



TENNIS KIDS

ACTIVS



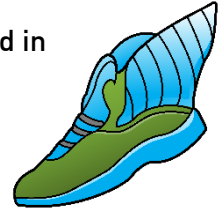
CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Five Core Activities & Core Athletic Categories
3. Running Activ5
4. Activity Development
5. Games Structure
6. Athletic Development Models
7. Tennis Demands
8. Athletic Development Essentials
9. Events and Training Games
10. Notes



Introduction

Activ5 has been designed as a semi-annual competition of athletic skills. Played in teams it is designed to give extra purpose to the athletic development part of a tennis program. To aid motivation and help kids to focus Activ5 is based on five events and played in a festival style format, but more than this it is based on essential skills that players need to develop through NTF Tennis Kids.



This manual has been designed as a coach's companion, providing you with all the information that you need to make practice and prepare.

You will find details of the five events at the back of this guide along with training cards with other activities to help your players train. A video resource is also in development to show both the events and ideas for practice.



FIVE CORE ACTIVITIES

The five games have been devised to combine many different physical skills. They are both focussed and dynamic in nature and include both races and adversarial team games. Behind each game is a set of training skills that coaches can use to prepare their players ensuring the development of an all round athlete, ready and capable of reaching their potential.

1. Egg Race – Team race involving speed and balance
2. Big Ball Match – Lots of tennis style rotation, working with a partner
3. Plank Throw – Precision throwing, strength and teamwork
4. Reaction Wall – Speed of reaction and focus are key here
5. Team Handball – A fast paced dynamic team game

Core Movement Categories

The games were developed with the following framework in mind, based in part on general sports development of balance, coordination and agility but also cognisant of the sport specific needs of tennis.

- Locomotion
 - Running Style
 - Lateral movement
- Balance
 - Hop
 - Jump (Take Off)
 - Jump (Land)
- Midline Crossings
 - Body Rotation
 - Left Right Coordination
- Object Control
 - Throw
 - Catch
- Posture / Strength
 - Squat
 - Lunge
 - Plank /Crawl



RUNNING ACTIVS

	GOM2 1	GOM2 2	GOM2 3	GOM2 4	GOM2 5
Rnd 1	3 vs 5	2 vs 4	6 vs 1		
Rnd 2			3 vs 5	1 vs 2	4 vs 6
Rnd 3	6 vs 2	1 vs 3		4 vs 5	
Rnd 4	1 vs 4	5 vs 6			2 vs 3
Rnd 5			2 vs 4	3 vs 6	1 vs 5

The games are based on a rotation for 6 teams across 5 events. On each of the 5 rounds players compete against a different team over a different event. Each round is allocated 15 minutes.

- 0:00 Introduction & Group Warm Up
- 0:10 Start first event
- 0:20 Finish first event and move to next event
- 0:25 Start second event
- 0:35 Finish second event and move to next
- 0:40 Start third event
- 0:50 Finish third event and move to water break and on to fourth event
- 1:00 Start Fourth event
- 1:10 Finish Fourth event and move to fifth event
- 1:15 Start Fifth event
- 1: 25 Finish Fifth event
- 1:30 Awards Ceremony
- 1: 45 Finish



Activity Development

NTF Tennis Kids considers athletic development paramount in the development of the athlete and as such uses some unique concepts with young players.

These include



Play - Train - Play

We understand that context is vital in the motivation of young players. Their timeframes are much shorter and they are less likely to work to long term goals or see the relevance of an exercise in the long term development of their tennis. As such all activities are structured with a game (play) element and then closed or semi closed skill practice (train). These two elements should be delivered in a short timeframe and be clearly linked. In the mind of the child the reason that they train is to get ready to play the game.

Gamification

As with all elements of the NTF Tennis Kids program the games use key principles that have been taken from computer game design. As such the game itself should have the following:

- A clearly outlined Mission
- Points scoring or collecting
- Multiple levels to show progress
- The chance to reset the game and start again

Through these elements the game will be motivational and meets modern child learning styles.

Game Structure

We use six types of games that are outlined in more detail later in this resource.

