The child prepares the racket early to make a slow swing and to get ready on the 2<sup>nd</sup> shot.

The child hits above the service line to increase his success rate.

Positioning is the key to ball control; the educator puts a ball on the floor as a reference for the contact point with the racket:

- a) Ask the child to show the positioning of his forward foot to hit in straight (the impact point is facing the forward foot) and cross (the impact point is done ahead of the forward foot).
- b) Then ask the child to do the same starting from the T and to position himself correctly to hit in straight or cross ... / ...

## **Educational object**

Development of positioning before hitting the ball.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast ball.

# Positioning

## **Games with 2 continuous shots for positioning improvement in various situations**

From this theme, have the children play a game, the educator hits from the right:

The 2<sup>nd</sup> cross shot can be made at any length, but it only counts 1 point if the ball bounces in the front  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

The hitting plan has to remain in the left front quarter to count and backhand only can be played.

1 point is counted on a 1<sup>st</sup> shot in the left front quarter chained in one shot in the right front quarter.

If the first shot does not end in the left front quarter, the next child comes to replace him.

Evolutions:

- The educator hits a cross which first touches the left side wall.
- Child starts from the T.

By lifting the ball, the child will gain time to control the second shot.

If the child starts too close to the side wall, he can back up to position himself correctly.

Sensitize the child on the ideal positioning, respectively for a straight shot and for a cross .../...

## **Educational object**

Development of positioning before hitting the ball.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast ball.

# Positioning

## **Games with 2 continuous shots for positioning improvement in various situations**

The 2 shots are hit behind the midline and no longer in front.

Encourage the child to place himself on the side and not facing the front wall.

- The educator hits in attack boast to increase the challenge.
- The educator hits alternately in attack and defense boast. Then randomly.

If the child misses the first shot, he is immediately replaced.

## **Educational object**

Development of positioning before hitting the ball.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast ball.

# **Kids Squash Lesson for 11 year olds - 8**

# Control and balance

## **Drills to improve racket handling and for fun**

1 - The child is seated on a Swiss ball, both feet flat. He hits the ball continuously on the floor with his racket.

2 - Same as 1 but the child juggles with the ball.

Evolutions: same as 1 and 2 on bleachers, on a chair, on stairs, on a bench,...

3 – Same as 1 and 2, randomly the child juggles, then drops the ball and makes a racket control, then makes it bounce continuously. And so on.

## **Educational object**

Make the child placed in situations involving balance and racket control.

## **Equipment**

Rackets, racquetballs or foam ball, Swiss ball.

# **Kids Squash Lesson for 11 year olds - 9**

# Positioning

## **Games with 2 continuous shots for feet positioning improvement**

Front part of the court is divided in half by adhesive tape.

The child stands on the midline between the T and the right serving box.

The educator, stands between the T and the left serving box, hits forehand cross towards the right front quarter.

After the 1<sup>st</sup> bounce, the child hits forehand straight, then he chains a forehand cross to the left front quarter.

The swing has to be slow and short so as to bounce the ball towards the front angles.

Evolutions:

- a) The cross distribution touches the right side wall, the child hits in straight then in forehand cross.
- b) Same as a) for the child, the educator distributes in outgoing boast.

Judging ball trajectory is more difficult in this case, it is crucial to prepare your racket as soon as possible.

A great way to start the exercise is to allow the child to hit the 1<sup>st</sup> shot after the 2<sup>nd</sup> bounce.

To increase the success rate, the child has to prepare his racket and open his racket head to hit the ball in a bell. He will thus gain time to place himself on the side and be able to hit in straight the 1<sup>st</sup> shot.

Sensitize the child on the optimal positioning.../...

## **Educational object**

Development of positioning before hitting the ball.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast ball, adhesive tape.

# Positioning

## **Games with 2 continuous shots for feet positioning improvement**

c) Same as b) for the child, the educator hits in incoming boast.

The child has to create enough space to hit the first shot.

d) The educator distributes in cross behind the midline to the right back quarter. After the 1<sup>st</sup> bounce, the child hits in forehand straight, then he chains from the right back quarter a forehand cross to the left back quarter.

The child must open his racket head, a short swing and early racket preparation will increase his success rate.

e) Same as d), the educator randomly hits cross towards the side wall or incoming or outgoing boasts. The goal for the child remains the same, the forehand and backhand shots are performed from the right back quarter.

f) Same as e), but the educator hits in short cross and forces the child to hit his 2 shots at the right length.

## **Educational object**

Development of positioning before hitting the ball.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast ball, adhesive tape.

# **Kids Squash Lesson for 11 year olds - 10**

# Control

## **Hitting drills to improve ball control**

1 - The “Distributor” child is positioned in the right serving box. He hits a short forehand straight above the service line and in the right front quarter.

The “Returning” child, stands at T, moves to hit the ball in forehand straight in the right front quarter.

Chain shots continuously.

To be able to hit straight along the side wall, the body has to be positioned facing the side wall.

2 - Chain 2 shots: a short forehand straight returned with a long forehand straight to the right serving box.

3 - Same as 2, but the long forehand straight can be randomly caught on the fly or hit after the 1<sup>st</sup> bounce.

Keep certain limits (ex: lanes 1 and 2 or 1 to 3), distribution requires a lot of control. Use adhesive tape so children keep their marks.

It is important to hit the ball from the side in order to maintain a straight trajectory.

Children has to keep up their rallying rhythm.

## **Educational object**

Ball control development.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast ball.

# Control

## **Hitting drills to improve ball control**

4 - 2 children are rallying.

The distributor hits all his balls over the service line. He hits his 1<sup>st</sup> shot in forehand straight, his 2<sup>nd</sup> shot in forehand cross.

