

## Essential Tennis Podcast #174

Welcome to the Essential Tennis podcast. If you love tennis and want to improve your game, this podcast is for you. Whether it's technique, strategy, equipment, or the mental game, tennis professional Ian Westermann is here to make you a better player. And now, here's Ian.

**Ian Westermann:** Hi and welcome to the Essential Tennis podcast, your place for free expert's tennis instruction that can truly help you improve your game. Today's episode of the podcast is brought to you by Tennis Express. Please check them out this week by going to [EssentialTennis.com/Express](http://EssentialTennis.com/Express).

Thank you very much for joining me on today's episode, and you may notice already that the audio quality or the sound of my voice is a little different. That's because I'm away from home. I'm away from my normal recording studio for the Essential Tennis podcast and didn't want to travel with all of my recording gear. I'm spending a little bit of time with my wife and child and our family, and so this episode and next week's episode of the podcast are going to be replays of previous shows that I thought were great and I think are worth listening to again. Or if you haven't taken the time to dig through the archives.

This is a show that I just want to highlight because I think it's a really good one. It's an interview with Andy Zodin, and we talk about the importance of doing cooperative tennis drills. Now because I'm not doing new episodes this week and next week, I've decided to start releasing some new video content as well. Definitely check out my YouTube channel to see those or go to [EssentialTennis.com/Video](http://EssentialTennis.com/Video).

Just yesterday I released a video about how to practice your serve for more confidence and better accuracy. Really good serve practice drill that you can watch me go through and do yourself, and I've also been releasing some really good videos with Steve Beck, a personal trainer, and myself showing you how you can get stronger to play better tennis. So look for a bunch of new videos this week and next week. And again, reply for today, reply for next week, and then I'll be back in front of my regular mic again the week after that for another new episode. So let's go ahead and get to today's interview. Sit back, relax, and get ready for some great tennis instruction.

My guest on today's episode of the Essential Tennis podcast is Andy Zodin and Andy is the host of In the Tennis zone, which is a tennis radio show in Colorado and you can also hear that as a podcast on the iTunes music store. Andy welcome back to the essential tennis podcast.

**Andy Zodin:** Thanks a lot Ian. It's great to be with you. I appreciate it.

**Ian Westermann:** To start off, why don't you tell people briefly about your show, and I know that the 3rd season is set to kick off soon on the 14th.

**Andy Zodin:** Yeah, we start on Valentine's Day and what we're trying to do Ian, we try to blend tennis at both the local level, from a junior and adult stand point. We pack lots of high profile guests over the course of the first few seasons, including Rob Laver and Billy King and Brad Gilbert and the Brian Brothers. All kinds of exciting guests. But we also try to make sure that we recognize some of the junior and adult players and as I say at the local level that work really hard to help us grow our sport and are worthy and deserving of that recognition, but don't always get it. So we try to do that.

**Ian Westermann:** Awesome. Well it's a great show, and I definitely recommend that my listeners go check it out. And I was just looking at it on iTunes. You have something like 200 episodes on iTunes which is awesome.

**Andy Zodin:** Well I think those are probably 200 different segments. We've actually done 64 shows. It's once a week for 32 week season, and I think they break those off into segments. For each 2 hour show, there will be 6 segments so it would be 3 per hour. And we try to give each segment 15-20 minutes so that we're able to get into some good detail with the topics but not go on and on with it. So I think we found a pretty nice plan.

**Ian Westermann:** Cool, let's go ahead and get started with today's topic and I'd like to thank John M. in Texas who suggested this topic. I posted on the forums at EssentialTennis.com and asked for topic suggestions for a show with you and by the way, Andy and myself have previously done an episode on the podcast, and it was #88. I suggest you guys go check it out. It was a good discussion about using modern techniques that you guys often see the professional players and using and whether or not they are applicable to the amateur game. So it was a good discussion and today's is going to be as well.