These include

- Battle – two players compete and can directly affect the outcome of the opponent
- Olympian – the aim is to improve your personal best
- Racer – Players compete but don't influence the performance of the opponent
- Acrobat – who can develop the most creative way to perform the skill then challenge the rest of the class to do it
- Explorer – players must solve a problem through the game
- Buddy – players must aid a partner to solve a problem or perform a skill

The games are not necessarily mutually exclusive and some games will have elements of two or three of the six game structures. For example a game could be Buddy Olympian.



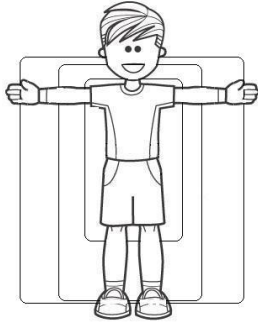
Game Structure

Preferred Way to Play	Motivation	Strategies
Warrior	...Likes to battle against an opponent	Use training blocks followed by competitive blocks Ensure players are clear on context
Buddies	...Likes to work with a team mate to achieve the result	Partners collaborate on cooperative drills Compete and share solutions with partner who then competes against prev opponent
Olympion	...Like to beat previous records. Enjoys improvement through measurable tasks	Use a series of cooperative to competitive practices over 3 – 4 stages Core drills over the term
Explorer	...Likes to solve problems and work things out	Define situations and missions and maintain frequent discussions
Racer	... Likes to achieve tasks but beat others	Use training blocks followed by competitive blocks Be aware technique may suffer
Acrobat	... Likes to be very creative and find new ways to do things	Allow players to be involved in making decisions and make choices Post clear objectives to stay on track or control environment



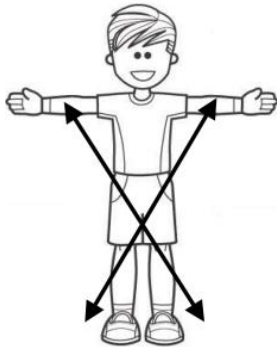
Athletic Development Models

At NTF Tennis Kids we use the following models based on growth and development for young players.



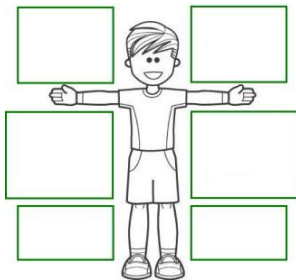
Inside Out (Proximodistal)

The development of the CNS means that players are likely to gain control of movements and coordinate using the bigger muscles first and then gradually recruiting the smaller ones. With very young children this can be seen with their lack of dexterity and not using the full range of motion within the ankle when running. It is also seen in catching and throwing very clearly.



X Man (Contralateral and Bi Lateral Coordination)

Human being are designed to function using both sides of their body and as such walking will involve moving the right leg with left arm etc. In developing a model to help develop coordination we consider each limb as a point and how we can get it to work with any of the other points. So for example a player may be asked to run and stop at a cone but could do this with the left or right foot and touch the cones with the left or right hand. All movements can provide a means of developing coordinative skills in an open way when the x is considered.



Impact Zones

In developing the tennis player we should also consider the impact zones that are required in the game. These will develop though red, orange and green but ensuring that players can maintain good posture and balance, and rotate and apply force in these zones is also important. More on this area is included on the next page.

