

Podcast Skill Drill Excuses (2023-06-01 09:54 GMT-4)

- Transcript

Attendees

Johnny Parkes, Larry Lauer

Transcript

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Johnny Parkes: Welcome to compete like a champion. You're here with Dr. Larry Lauer, Director of Mental Performance and coach, Johnny Parkes with USDA Player Development. Today, we got a mental skills drill for you. We're going to talk about making excuses and how to stop making excuses. And to do this we got a couple drills for you that we're going to talk through. So Larry we've been done episodes on making excuses and we thought we'd put a couple drills in there that actually emphasize how to potentially bring awareness more to actually making the excuses and how to try and stop that behavior from happening in order to be a bit more positive. Proactive forward thinking, more planning going on, as opposed to the excuse making.

Larry Lauer: Yeah, we did talk about excuses. We talked about how everybody makes them. Some excuses benefit people, but a lot don't and typically, when you're in a performing situation, that usually doesn't help you, you got to be real with yourself, right? And, and make really good decisions and your excuses, keep you from doing that. So, in training, I think what you gotta do is help players as you mentioned, be aware of when they're making excuses and what they are. And these games that we're going to talk about the conditions that you put in create some excuses cause some of that to happen. And so that's a great opportunity for a coach and player to talk about specifically how they're perceiving these things and how they might want to counter them or change them.

Johnny Parkes: Yeah, absolutely. So the first drill, we're gonna give the listeners here is, I think this is more of a basic level introduction type drill. And I remember doing this, when I was a kid and it was again at that point when we were doing it, we thought it was just a bit of fun but maybe the coach had a purpose. I'm sure they did. But it's called the racket switch drill. So this can be done in a few different ways. As let's say, you're playing points to 10 me and you. Larry is playing with each other and we switch rackets, right? It's just assuming that we have different rackets. We switch rackets and we have to try and win with the other person's racket or opponent's racket. Now we're both in the same situation. We don't have our racket. We don't have our same strings, you know? And so this is a battle of who can win without their specific rackets and strings and tension and all of that. So, you're both in the same situation, it's a bit of novelty, it's a bit of fun. The other did you, I guess a lot of the time you don't want to be spending too much time with another person's racquet if you're not used to it. If it's a little bit heavier, a little bit lighter than you used to. So a short game like that to emphasize it is enough.

Larry Lauer: Like a tiebreak or what do you think?

Johnny Parkes: Like a tiebreaker. Yeah, exactly. It could be without serve, right? So you don't have the overhead involved. It's for the overhead motion involved. So you just keep it ground strokes and have them battling out. Another way you can do this is, wait for it on one side. So one person plays with their racket and the opponent plays with a different racket that's not theirs. So they've got to figure out how to try and win or to get as many points as they can with a racket that they are not used to playing with and they're playing an opponent who has their own racket and their own strings. So this works two ways: one is that person ends up who doesn't have their racket. If that person ends up winning, imagine the confidence that that gives them that they're beating a person who's playing with their own racket in their own more ideal conditions. So then you can do that both ways, right? Play a game where one person has their own racket and then switch, switch the roles. Yeah.

Larry Lauer: Yeah, I like that. I think you know, those games one is a kind of tap on that perception of unfairness. Right. And then unfairness creates frustration and anger which can then lead to excuse making as you're not getting a result, you don't feel control over what's happening. So, what you have to do then is, you're sort of making the game, creating certain adversities. For them, then it's, it's got to be like, okay? How do I work through my mind? Right, How do I deal with this? You know the first game we're both in where you switch rackets with your opponents like well the other person's dealing with it too, right? So then maybe that's the way you get through that. But the second one, That's a tough one, right? Because that's where one player is, is using his or her normal racquet, and the other person, isn't that really gets the feeling unfair, in the player's mind, so they're really going to have to do some mental work. Use their routines to connect with what they can control, right? Identify an excel. I can't do this. I have no chance. Hold on, wait a second. What can you do about this, right? How can you play?

