Okay. So today we have a guest here for you. We have coach Jon Glover who is men's national coach of the boys, mainly 14 and unders. Works heavily in the player ID and development department. And we're labeling today's episode as a Philly special, um, we as John, we're not going to get too much into the Eagles but we uh, we certainly have a, a great Philly special with John Bean here. So we, we welcome you. Thank you for coming and being on the podcast.

JG: Thank you for having me. Happy to be here.

J: Yeah. So Larry, what are we going into today?

L: Yeah, we have coach Jon here cause we really wanted to talk about something that we think that uh, you do quite well and that's, that's bringing the mind to the forefront in your training and the practices and maybe have you talk a little bit about the things that you focus on with the players, how you bring it into the practices. But for you, what are some of the most important things relative to the mind that need to be addressed with those boys you're working with? Cause you're working with boys that are what, 12, 13?

JG: Yeah. Right now I'm working with boys that are 05's mostly. Um, I just got finished working with 04 boys who were 14 and I'm doing a lot of work with the 12 and under space as well. And um, you know, for those of you who've been to a 12 and unders national, um, you can see that the, uh, the mental aspect plays a pretty big, um, it's a big deal as far as, you know, determining the result of the match. Um, so I feel like it's very important to start to work on those things with the boys at a young age. You know, once they're getting older, if they're being introduced to it for the first time, maybe they have a little bit of an aversion to it. But the younger kids, if they can start to understand the importance of breathing, executing routines, um, you know, journaling after their matches so they can, you know, learn the lessons that need to be learned after each win and loss. They can really make some positive outcomes for them. And then as they get older, it's already part of their, um, their off court habit and it's a little bit easier to incorporate those things. Um, you know, once the margins of winning and losing is so much smaller, um, you know, when they're in college or playing professionally.

L: I get this question often when I go and present to groups. And that is, when can you start mental training with, with a player in your mind, coach Jon went, when should that begin or where could you begin?

JG: You know, I think you can start very early. I think you can start when kids are in orange ball. So that would be seven, eight, nine years old. Um, it's gonna look a lot different than it looks when kids are playing high level nationals or playing college or playing professional tennis. But I think the earlier you start the better. For a long time, I was a director of player development at legacy youth tennis,
which was a regional training center at the time. And we did mental skills with our orange ball kids with our green dot kids. And, um, the practices would go great. And not only that, the kids love doing it. Uh, we didn't have to, you know, make them do it. They, you know, if we didn't have our mental skills coach there for that day, they would all say, Oh, where's Landa? We, you know, we wanna we want to do mental skills. So it, it was great and once they got older and they started playing more tournaments, they were ready for each next level that we are to bring to them.

L: Well that's amazing because you know, one of the things, and I'm sure the listeners often, you know, the coach or parents are aware of this, that that age group not only being emotional, their attention spans can be quite short. What have you found in terms of the kinds of exercises or practices that these kids gravitate to or they enjoy the most or maybe helps them the most?

JG: Well, um, one of the things that I think can help them most is just spending as little as two minutes with your kids, with their eyes closed in a comfortable position, working on breathing and visualization. And a lot of times when the kids are coming to practice, um, you know, if you're at an Academy or, or you know, you're running your own program, you know, they're coming straight from their school day or they're coming, you know, from a, a hectic car ride with their parents or you know, you don't know where they're coming to you from. So if you just, you know, put them on the court and okay, now we're, we're, you know, doing our warmup and now we're hitting balls. They haven't really had an opportunity to transition. They haven't really had an opportunity to set an intention to put their focus onto, you know, what they want to try to accomplish on the tennis court. And you know, when I, when we had our Academy in Philadelphia at Legacy, you would see, I mean, it would take a good 20 to 30 minutes at times for the practice to start, the kids begin to start to become engaged. But when we would start practice off with just even two minutes of quiet meditation, visualization, sometimes we will give the kids a cue. Um, you know, something to imagine or something to put their focus on. Sometimes we would just tell them to put their focus on their breathing. Then it's like the kids, they're stress, whatever they had to deal with would just kind of wash away and practice would start so much better. And you know, the kids sometimes they, you know, if they came late they'd say, okay, hold on, I need to, I need to do, do you my, my, my meditation before I get started. And that's pretty cool.