Open Skill Development

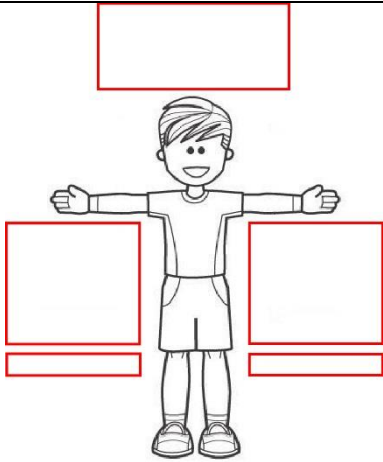
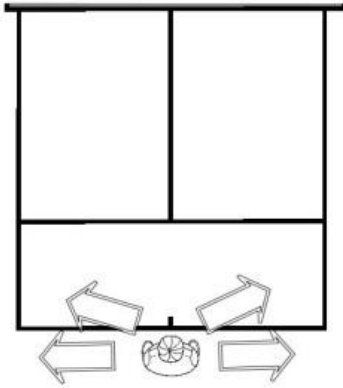
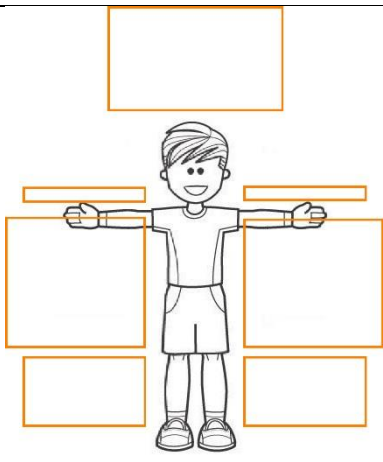
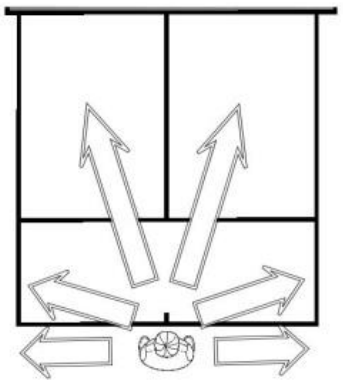
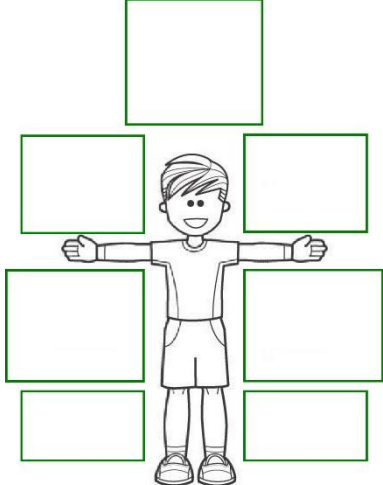
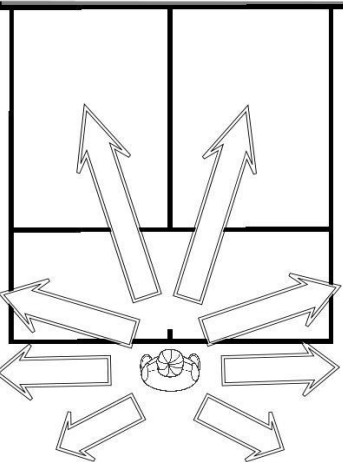
It is essential that all athletic development is also looked upon as an essential part of skill development. Through the program the players should develop skills that will aid their technical development on court in an open skilled sport. As such we must consider that movements must be opened rather than being only presented in a closed and objectives / measureable way.

The model below is therefore helpful in considering how activities are progressed.

Balance	➡	Coordination	➡	Agility
Static		Simple		Predictive
↓		↓		↓
Dynamic		Complex		Adaptive / Reactive



Tennis Demands - Red, Orange and Green

Impact Zones		Movement Patterns
Red		
	<p>Deceleration Posture Rotation around single axis Lateral Movement Forwards Movement</p>	
Orange		
	<p>Increased Speed Dynamic balance Balance on different stances Rotation includes bending Wider lateral / diagonal Dynamic movement forwards Simple backwards movement</p>	
Green		
	<p>Combining Rhythms Change of speed Separation of upper and lower body Whole body coordination ground up Strength through COG Impact may be off the ground</p>	



Athletic Development Essentials

Development Considerations	Suggested Areas of Athletic Development
Aged 5 - 6	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can catch after bounce • Throw overarm / may need work on underarm • Balance on one foot and hop • Left or right dominance • Can learn striking • Has best friends • Understands basic rules • Seeks adult approval • More receptive to instruction / teaching (started formal education)! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posture and Rotation around simple axis • Movement sideways • Quick reactions • Balance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – emphasis on deceleration – Lower base, bend knees and widen stance • Bi-Laterality • Predictive Fundamentals – running, jumping, landing, throwing, catching • Basic Rhythm
Aged 7 - 9	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body proportions changing • Core strength creates better balance (still static) • Posture now important • Much improved FM Skills and Patterns • Longer attention span • Actively engages in Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posture and Rotation now includes bending • Movement forwards, dynamic sideways • Quick reactions and acceleration • Balance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – emphasis on dynamic balance – Off one foot, vary stances, dynamic recovery • Bi-Laterality, improved hand eye, overhead and non dominant • Adapting Fundamentals – running, jumping, landing, throwing, catching • Changing Rhythms
Aged 8 - 10	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved coordination and reaction time • Improved posture / control • Increase in body strength and hand dexterity • Includes ability to use complex coordination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Different body parts do different things at the same time – Road runner – More body parts in stroke • More Tennis Specific • Makes own choices more • Enjoys belonging to club or team • More emotional control • Can be strategic, tactical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posture and Rotation includes separation of upper and lower body • Movement dynamic and coordinated off the ground • Quick reactions to include anticipation • Balance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – emphasis on dynamic balance – Includes being off the ground • Complex coordination varying speed, patterns, upper & lower body • Adaptive Agility based Fundamentals – running, jumping, landing, throwing, catching • Combining Rhythms