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Larry Lauer: That's gonna be important. I think when you, when you do those games, have a conversation before you start, it is imperative because already the excuses will start to happen as you lay out the game.

Johnny Parkes: Yeah, yeah, exactly. So we'll move on to the second one here so I don't know the exact name because I just thought in my head. Now it's called Dig yourself out of a hole. So with as few different versions of this, so first of all, you set the environment. Are we going to play a tiebreaker? Are we gonna play? Normal game, Scoring 15 Love, 30 Love. Set the tone there first. So what we'll do here is what we're focusing on, Excuse making, what obviously, what When excuse making comes forward, it can be looked at from if we're looking at somebody making excuses. It's a negative reaction often to losing a point. It's

Johnny Parkes: It's the feeling that, you know, nothing's going their way and they're feeling sorry for themselves blah. So when I see that, all I think about is how you're giving your opponent confidence, right? If I see an opponent doing that, my opponent doing that, I think all that's going to do is give me confidence to want to try and keep making them suffer, and keep working them and keep keep trying to dig them into a hole, you know, but then if you're the one making excuses, you've got to figure out how to stop that behavior because otherwise you're going to keep going down that hole. So you got to dig yourself out of it. So a few different ways here are we talk about in every negative reaction.

Johnny Parkes: So, if you lose the point and then you pull out an extra reaction, you lose another point, right? You give your opponent, you give your opponent another point there, right? So what you're doing is, you're giving another point away from the reaction. So you've lost the point and then you're giving another point away because you're giving your opponent confidence. So you put yourself more in a hole from that

negative reaction or another way you can do it is in game scenario, is if you pull a negative reaction, your opponent gets the after you lose a point your opponent gets the point but you go back to zero in the game. All right. So then it's now you're really in a hole that you have to dig yourself out of from that negative reaction. So, those are a couple different ways that we can use. I guess it's you know again I it's not necessarily punishment although it kind of is but it's more, you're giving your opponent confidence with your negative reactions and excuse making. So the only way to stop it is to get a handle on it and have awareness of it. Oh, I just pulled a negative reaction, and made an excuse then. My opponent gets the point, and if I keep doing this, then I'm gonna lose pretty quickly because I'm just gonna keep giving points away, you know? So

Larry Lauer: I like these games, I play them with some players, junior players and my experience has been even with highly emotional players who want to win badly and practice. They will get the negative reactions under control typically because they don't want to lose the game. So they'll control themselves and then that's a talking point, right? Like well, okay, you were able to control yourself. Even when you missed, So, what does that tell you? It's possible. You don't have to react after a mistake. And in fact what you're hoping for is that he actually finds some good tennis, right? As they're playing, like, look at what that does for your tennis when you're not reacting off your mistakes. Now, one of the things as we talk about this is that you want to make sure the players still take the game somewhat seriously or what I mean is they compete and they try to win. So I would keep an eye on that because part of the excuse making the out is well. It was just a weird game or I didn't really treat it with any kind of seriousness and so you want to look out for that. And if your players aren't going to keep that level of competitiveness. Competitiveness up. When? You're entering these conditions or constraints and then you know reinforcements and punishments then you might have to then you know put something on the line for you know for who wins. Maybe they get something if they win the game you know they get to pick the next drill, the next game, or they get to decide to do drills in the next practice, right? So you try to emphasize like you're getting something. And again, the coaches out, there will have a lot better ideas on that than I do. I trust in their creativity, but that's the point is you can't lose the integrity of wanting to compete, just because you're trying not to be negative and that's something to look out for.

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Johnny Parkes: yeah, and I think sometimes giving this longevity, helps well, not help. But giving this longevity will allow the potential of the challenge of managing the negative emotions of excuse making to come to the surface. Because I think anyone can do something in the short term because it's got a bit of novelty. But I think...