Here is John's question and topic that he wanted us to talk about. How about elaborating on a topic you discussed in the last podcast with Andy, cooperative tennis. Why is it important? What are the benefits? How can a re player incorporate cooperative tennis into their practice routines. Can you provide examples of specific of cooperative drills for ground strokes, volleys etc? I know you stressed cooperative drilling in the ET clinic in Palm Springs. And John was with me in Palm Springs for the last clinic that I did, and we did a lot of cooperative hitting. And it's something that I believe in a great deal and I believe that the average player is not doing it enough. I think the average player goes out onto the practice courts and hits a few practice balls without any purpose and then plays a couple of sets or baseline games.

So Andy, what's your take on this, about cooperative hitting and the recreational or club level player?

**Andy Zodin:** Well, I think it's a great question Ian. It's something that I spend a tremendous amount of time and if some of the students that I work with on a regular basis heard that question, and I was going to be the one asked to answer it, they would probably have to laugh at how much I stress that. And I think my main point to really get to the bottom line of it all, is that I believe that the most productive practice sessions that you are going to have are the ones that involve great rhythm in your rallies.

For instance, as you say you go out and hit balls without purpose, I don't think that you are really building a foundation of a game that is going to hold up under pressure. I think that people come out onto the drill court specifically, and they have no pressure what so ever. They can just kind of go for what they want and not have any consequence to whether the ball goes on or out. And it's good to be able to work on aggressive tactics as well but I think we forsake the importance of the rhythm in the rallies.

If you go to the US Open and you go back to the practice courts-- I remember I used to watch Andre Agassi and Brad Gilbert hitting, and you'd see Brad at the net and Andre hitting ground strokes. It was going back and forth, the exact same shot. There was nothing aggressive, obviously. Andre was hitting the ball but it was a very nice rhythm. If you watched Muhammad Ali, working out in the gym, you'd see him hitting the speed bag, well he isn't going to go into the ring and just beat on somebody's forehead like you would a speed-back.

But he was working on the rhythm and the speed of his hands in a way that wasn't necessarily what he would be doing competitively. People said to me we don't do this in a match and I say football players don't run through tires in a game but they do it as they prepare to become better football players and work on the skills that make them a better player. I look at your asking players to do as the foundation of their game and if you want to build a good foundation to your house, you got to pour a nice 3 foot of concrete slab. You can't just go 2 inches then go okay, let's build the house.

That's the way your game operates. If you don't have the type of game that's going to hold up under pressure- you know one of the best compliment I ever got as a player was when I was hitting with Tommy Ho, and he was a great tour player, and I could never stay on the singles court with Tommy. But I could go out and work with him and at least hit enough balls back to make it a good session for him. And I used to apologize and tell him I can't stay on the court with you in singles, and he would say 'well, you are solid and the ball comes back pretty much the same way every time.' And I took that as a huge compliment from a guy like that.

I've always taken a lot of pride in that and I think that players hold up over a period of time if they go out there and they work on the rhythm drills that make them consistent and that make them steady and they gain the confidence more and more as that becomes part of their game.

**Ian Westermann:** You said a lot of great stuff in there and let's go and start to break this down a little bit. The first thing I'd like to talk about is a very common excuse or complaint that I get from my students when trying to implement drills like this that are cooperative and steady. I like that you use the word rhythm to describe these drills but often times, I hear the complaint 'why am I practicing hitting back to somebody? This doesn't make any sense. What happens when I go into a match and I've been practicing all this type hitting to a person. I'm just going to do that in a match then, aren't I?' What's your response to that? And you've kind of answered it a little bit, and I like the analogies you gave about football players and boxers doing things that aren't necessarily what you do during competition but they just help to lay a groundwork and maybe I just answered the question. Sorry.

**Andy Zodin:** Actually, if you want to have a complete practice regiment, you have to go out and do the things that we're talking about right now Ian. You have got to go out and have those drills where you've got 2 volleyers at the net and two ground strokers at the baseline, and maybe you're having the volleyers track the ball a little bit and move side-to-side and stay in the formation. And their goal is to not let anything through-- they aren't trying to attack the net, they are trying to defend the net. When you watch the Ryan brothers play doubles, you want 2 guys moving seamlessly together, covering court to where it is almost like two rotating soccer goalies because every ball that is struck, that comes to them, is not necessarily going to put them in position to do something aggressive with that ball. Sometimes it is just a matter of being a crisp, solid volleyer and making the ground strokers hit 4 or 5 or 6 balls.