J: So you used it almost as a way to reset them from whatever was going on from the outside and then they come to the cause. Use it as a form of resetting. Do you ever use that as a way of, you know, I know you like to have some specific objectives with your players on court. Do you ever use it as a way to really start getting dialed into objectives or do you, is it mainly used as to that breathing exercise and that transition from maybe chaos from the outside calm things down to then really prepare for the engagement of the tennis practice?

JG: Yeah, no, I think with the kids who are slightly older, like the kids I'm working with now, that's, that's a perfect exercise for them. And that's something that
we do with our journals. Uh, you know, before the kids step on court, they're gonna, um, commit to their practice plan, what they want to get accomplished, how they're going to get a, how they're going to go about accomplishing it. And then if they had some things they wanted to work on from the previous practice that had to do with those objectives, they can say, okay, yesterday, you know, my footwork was a little bit a sloppy. I'm moving forward to the ball today, I'm going to work, or whatever it happens to be that that's in line with that objective. And then you also give the kids a chance to evaluate themselves after that practice?

05:52
L: No, I've heard a, I had this experience today, Johnny, um, that a player said to me, this is the most that I've written in two years. No. And they look at me like, like.

06:02
J: Actually written? I mean, surely they type.

06:04
L: Type, yeah. They type, but actual writing and then one player, Oh, I had them write a few paragraphs. One player is getting a hand cramp and you know, Oh my, wow.

06:14
J: We're not going to get to a point where we really have to go over handwriting skills.

06:18
L: Yeah, we're gonna have writing at the end of class.

06:20
JG: We might have to have the kids bring their iPads on court so they can, uh, you know, do their journaling with the iPads.

06:25
J: As long as they don't have all the, you know, Snapchat, Instagram apps on there, that we're fine.

06:30
L: Yeah. That, that happens really quickly. So, I mean, when, when you, you look at what we're, uh, what I hear that we're talking about is this engagement, this, uh, it's engagement, which is focus, right? It's being present. And then you're present with a purpose. You know what you're trying to achieve and, and you imagine yourself being successful, you're, you're preparing for successful practice, right? A successful future. When you look at that, what is the difference you see from the players in the practice? I know you've mentioned a little bit, but what tangible differences when you start implementing a daily mental practice? Cause I'm maybe I'm a coach out here listening to this podcast and I'm thinking like, wow, why have I never done this? Let's slam the door open and say, look, you've got to start doing this. What's the evidence in practice that tells you that this is a no-brainer?

07:21
JG: The evidence for me is just how practice begins. We're, we're beginning practice with intensity, with engagement from the very first ball and we're not having to fight for those kids' attention a lot of times, especially now I'm with
the boys and if you start off and you're saying, okay, we're playing a game or playing points, then they're in there. But if you're having to work on a skill or do something that, that doesn't involve competition, then it takes them a while and they may not get to that point of engagement. But if you have them, okay, commit to, you know, this is what I'm trying to work on and, and you, you know, maybe give them some time to visualize themselves doing it, then you go out on the court and you're just, you're just seeing, you know, more intensity, more consistency and, and just less sloppy play. And you know, for me, one of the big things that I always talk to the kids about is, I mean, one of the first things I ask them when they come in, as I say, how much of tennis do you think is mental and how much is physical? And you know, that's a great question. And you know, I think if you ask most coaches that question, the very least, they're going to say it's 50% physical, 50% mental. I haven't heard anybody say tennis is less than 50% mental.

**08:20**

J: Do you think it changes over time as skill level progresses? And you, you kind of go through from playing sectional, it may be then national events, then you're at the international stage, then you're transitioning from juniors to pros and kind of going through the, you know, that progression within the pros from the lower levels to the higher levels. It would seem the, the, there's ever more focus as the high level you get, it becomes way more lopsided on the mental sides than possibly the physical side as the demands, the, especially the mental demands and in the intensities are so much greater, the higher the skillset gets and high the level gets right.

**08:54**

JG: And the higher the level you get the, the margin for error is so small. I mean, everybody can hit a forehand or backhand, everyone's got a good serve, everyone's in great shape, everyone can move. And the difference between winning or losing oftentimes isn't, you know, who hit a bigger forehand that day. It's who is able to keep their calm, who was able to kind of stay focused on their game plan in the, in the critical points of the match. And you know, it might be three or four points that are deciding to match and who plays those points better. Who plays those points? Um, you know, more relaxed. Yeah.

