



The
Ultimate Guide to
**WEIGHT
TRAINING**
for
TENNIS

fourth edition



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Part I



**Tennis
Specific
Training**

*With Weight Training, Knowledge is the
Key to Success*

INTRODUCTION

Tennis is a sport where your overall level of strength and fitness is crucial to performing at the best of your abilities. The sport requires strength, power, speed, quickness, agility, flexibility, balance, muscular endurance, and stamina— each of which can be enhanced through a proper tennis-specific weight-training program. This book focuses on how to develop your body in every area that is most important to tennis. It also provides you with daily programs designed for the off-season, preseason, and in-season to maximize your playing potential.

There are two requirements needed to be a good tennis player: tennis-specific skills and proper conditioning. An important note must be made clear. Weight training will not directly improve your tennis skills. However, it will make your entire body stronger and more powerful, which will give you greater racquet and foot speed. It will also decrease your vulnerability to injury and increase your muscular endurance. All of these factors will increase your tennis playing potential. If you train properly for tennis, you will experience all of these benefits without sacrificing your technique on the court. In fact, proper weight training can enhance your technique by improving your flexibility and increasing your range of motion. This book not only contains a year-round tennis-specific training program, but also includes over 50 additional 4-week programs so you can find exactly what you need.

Improper Training Training improperly increases the risk of an injury occurring, and it can also set you further away from your goals. The goal of strength training for tennis is not to build stiff, bulky muscles; it is to improve your game by increasing your speed, agility, quickness, power, flexibility, muscular endurance, and

balance. You want to build your muscles and improve flexibility in areas that are important to improving your performance on the court.

Major Benefits from Weight Training Weight training for any sport provides you with two general benefits. It helps enhance your athletic performance and it helps reduce or prevent injury. Weight training also plays a major role in injury rehabilitation. Muscles that are well trained have been shown to recover faster from injuries, which will reduce chronic pain. Tennis is often an outdoor sport and players are at the mercy of Mother Nature, who can be very unpleasant in the spring. Unfortunately, cold and wet weather elevate the risk of many injuries, including sprains and pulled muscles. With stronger muscles supporting your bones, tendons, and ligaments, you will be much less injury prone in all aspects of your life.

Common Tennis Injuries The most common injuries experienced by tennis players are in the shoulder and elbow. These injuries negatively affect your swing, which makes it necessary to take injury-reducing precautions. Always stretch before lifting and playing, and weight train properly. The programs provided in this book are designed to train these and other areas of your body, minimizing your chances of getting injured. The programs strengthen both the internal and external rotators of your rotator cuffs to help maintain an injury-free shoulder. The programs also require performing both arm-extending (triceps) exercises and arm-contracting (biceps) exercises through their entire range of motion during the same training session, thus reducing the chances of elbow injuries by increasing both the strength and flexibility in your elbow joint.

Knee injuries and hamstring pulls are also very common among tennis players. They can occur in many activities, including stopping, starting, changing directions, running, jumping, reaching, and diving. Similar to strengthening the elbow, training the muscles surrounding the knee is a good way to protect yourself from these injuries. Performing both leg-extending (thighs) and leg-contracting (hamstring) exercises on the same day through their entire range of motion both strengthens and increases the

flexibility in the knee and hamstring. Your hamstrings are responsible for many tennis movements such as leaping, sprinting, and changing directions so you must be sure to stretch them often.

Practice Makes Perfect While weight training for tennis, it is crucial to continue practicing your skills. Your neurotransmitters will need to adapt to your new-found strength so you can convert it into power on the court. As important as strength and power are, they are not as important as technique. You need to be continuously practicing your serves, ground strokes, backhands, and volleys throughout the off-season. It is best if you play tennis on the days you are not weight training, but if you choose to do both on the same day, you should weight train first so you are full of energy and able to get the best workout possible. In order to improve your skills you must be sure to practice, practice, practice throughout the off-season.

Quickness vs. Speed The programs provided in this book are designed to enhance both your speed and your quickness, placing more emphasis on quickness. During the course of a match, quickness and acceleration are far more important than overall speed. The longest runs made during the course of a match last no more than a second or two. Quickness and agility are extremely important in tennis. The most crucial aspect of tennis is your ability to cover the court. You need to be able to get to the ball in order to have a chance at hitting it. If you are unable to get to the ball, you will have no chance to win. In tennis you need extremely fast foot speed in order to move forward, backward, and laterally all over the court. The faster you are able to get to the ball, the more time you will have to prepare for your shot. You need to be able to get to balls hit in front of you, behind you, and on the opposite end of the court. By following the programs provided, you will increase your quickness and reduce you're the time it takes for you to get to the ball.

Medicine Ball Exercises Note to Coaches: Although the programs in this book do not include medicine ball exercises along with weight training, they should not be neglected. Medicine balls are effective strength training tools, and can be very effective