A lot of times the players that you work with are going to go out and play against an opponent that if you give that person enough rope with which to hang themselves, inevitably they will. But you can't just go to that game if you haven't practiced it. You can't flip the switch and say 'well normally, I play really aggressively and that is all I ever do, but these guys are overly aggressive and if we can just play steady, then we can get them to make a bunch of errors-- let's just flip the switch even though we haven't practiced doing that, it's not going to happen.

So what you have to do, is you have to go out and practice the drills where you go OK, I'm going to make sure that today when I play the net, I'm going to be the most crisp, solid, error-free volleyer that I can be and that's going to be my strategy with which to

win. Now that's not your entire strategy and then you have to go out and you have to apply what you are using in a competitive setting. So if the player's that you are working with are only coming out onto your court and onto the drill court to try to prepare for match play, they are leaving a lot on the table. Because if they aren't going and setting up matches with their friends, and going out and playing practice sets, then going ahead and being a little bit more aggressive and using competitive tactics, then I think that they are not getting the whole picture of what it takes to become a complete player.

But if all that you are worried about is every time you are on the tennis court, hitting the ball by somebody, I think you are missing a lot of what the essence of the sport is, which is just that feeling of just a beautiful long rally-- guy goes out and hits with his wife in on the park on a Sunday etc. They are playing tennis... They aren't playing against each other, they are practicing together and there is sort of a beautiful simplicity to that, that I think a lot of people miss out on. If they are only on the tennis court to make a blood and guts affair, I think they miss a lot of what the essence of the sport has to offer in terms of a very peaceful game and something that you can go out and get some nice exercise with and have it be something that's not necessarily all stressed out and turning into knots.

Learning how to relax and just be that steady player... And you watch some of these pros that you go to locally and you see just the beauty and the ease with which they'll hit nice drop shots, a nice angle volley or a nice lob etc. You see Federer do that even at the highest level and there is a tremendous artistry to that and when you learn how to play that game, it's a lot of fun to play and it's also very effective.

**Ian Westermann:** I like how you describe that a lot. You said there is a beautiful simplicity to watching two players who are able to do this, and are able to control the ball back and forth. And this is the draw for your average player, or even player's like me or yourself who didn't make it as a professional player-- who didn't make it to the top ranks-- that's the draw to going and watching professional players. And you talked about going back and watching the practice courts and yeah, there is something beautiful about it.

Seeing two players who are just master of controlling the ball and keeping it in play. And it might seem boring to the average player, and especially if they've only been playing for a short period of time, they perhaps just picked it up a year or two ago. They are watching tennis on TV and seeing all these big flashy shots, it might seem boring to a lot of players to walk out onto the tennis court themselves and just try to be steady and consistent. But something that I try to remind my students of, is just the stats in your average tennis match show that most points end with an unforced error.

This is really across the board-- there are professional matches where there is more winners than unforced errors, but even at the professional level, often times there is more mistakes for both players than there are winning shots or winners that are hit. And then when you go and you look at your amateur or club player, certainly we can't expect them to hit more winners than unforced errors. So, I think a lot of times it becomes managing errors and what better way to practice that than to have some kind of focus and try to build a rhythm, like you were talking about Andy.

Anyways, I like to point back to the stats to kind of show what players should be spending most of their time on. Does that make sense?

**Andy Zodin:** Absolutely. I was going to say, you use the word error-management and that was going to be my next point. If you talk to the greatest golfers in the world, they all talk about at one point or another in respect to their performance golf tournaments, golf course management. And I think tennis players have to have that same mindset with respect to what they are going out and doing. And you're right, every player that comes out and tries to play the sport, can't necessarily emulate what the top players in the world are doing. No offense to anybody listening, but you just aren't athletic enough to do what Roger Federer is doing, or what Andy Murray or Nadal is doing. This is a level of athlete that is almost super-human.