**09:23**

J: Who has that relentless focus versus maybe those that eyes are wandering around a little bit.

**09:28**

L: They're in and out. But you think like a high level junior. So high performance junior when they step onto a court, don't you agree that a lot of those matches already? They have a huge advantage on their opponent when they're younger because of discrepancies in the talent and skill, right. Cause not everybody has matured yet or to any extent. So the mind, not that it isn't, it's very important, but they can get away without being mentally strong or, or let's say affective but still win.

**09:58**

JG: For sure. For sure. Sometimes you get a kid who's just very strong, um, you know, has matured faster, gone through puberty. He's 6'2" hitting a serve 20 miles an hour faster than everybody. He probably doesn't have to be as
mentally tough at that age. Two years later and the 14th and the 16th when people are returning that serve. And his forehand and he's not able to just overpower players, then you have to develop the other aspects of the game for sure.

**10:20**

L: Absolutely. And do you think, cause I, I've worked with players who've gone through this early success struggles later that that early success and if they don't have an open mind to this side of things, working on being present, the mindfulness, rehearsing what they're going to do, visualizing being very planful about how they're going to play the next point. All these things that were discussed with the players. How difficult is it? You got to play, he didn't have to do all this stuff. Maybe when they were 13 and now at 15 they're losing to guys who they used to be just purely on physicalness.

**10:52**

JG: That's right. I think, I mean in, in the 12's and the boys 12's especially early success can sometimes be a curse if the players aren't doing things the right way. If they're, if they're playing a style of play, if they're, you know, not if they've gotten away with bad habits because they have more physicality or because they may sometimes the kids really fast. And you can just run down balls and keep the ball in play and then they get to that 14's, 16's level where now you have to do X, Y, and Z. Just to kind of keep the competitiveness with people that you used to feel like you were way ahead of then that player, I mean, kind of naturally in your mind you're like, wow, I've got to work twice as hard just to, you know, just to, just to stay afloat here and, and sometimes it can be a demotivator. So that's why, you know, with a lot of the kids, you know, that, that are coming to train with us. We are, we deemphasize, you know, the results. We kind of just try to emphasize playing the right way, um, executing proper skills, having the right attitude and just things that you can control. And if, and if you do those things, then the results will start to come at some point. But at 12 for me, the result of, of a tennis match isn't the most important thing. It's, you know, did you play the right way? Did you have a great attitude? Did you give a hundred percent effort?

**11:58**

L: I think those are great points. I think we were all set to look at what's happening in terms of how players mature. When you're young, let's say before nine years old, your whole universe is your parents, right? And then that starts to change. You get into these group classes and lessons and you start maybe traveling to play a little bit. You start comparing yourself to other players, right? Right. And then you're, you're dominating, you're one of the best players. You know, you're just brow beating these kids just by showing up, right? Some of these kids do this, but when that flips, because you know, it's, it's really hard to tell someone of that age, Hey look, you got to do all these other things because later, because they're, they don't, they, they, that's abstract to them. They can't see that. Right. They can only see five inches in front of their face at a young age. Some were trying to tell them, but yeah, but two years from now, if you're not doing this stuff, then you're going to be losing to these guys. No chance. Coach John, no chance. I'll always be better. Do you run into that. And how do you combat that?
JG: All the time, um, when I was in the private sector, now that I'm with the USTA, I mean it's something with the boys that age. I mean they're just naturally so competitive and everything is about winning. So what I try to do is I try to redefine what winning is to them and I try to, you know, define winning as completing their objective. So it may be to come to the net 30 times or every time the ball's short to come forward. Maybe it's to serve and volley 10 point 10 times in a match. Use your slice back in 20 times and if you execute those things and then to me, you know, you won, no matter what happens on the court, no matter what the score says when the match is over, I'm getting the kids and the parents to buy into that is sometimes challenging. But the ones that can buy into that plan for the long term with their games, then they tend to have more success over the longterm.

L: Johnny. Now you, you've talked a lot about within our department about mixing the players up and having younger players play older players. Right? Wouldn't this seem like this should be a part of the solution as well?