EVENT ONE

Egg Race

Skills: Speed/ Agility / Midline crossing

Equipment Required: Six tall cones, 3 balls

Instructions

Players in teams of 3, sprint and move balls from cone to cone. Red players transfer between 4 cones in an x shape, Orange and Green players transfer between 6 cones in a star shape. The next player in the team must be tagged in a relay style.

- Balls must remain on the cones
- Balls must be picked up and put down with the specified hand
- Players must face forwards

Event is played over three rounds. Each team of six players splits into two teams and competes against one of the other teams in round one, against the other team in round two and then on a coin spin to decide which teams play against each other in the final round. Total 6 points can be won!

Red

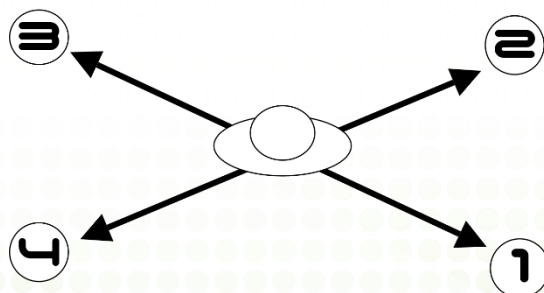


Balls must be moved one at a time in this order

From point one to three and two to four then back from three to one and four to three.

Player must

- Pick up and put down on cones 1 and 2 with left hand
- Pick up and put down on cones 3 and 4 with right hand



Orange & Green

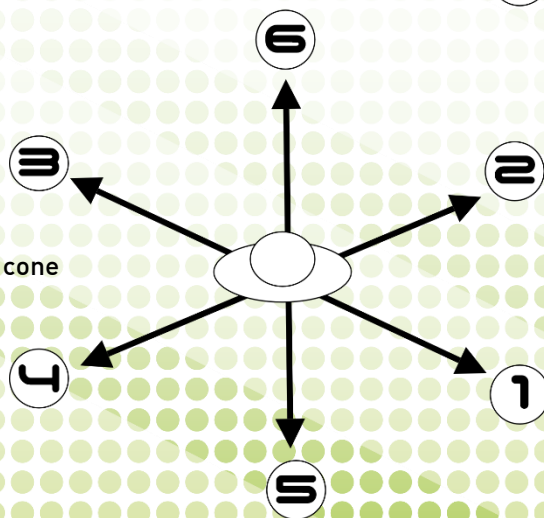
Balls must be moved one at a time in this order.

From one to three, two to four, five to six, then back from three to one, four to two, six to five.

Balls must be collected with the hand furthest away from the cone

Player must

- Pick up and put down on cones 1 and 2 with left hand
- Pick up and put down on cones 3 and 4 with right hand
- Pick up and put down on cones 5 and 6 with any hand





TRAINING CARD ONE



EVENT TWO

Big Ball Match

Skills: Midline crossing / Rotation / Throw

Equipment Required: Net, Mini Basketball or Soccer Ball

Instructions

Played on a red court over a 6m net. Players play tiebreaks to 7 points using usual scoring but with a mini basketball. The ball must be thrown two handed from the side in the manner of a groundstroke. Points are won and lost in the usual way for tennis. The ball must be started from behind the baseline for the start of each point but can land anywhere in the court (not only diagonally)



Red

Players play in pairs like table tennis doubles taking one shot each in a rotation. Players need to work together. Any player from the team can start the serve it does not need to be in turn like a doubles tiebreak. Ball must bounce before catching.



Orange

All rules as per red but players must do a two-handed high five with their partner on the follow through side only before switching. If they fail to do this or do it on the wrong side then they lose the point.



Green

Use a full-sized basketball at this stage. Play same rules as orange but this time the game can be played in two service boxes or over two red courts to increase the level of required movement.