And so, when I was growing up, the average to slightly above average athlete could try to emulate what the top players were doing. Whether it was Jimmy Connors or [inaudible], those strokes gave a lot of margin for error the average to slightly above average athlete to be able to emulate and try to play [inaudible], a largely lesser version of those players but nowadays, you can't just take a kid who is trying to get onto his high school team and say 'OK, before you go in to those tryouts, I'm going to teach you the [inaudible] forehand. Let's just face it, it's not going to happen that soon. You are going to have some kids that are going to come out and with the technology that we've got, they are going to watch some TV and be able to emulate some of that stuff and if you see that the kid can do it, you certainly can embrace that and give the kid the opportunity to play to the highest level.

So for every player to come out on the floor and to think that they are going to throw out these weapons on the court that we watched at the Australian Open recently, I think people are kidding themselves. What they should be thinking about, is how can I take today's technology and the brilliance of what Babalola, Prince, Head and all these racket companies have done putting into these frames, and then try to play that steady or maybe old fashion game and play it at a higher level. I think they are going to have much more success with that and I think in large part, probably much more injury free as well.

**Ian Westermann:** I agree. I've got 2 more questions for you. After those, I'd like to go back and forth and give a couple-- John asked for some drills, some cooperative drills. So I'd like to talk about that for a couple of minutes as well. Just two more questions having to do with the essence of this idea of being cooperative. First of all, what would you say to the player who says to you, after suggesting cooperative tennis drills, what would you say to the person who says 'well, that's boring. I'm going to lose interest and that just doesn't sound like a lot of fun to cooperate back and forth.

**Andy Zodin:** Well what I say about 3 times a week and the answer is, there is a big difference in playing against each other and practicing together. Now, when I played in Austin at the University of Texas on the team out there, we'd go out and we would hit cross court fore and backhands and we would do hours of that and we did that in all the junior programs that I grew up in as well. And the fact of the matter is, is that if you don't like it, then maybe you are too ADD or maybe there is something that you're not getting about the importance of being able to hit the same shot over and over again. There is a certain monotony to some of what it takes to become a great player.

But I think that holds true for any sport. I think there are certain things that you have to be able to do that show how bad you want to be great because you are willing to put in the work, and have everything not necessarily 'Oh, this is so much fun. ' Well it's not always fun. Part of becoming great is putting in the work and work is not always fun and it doesn't always have to be boring. It doesn't always have to be monotonous but there are going to be elements.

If two people are standing inside the service line doing reflex volley drill, or 15-20 minutes at a time, there is a period of time at which you go, 'can we go onto something else?' And you know what? No, we can't yet. We need to make sure that we are working on our hand speed, that we are working on our hand eye coordination, that we are getting our footwork lined up with where this ball is and trying to get the proper separation between the body and the ball. All the little things that keep you balanced-- those aren't necessarily a ton of fun to work on, but if you want to be a great player, those are the things that you've just got to suck up and take it for the team.

So I tell them that on a regular basis and I just say, 'look, there are some things that you are going to enjoy from this later on and it's called winning. It's a lot more fun to win than to lose and I'm not one of those 'winning is everything'. To me, what I look for is the enjoyment of the game. If you go out and you play well, and you've made your opponents do what they had to do to beat you and you come off the court and you lost 7-5, 6-4 but you made them play and you didn't beat yourself, you are going to gain a certain level of enjoyment from that. But I think that if you only make it about having fun, every time you are on the court, you are missing out on a lot of what it takes to become a player that can perform at a pretty consistent level every time out.

And I think some of these drills, you just have to say if you want to be good or not. You can't necessarily just give into the fact that a person didn't enjoy every single 5 minute increment of their practice routine and making them realize that there is-- getting back to boxing, when those boxers go out and do that road-rock and they are running miles at a time with that car right behind them, you think they are having fun doing that? - But it's a hell of a lot more fun to laugh and be able to go into the later rounds of a fight and not just keel over because you put in the work. I just have to make the analogy that it's a lot of fun later if you do the work now.