J: Well, I think, yeah. I mean having the players mix up with each other also exposes them to different different approaches that the kids take with each other and it provides, provides that element of you might have to be able to have some leaders step up and show them how it's done and then the younger players get to see how, how those habits need to be created and how we can work on those different skills. I think as you look at the older players, you think generally they have a greater skillset, so if the younger players are seeing them working on some certain skills, that will create that mindset in the younger player. That, wait, I should be doing some of these things. If I want to catch up to that person, then I've got to surely be implementing some of the skills that may they're doing that I'm not doing enough of. So they're slicing a lot more than I ever do. So I should probably start slicing a bit more so I can start to feel comfortable with that. But the mixture of the kids I feel provides a great element so that you can, the younger ones can definitely learn and look up to the next level. And certainly for the older ones, they're the ones that are being targeted essentially, especially when it comes to point play on the court with whether we're doing situational point play or whatever. They're the ones being targeted. So can they use their skill set to overcome and stay ahead of those younger ones that are chasing them. But it just provides a great healthy, if it's done, obviously done the healthy way, but a great mix where you can get the younger ones and the older ones together. And I know that's something that you're looking to, well the you are going to do this year, especially now you've transitioned most of the 05's, 06's, 07's, et cetera. But having them mixed in with some of the 04's that you've, you know, you've worked with pretty much the past three years, you know, and, and done such a great job with them. But so, you know, tell me some of the, maybe the strategies of incorporating them at that mental aspect with, with mixing them up and why you want to do that.

JG: Well, I think it's important to play at the different, with the different dynamics of pressure. A lot of times you hear parents say, Oh well, you know, Johnny didn't have a good practice because he was the best player on the court.
Or Oh, you know, this isn't a good practice match cause he's better than that
player. But you know, like you said, if you're, if you're playing with the older
players, now you're receiving some shots from them that you're not used to
seeing. Maybe they're thinking you slice with a sh, you know, with a short slice
and come in and maybe they're, um, you know, able to chip in charge off of you
or, or giving you different tactics that you're not used to. Now you can take
some of those things that you've learned from playing an older, a better player.
You can try it against someone, maybe that's a little bit younger than you and
that you maybe have a little bit less pressure playing and you can say, okay, well
if I play this guy and I'm used to beating them 6-0, I'll immediately try some
things out of my comfort zone. And it may be, maybe I went 6-4 maybe I won't
win. Maybe it will split sets, maybe it'll be a closer match. But I've kind of
expanded my comfort zone. So you know, that's, that's one of the things that
we're doing with the kids. We're going to, we're having some camps where we
bring in 05's with 06's or 05's with 04's and you know, if that player across the
net, they can send back a reasonable ball to you and that, that's a good
match for you and you can, you can get something out of that match if you go
about it the right way. But the thing that kind of really bothers me with some of
the parents that, that I've encountered is they almost get the point across to
their child that this isn't valuable for you because you're playing someone that
you're better than. And then the child goes on the court with, you know, maybe
not so much energy or effort cause they've been convinced that, oh this isn't
helping me. So I, you know, maybe I shouldn't give a great effort and I just
really, I mean the attitude you need to have is, you know, I'll play anyone
anywhere, anytime. And if you know that you're playing someone that you're
better than, then you know, you'll use it as an opportunity to try to incorporate
these different skills that you might not have mastered yet.

17:14
L: That's competing, right? Competitors compete. You throw someone at me,
I'm going to take them on. And I think sometimes for the parents, they're
already creating the parachute for the child just in case they struggle. Because it
would be awful if my kid struggled against his kid who's younger than them or
not as ranked as high. Right. That that doesn't look good and now there's
something wrong. So we're already creating that kind of parachute while I go.
You can't get anything from this, so don't, don't worry about it.

17:38
JG: Well, I thought you really put it in a great way. One of the groups that I sat in
with you where you said the parents create a lose lose situation for their child
where you're playing someone that you feel like, okay, you should beat them
because you know, I've made it in your head that you're better than them. So if
you win, you didn't really accomplish anything. But if you lose now sky is falling
because I've told him so there's really no, there's no motivation in that match
for the child.

18:01
L: There's no benefit.