TRAINING CARD TWO



EVENT THREE

Plank Throw

Skills: Strength / Throw

Equipment Required: Basket of Balls, 12 Cones, 10 throw down lines

Instructions

Players work in team of 6. 4 players create tunnel either in a plank position (orange and green) or ready position (red). The player one at the front starts by throwing a ball over the net at the cone target then picks up ball from the basket by the net and rolls it under the other players to player six at the back of the tunnel who runs to the front to throw at the target. All players in the line then shuffle back with player five now at the back waiting to receive the ball and player one now joining the plank tunnel in the former position of player two. Player 6. The game continues for 3 minutes or until the cones have all been hit. This event takes place over three rounds. Make sure all positions are marked using the throw down lines at the start of the game.



Red

Players 2 and 4 assume a ready position while 3 and 5 do the plank. (At this age we want to limit the time they are in the plank position). The game is as described above with players throwing from the at net to one target at the back of the red court (tramlines) with all 6 cones making one large target.



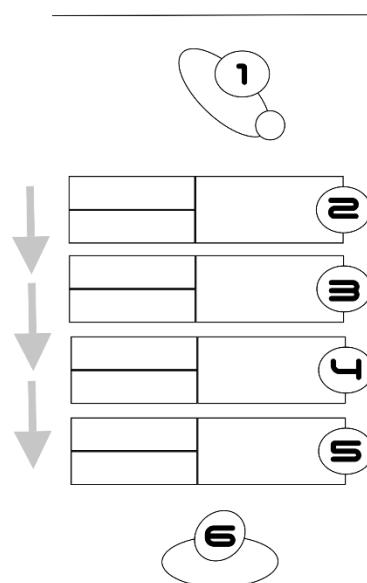
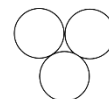
Orange

Description as per the description above. Players should throw from half way between net and service line to a six cone target on the orange baseline.



Green

As per orange but throw from the service line. Now two targets one of six cones and one of three cones. Six cone target on the orange baseline and three cone target 1m over the net. Encourage players to make a choice.





TRAINING CARD THREE



EVENT FOUR

Reaction Wall

Skills: Midline crossing / Reactions / Bilaterality

Equipment Required: Fit Light

Instructions

Every players competes for their team on the fit light wall. Play in pairs each team for one minute to see how fast they can put the lights out. Add the score for the three pairs of players together to get a team score.



Red

Position the lights relative to the impact zones between shoulder height and knee height. Players should have to move no more than 4 steps so the distance between the furthest two should be no more than two metres



Orange

Position the lights relative to impact zones between shoulder height and the ground. Include one on each side below knee height. Place maximum of three metres apart.



Green

Position the lights relative to impact zones between head height and the ground. Include on each side above the shoulder. Place maximum of three metres apart.



TRAINING CARD FOUR



EVENT FIVE

Team Handball

Skills: General Athletic Skills

Equipment Required: Net, Mini Basketball or Soccer Ball

Instructions

This is a team game played across the court width. Set up a goal at each side of the court, 1m x 1m square, which is a dedicated area where the ball can be placed. The aim of the game is to pass the tennis ball among your team, keeping possession and working up the field in order to score a point. Each team scores by placing the ball in their opponent's goal.

Players must pass the ball in a way specified (see rules below for Red, Orange, Green). Before passing to a team mate you must touch the ball on the ground—then pass. Once the player receives the ball they cannot run, they are frozen and then must pass to a team mate. The opposing team can only intercept between passes—they cannot grab the ball out of players hands. If the ball goes out of court the ball goes to the opposing team.



Red

Players can pass in any way that they wish using any kind of throw including bouncing the ball to the opponent.



Orange

Players can pass in any way that they wish but the ball must not touch the ground and they have only 5 seconds in which to pass



Green

Players must pass only overarm but can also bounce the ball to their team mates also. They have only 5 seconds in which to pass



TRAINING CARD FIVE



Notes and Ideas

Balance

Knee Wrestles

Cross the River

Speed

Spider Tag Relay Drill

Cone Code Combinations

Fit Light Reaction Wall

Throw

Team Plank and Target Throw

Move the Blob

Midline Rotations

Big Ball Tennis Match

Strength

Press Up Tennis

Crab Football

General

Handball