The ball bounces in the right quarter court, left side the ball bounces on the side wall before bouncing on the floor. And so on.

The distributor hits forehand only, the “Returning“ child hits forehand on the right side, backhand on the left side.

A good contact point in the racket improves ball control.

The distributor is positioned towards the back of the court, the “Returning" child is rather positioned towards the front.

On the backhand shot, the child can step back to the middle of the court, if necessary.

## **Educational object**

Ball control development.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast ball.

# **Kids Squash Lesson for 11 year olds - 11**

# Trajectories

## **Learning the service with indoor soccer goal**

Using indoor soccer goal as a visual aid is very motivating for children.

Put soccer goal in lanes 2 and 3, 1 m behind the right service box.

The key to hit the ball at the target is to have the correct contact point with the racket.

Left side service:

- The contact point is located behind the body for right-handers.
- If the contact point is correct, the racket remains fluid on the shot and the body don't need to compensate.
- Particular attention is paid to a correct contact point, a few centimeters can make a big difference.
- Make sure the child properly prepares and controls their racket.
- Have the child try different contact points (near, far, forward, back of the body), but using the same swing on each attempt.

Apply a variety of exercises and moves by moving the soccer goal (suitable for a group).

## **Educational object**

Learning the service.

## **Equipment**

Racket, blue ball or fast black ball, indoor soccer goal.

# **Kids Squash Lesson for 11 year olds - 12**

# Positioning

## **Games with 2 continuous shots for positioning improvement in various situations**

1 - The child stands in front of the midline on the right quarter court.

He hits a forehand straight for himself in a bell, then he goes on after the 1<sup>st</sup> bounce by a forehand boast towards the left front quarter.

The educator, positioned on the left, hits a cross shot.

The main goal for the child is to perceive the required positioning to hit different shots.

For the forehand straight, the front supporting leg is at the same level as the ball.

For the forehand boast, the forward foot is in front of the ball.

To start the exercise, the child can let the ball bounce twice before the second shot. This will save him time to position himself well before hitting.

Hitting 2 shots in a row has advantages:

1 - Force the child to control the 1<sup>st</sup> shot.

2 - Force an early racket preparation for the second shot.

3 - Correctly position your feet and control the ball while being under pressure... /...

## **Educational object**

Development of positioning before hitting the ball.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast ball.

# Positioning

## **Games with 2 continuous shots for positioning improvement in various situations**

This exercise can be used in game, adding a mental aspect:

- a) Use different ball types which children will adapt to.
- b) To control the ball, position yourself correctly rather than changing your swing.
- c) Hit the ball as late as possible, making the best positioning more likely.

2 - The educator hits a cross shot which touches the right side wall.

Judging the ball trajectory from the side wall is difficult.

The high and in a bell distribution is suitable for all children levels.

The child must hit his forehand straight in a bell in order to save time to control his forehand boast.

## **Educational object**

Development of positioning before hitting the ball.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast ball, various balls.

# Positioning

## **Games with 2 continuous shots for positioning improvement in various situations**

3 - Same as 1, but the child is positioned in front of the midline on the left front quarter.

He hits a backhand straight for himself in a bell, then he continues after the 1<sup>st</sup> bounce by a backhand boast towards the right front quarter.

The educator, positioned on the right, hits him a cross shot.

The backhand is more difficult, a good positioning is even more crucial.

The contact point for a backhand straight is located in the axis of the shoulder closest to the front wall.

Teach the child to move step by step in order to find a very favorable position.

The contact point for the boast is located behind the body with a regular swing.

Encourage the child to hit the ball in an incoming boast (3 walls) to force the correct positioning.

## **Educational object**

Development of positioning before hitting the ball.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast ball.

# **Kids Squash Lesson for 11 year olds - 13**

# Games

## **Games to avoid unforced errors**

Children compete in normal play.

They can score a point when they hit at least 2 shots, including service and service return. They must cooperate together from the start of the rally.

The vast majority of rallies in beginner children are lost on unforced errors.

Evolutions:

- 2 bounces allowed on certain shots.
- Use a ball which bounces a lot and slowly.

The service return is the most crucial shot: a short and slow swing with early preparation will facilitate the information gathering with the ball and will make fewer unforced errors.

This game confirms the fact that most matches are lost by making too many unforced errors.

It is important children have to integrate this concept because they are impatient and tend to make too many unforced errors when they start playing squash.

## **Educational objects**

- Discovery of the squash match adapted to child level and age.
- The child is facing a typical squash situation.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast ball, racquetballs.

# **Kids Squash Lesson for 11 year olds - 14**

# Control and adaptation

## **Games with different racket types to stimulate adaptation**

2 children play a normal game.

But depending on the level of each one they can play with a different racket. This gives a handicap to the best of them.

Each racket has its own characteristics, but the child has to adapt in the same way.

They also have to adapt to their opponent level.

## **Educational object**

Ball and racket control development.

## **Equipment**

Various rackets and racquets: wood squash, light metal , graphite, racquetball, jokari, beach ball, table tennis, mini tennis, mini squash, etc. With variable rope tensions.

Fast balls.

# **Kids Squash Lesson for 11 year olds - 15**

# Games

## **Game in a reduced space to increase the rally duration**

Children compete in normal play.

All shots are played above the service line and the bounce has to be in front of the midline.

This is a very good exercise to understand the ball rhythm and make the rallies last.

The service is played along or on the side wall, as long as the ball bounces from the opposite side.

The child makes sure of his “cocked wrist” and his opened grip so as to play balls in a bell trajectory.

## **Educational object**

Discovery of the squash match adapted to child level and age.

## **Equipment**

Racket, fast ball.