18:03
J: Well, and then there's nothing more uncomfortable for a player than playing
someone, um, that is chasing them. So to me that's the green light, to put them
in that situation more because our jobs and and taught, I've heard a lot of our national coaches talk about this and I've heard Larry, I've heard you taught the kids about this and coach Glover, you with the kids on court. But part of our role is to make them uncomfortable because that's how we know we can develop resiliency and develop that toughness that they can overcome. So it's there are uncomfortable doing something, we should be putting them more in that environment. And again, that, that mix of younger players, older players creates that element too. And I think it's a fantastic mix.

L: And then when you look at like the mental skills, that mental training that we do, that stuff becomes even more relevant because now if they're struggling in practice, they start wanting to use those routines. They're trying to find a way to right. And so now, Hey, go to your breathing, visualize how you're gonna play the next point. So integrating in the mental training actually it carries more weight. And when they're put in these different situations, like, Hey, I got, now I got to play someone who's two years younger than me, you're three. And in my mind I'm thinking I should win 6-1, 6-2 easy. But this kid has a pretty good ball.

JG: Yeah. And they've got nothing to lose. So they're going after you.

L: Oh yeah. They want a piece for sure.

J: We, um, you know, we had that the Navy seal in, in one of our last, uh, department, uh, we're not department, but I'll last PD meetings. Right. David Rutherford. And he mentioned the guy, David Goggins. I don't know if you guys have seen it by what, so I went on YouTube to look at some stuff from Goggins.

JG: I've been listening to his Podcasts.

J: There's a, there's a video called embrace the suck with, I know rather Fred had mentioned that Goggins talks about embracing the suck and embracing the suck with, with how you feel. If you feel like it sucks, then you just got to embrace it and move on. The one thing you really talks about is, you know, he made a choice in his life that every time he had that voice inside of his head saying, don't do something, he said, I'm going to do it. So he brought it back to, well, my mind's telling me not to make my bed. He goes, I'm going to make my bed. If my mind is telling me not to get up and go for a run, then I'm going to get up earlier and go for a run. My mind is telling me I don't like to slice a backhand, then I'm going to go only slice it backhand. And so he's talking about embracing those things that make us uncomfortable. And the only way to make it stop making them uncomfortable is to keep doing them until they're, until they're comfortable. But it starts with the mindset of basically overcoming that and embracing the suck, embracing the, you know, the, the uncomfortable. Uh, I just thought it was really powerful in anyone who's out there. If you want to go on YouTube and uh, and look that up, that, that, that video segments about 10 minutes long. I mean, it's a really, really cool thing just to see from a, from a guy who really, if you look at him, came from really a very, um, rough, rough upcoming and rough beginnings and along the way made decisions, you know,
he wasn't really born with this mindset, he found a way to make a choice to
unlock it. And uh, and I think that was a really important lesson by thing. You
know, when you talk about uncomfortability, that's a, you know, I think that's a
mindset that we can go get into.

20:56

JG: Yeah. One of the things I used to like to do with my players, um, when I was
in the private sector, if I had a kid and he was number one seat and he was
gonna kinda breeze to the semifinals, I'd make them go out there and say, okay,
you can only slice her back in this match or you can only, you have to serve and
volley on every first and second serve. You have to come in on every second
serve. So I put different parameters on them. So they had to kind of get into a
different space mentally and you know, they would get more out of those
matches because they weren't able to just go out there and play like they
normally would and and be the guy they were used to beating. They had to find
different ways to win points and it helped develop skills they didn't already
have. So then maybe when they're the net player in the semifinals, you know,
they're not going to slice the backhand every time, but it's there when you need
it. They're not going to serve and volley every time, of course. But you might
need it a couple of times in a, in a match, and you feel comfortable doing it.

21:42

L: Well, that's tremendous because we know where you get uncomfortable or
where or what's stressful is where growth occurs. Right. And that's one of the
messages we try to give to our players is that you need to be under stress, more
stress and training. You've got to make an important, you gotta push yourself in.
Some of these things we're talking about are ways that we make our players
stress in training as well. And I think that it's so important, but uh, coach Sean,
when you see a player struggling, I mean just struggling in practice and they're
negative and they're frustrated, maybe they've thrown a racket. Maybe they're
just, I mean maybe they're yelling out and they're angry and it's starting to
affect the other players in the practice before we always talk abou
Hey coach Jose Higueras talks about I have no bad practices because I don't let them get
bad. Right. Which I believe in. But what, what will you do to help a player, to
coach a player who's struggling emotionally on the core? What do you do?