Larry Lauer: Yeah.

Johnny Parkes: if you extend this out to playing a full set or a two out of three with these conditions at some point, it's going to reveal itself and challenge the player in those moments, right? So I think as well sometimes, longevity is don't be afraid to include something like this in a practice match like a long like a two out of three practice match.. because then you will the play will for sure for certain take it more seriously as they get into the you know deep into a first set that they really want to win. And then all of a sudden, those emotions start coming forward a bit more because there's a bit more pressure to win it, you know, so I think longevity is a good one.

Larry Lauer: Listen. Excellent point, JP. Glad you brought that up. I'm really sharp because I've seen that, I've experienced that on the court working with players that if you play a full set, you play a match and you

do this, it takes on a level of seriousness that maybe you won't get in a small game sometimes. So you may need to do that, you may want to do that. I think the other thing that you get is that people stop losing they stop focusing on the fact that they don't want to be negative and reacting as they get into the match. And so then they they're natural self-starts to come out and that's where as a coach then working through with them. Okay. What are you think in here? This game is so unfair and I hate it. Hold on Let's talk about that because that's the teachable moment right now we can get after their excuses, seems to me like you're kind of, you know, making excuses here. And when really what you need to do is engage

Larry Lauer: And give better effort, run for every ball you know to recover after going out wide or...

Johnny Parkes: Yeah.

Larry Lauer: whatever it is, it's important, right? This gives the coach a chance to understand what the player's thinking and start to help them counter that. Now as you get into the game, what you would hope is that they're actually countering those excuses for themselves and again you want to know what's going on. So you might ask, Hey, what are you thinking here? Because you're seeing a good effort after, you know, making a lot of mistakes and it's like, Look, I know that getting negative doesn't help me. And obviously in this game, I lose an extra points. So what I need to do is calm down, breathe. Think about how I want to play the next point and get myself ready. Boom.

Larry Lauer: Now, you have learning, now you have change, right? That you can then capitalize on because they said it to you, they're doing it, you want to reinforce that in the moment and then you want to reinforce it later again and get them to journal it, visualize it. So it starts to stick right? You want to see it the next day, maybe you come back and play the same game the next day or maybe you don't, but you ask for the same expectations you're playing. I don't want to see those negative reactions. I want to see you go to your routines, but it gives the coach an opportunity to really understand what's going on in the players head and how to help them counter that.

Johnny Parkes: Yeah. Yeah, absolutely, absolutely. Well, this is interesting. I'll be interested to know some of the games out there that the coaches are applying in that deal with negative emotions and excuses and how they handle that. It's obviously, one of the biggest components, especially see what junior tennis, is this whole ability to manage the emotions and manage excuses. Not, you know, not continually to make excuses for losing but how to show a bit of ownership to it?

Johnny Parkes: So yeah, they'll be really interested to hear from others regarding this topic. But so yeah. But with regards the games we just emphasized today like Go out there and give them a go see what you think. I think probably the racket switch. Drill is one that's maybe done. You know, frequently or maybe your kids come to practice with not enough rackets strong up and they break a string and they have to use a practice partner's racket, and they get to experience it that way too. But anyway, give these a try and you can always reach out to me and Dr. Larry over Twitter, we'd love to engage in what you're thinking is with regards to these drills. But Larry any final parting thoughts before we shut it down.

Larry Lauer: No, I don't think so other than just, you know, Yeah. If you direct message us, or both of us, be great to hear from the coaches. Even what they're thinking about the drills that we've shared over the last, however, many months or year are using some of these games and drills. How are you adapting them? How are they working? I would love to hear people's thoughts on that because again, these things are very creative. So you and I come up with things but There's probably a different or even better version out there than what we're coming up with it. Someone has come up with, right? And so we don't think that

there's just one way to do this and that's the way that we're sharing on these podcasts so we'd love to hear some of those examples from you.

Meeting ended after 00:16:10 🖐️