22:33

JG: Usually when I see a player that's struggling to, to that level emotionally,
they haven't been given the proper tools to deal with, um, you know, negative
emotions. And a lot of times it also comes from being in a result oriented
mindset and not, you know, you might be missing balls, but are you missing the
right kind of balls or we, are we missing in the right place or is there something
that we can build on there? So what I try to do with those practices, I try to help
the, the, the player go through certain routines on the court where they can
take some of that negative that happens, take like 20 to 30 seconds, use their
breath, use their mind to kind of get to a different space and then come back.
So it, it takes a little bit of work. But when the players have, you know, been
able to buy into it, then I see them, I see them doing it in practices, but more
importantly also in matches. And it's a, it's a really neat process. Um, you know,
that something that I think all players should be working on. I mean, we talked a
little while back about, you know, the, the percentage of tenants that's physical
and mental and I mean how, you know, coaches like how much time are we spending working on our mental games if tennis is more mental than physical, are we spending time with the players on the court working on the mental portion of the game? If not mean you can't just expect them to be on the court in a critical situation when everything's happening around them and to be in a calm space, it's, you know, you're, you're leaving it to chance.

23:53

L: Yeah. And I, I see so many times in practices, you know, just in general, I'm not talking about our national coaches, but where players will be struggling and will just expect them to hit more balls versus saying, Hey, let's work this out. And if we've taught them while we need to say is like, Hey, you know what, just go to your refocusing routine or whatever that, whatever it's called, get to that. We talked about green, yellow, red lights here, routine. So we can, we can say a color and a player knows like, okay it's yellow light, I need to go to that routine, my breathing, refocus, remember my purpose here, lets go get energized. But I, I think those kinds of things coaches need to be doing those more instead of just letting the practice roll and allowing, well really honestly the, the proliferation of bad technical habits or tactical habits, but the proliferation of bad emotional habits as well and mental habits.

24:43

JG: I mean sometimes a bad technical habit can be mental, you know, and I think like you said, a lot of times we just go to hitting more balls but we've got to understand that mental, physical connection.

24:53

J: Well one thing I saw you doing yesterday, Larry, with the group of girls we had then was um, you're actually just on court just only specifically working on routines, uh, and coach Glover or I know it's something that you love to do with, with players, especially if we only have a few players in and you see players struggle with the routine elements on core. You take a lot of time in a session and when maybe the session is, it's literally only working on routines, you may hit less balls, but that work is probably just as valuable. Um, but speak to maybe some of the, I know, yeah, we have talked about red, yellow, green light routines before, but, but maybe speak to what those sessions look like when you take the kids just on court to only work on the, that rituals and routine element.

25:33

JG: Okay. Um, so what I like to do is I first talk to the kids and asked them, you know, what a good green light, yellow light, red light routine should look like. And um, you know, they'll describe it to me and say, okay, well, you know, I should, you know, pump my fist and, and, you know, look at my strings or I should, you know, if, if they lost a point, I should, uh, you know, go back to the, the curtain or the, the fence and I should, you take a second and breathe and then come back around. I should say something positive to myself. So once we agree, um, on what it should be verbally, then I have them kind of shadow it and just, and just do it without a ball. And you'd be surprised how long it takes them to actually be able to do what they said they should do without even hitting a tennis ball. So I mean that could take anywhere from 10 to 15 minutes. So we'd go over those routines without them hitting a ball till they can do it
perfectly til it looks like they're doing it while they're playing a match. And then we incorporate some, some, some balls into the, into the session where I'll, we'll be doing a drill and I'll give them one last shot. And if they make the shot then they go through like a green light routine. If they miss a shot, they go through more of like a yellow or red and at, you know, if they do anything that's outside of what we agreed on outside of what they did without the ball, then I make them stop and they do it again and they'd do that until they can do it perfectly. And then we'll do something more live ball or playing points where, I mean, I'm not even concentrating on if they won or lost the point, but after the point they have to go through that routine and then you just do it until it's rote, until, until they can do it, you know, without putting so much mental energy into it. And um, you know, I think if you, if when you work on these things at a young age, the players can still execute. You know, there a girl that I worked with for many years and we started doing this when she was six years old and we would incorporate routines into almost every practice. Serve plus one. Okay. Go through routine after you're done the plus one. And I saw her play at winter nationals here and you know, I hadn't, haven't coached her in years and she was still doing it, you know, hadn't really practiced it, but the coach of the players, she was playing this, wow, this girl looks really professional. And it's like, well, you know, you know.

27:31  J: She's out a lot of practice.


27:34  J: That's great.

27:35  L: That is outstanding.

27:36  J: That's great. Um, you know, we're running out of time here, but um, wanted you to maybe give the listeners some tips, uh, bear in mind may be we're maybe talking to the players directly here. What are some tips you can, you can give an advice that you can give them that they can start incorporating tomorrow or today in their practices?

27:54  JG: Yeah, really simple. I mean, a lot of kids, I would have them do things like if they're on the car ride to practice, you know, before they step into the building, just close your eyes, visualize you know what you're going to be working on. You know, if you know your tour areas, a focus, you have an idea how your practice should go. If you're having a lesson or you know, if you have time when you get to your practice, just go to a closed and enclosed area. Just shut your eyes, take some deep breaths, and just visualize how you want to be hitting the ball, how you want to be moving to the ball. I think that's probably the easiest thing that a player can do. You know, very quickly, you know, I with players that are a little bit older, um, I love incorporating yoga into their practice. It's a great way to work on the mind, body connection to help them learn how to breathe. Um, you know, the way that they need to breathe on the tennis court. I mean, we, we don't spend any time practicing breathing and when things are going haywire on
the court in your emotions are going crazy, that's the one thing that's going to be able to, you know, make all those different emotional things dissipate a little bit and you'd be able to go into your logical, rational thinking mind more so than your emotional reactive mind.

28:53

J: That's awesome. And Larry must be extremely excited for you to see that a lot of the work and programming that you've put in place since you've been with the, with the USTA is being incorporated by all by all coaching staff. And in turn we'll probably filter through to the coaches out there. You guys in the private sector, the already working with the players day to day. I mean, you know, what's your thoughts?

29:13

L: Well, it's extremely gratifying and I think John was doing most, or a lot of this already before I spend any time with them. So, but I, I, it's just great to see a coach take advantage of the resources out there, learn it. And it wasn't like he was saying like, well, I don't have a master's in psychology so I can't do this. He went out, has learned yoga, has learned, mindfulness has learned visualization and he's now applying that in everything that he does.

29:36

JG: Yeah. Well, and Dr. Lauer, um, I think you're also being a little humble because we definitely would check in with you. I'm when I was with the RTC and you, uh, helped our mental skills coach quite a bit and gave us some great ideas for things to incorporate into our program. And yeah, thank you for that.

29:51

L: You're most welcome. I'm just glad you can take advantage of you do a great job. I mean really, really respect the work that you do with the young ones, bringing them along.

29:57

JG: Appreciate it.

29:58

J: Yeah. Well that's fantastic. Well Jon, we're greatly appreciate you getting on the podcast and sharing your insights with the listeners and you do such a phenomenal job inspiring our young players, connecting with coaches, connecting with parents and you're extremely patient, extremely detail orientated and it shows in the kids that have spent time with you, whether it's for one week, whether it's they spent six to eight weeks with you throughout the year. You can see the impact that you have on them and their coaches and how you keep this as development wheel turning around, not just obviously on court but with the mental skills aspect and how you bridge all these together. Um, for the overall development with which it is all works together. And so, um, you know, thank you for everything you do. And then I learn, you know, I spent a lot of time with you. I learned a lot from you every single day and, and, uh, you're one of the best out there, so thank you John. I appreciate you coming on.

30:47

L: Thanks man. Appreciate it. Great job.
J: Alrighty, thanks for joining today's episode of compete like a champion. Uh, for more information, you can go to www.playerdevelopment.usta.com a lot of great resources on there, a lot of good information. And if there's any specific information that you would like, you can always reach out to us at our contact details. We'll see you next time.