**Ian Westermann:** Really good answer Andy, great stuff. I want to ask you one more question before we talk about some drills, and what I'd like to ask you next is what you feel is the right ratio and you're talking about having fun versus working hard and maybe we can compare those two-- cooperative versus competitive drill situations, maybe not all the time. It depends on your personality etc. But how would you split up the time spent between each-- for our listeners out there, who are club level players, you are recreational level players, how would you recommend that these types of players split up their time between the hard work and the repetition and the cooperation, and having fun? More playing out points? Doing more competitive stuff? What do you think?

**Andy Zodin:** Well, I think a lot of it has to do with the particular group that you are dealing with and in my case, it has to do with the fact that I'm a guy that is at high altitude-- remember, I'm in Denver, Colorado where your grandmother can hit the ball hard here. It's not a matter of generating pace at high altitude, it's a matter of accommodating pace. So for where I am, it's probably a higher percentage of time spent with the cooperative type drills because it sort of brings people back down to where they worry more about that pace accommodation than generating pace, then those are the people whose performance graphs end up being a little bit more of a steady line from match to match, as opposed to, 'well I played an indoor match and there were no elements to compete with and I played great, but next week I played outdoors and it was windy, and I couldn't see in the sun, but I still tried to play real aggressively and I couldn't hit the broad side of a barn, and you played awful.

So I think here it's a matter of 50-50 with that. The other thing is, who are you dealing with? If I'm out there dealing, there is a group of ladies that I deal with on a weekly basis, they are competitive, 3.5, 4.0, senior players-- 55 or 60 years old. And nothing bores them, they go out there and they just want to play well and they are happy to do whatever it is but then later on in the afternoon, I have a group of junior kids coming out and you know those are the ones that want to play.



So we'll make them do the work, and they'll do the rhythm drills, and maybe in an hour and a half, we'll spend the first 30-40 minutes making sure that we are sort of using our game like a transmission-- we'll start in 1st gear and shift into 2nd gear and make sure that we are hitting some good clean balls, do some nice cross court ground-stroke work. I like to do a tracking drill with 2 volleyers and 2 baseliners and I'll feed from behind the volleyers and move the [inaudible] around and make sure we are working on our court positioning. Make sure that we are covering the areas of the court that are the highest percentage areas of the court for our opponents to hit to.

That type of thing and once I think that everybody is warm and has a good sweat, and they've really shown that they've dialed in their focus and now we want to get into some ground stroke rally points and do some singles, doubles and maybe some half court. And then maybe play some tiebreaker or set work at the end-- that would be a typical day of a junior program whereas with some of the adults maybe I would spend a little bit more time with the cooperative stuff just because they have a tendency to have more of an appetite for that because they can conceptualize why the hard work of becoming a steadier player is going to pay off in the competitive format whereas the kids are just like 'bring it on.'

**Ian Westermann:** Alright, let's finish up with just a couple minutes of suggestions for John and everybody else that is listening to today's show and let's give one or two suggestions for cooperative drills for the single's player and a couple for those of you listening who play mostly doubles. Because there is definitely some differences between the two and what skills should be cultivated. What's your number one drill or two drills you would suggest for a single's player that is cooperatively based?

**Andy Zodin:** I like to do a live ball drill with a cross-court rally, with a volleyer and a groundstroker both in the deuce court-- the volleyer is slightly inside the service line, the baseliner is slightly behind the baseline, and they are just playing it out like a cross court rally and normally with one up and one back like that, you get a nice frequency of balls being hit. You get a volleyer that is working on a nice, consistent volley-- kind of like what I saw Brad Gilbert and Andre Agassi doing for several minutes at a time and just having that baseliner go right back to the volleyer every time and then maybe even have the volleyer move the ground stroke or around a little bit and have the volleyer be in the point position that this ground stroker has to hit this ball back to this volleyer. The volleyer is going to move the ground stroker around a little bit more and give that ground stroker a little bit of a workout.

But the idea is to hit him a ball that he has to move for, but can definitely get for pretty easily and go like a minute or two at a time like that. It's a great workout, and it's a great consistency drill both for the volleyer and the groundstroker and it's not going to take anything away from your ability to distill or tweak that into an aggressive mode you are

working on your wind, your foot-speed, you are working on your ability to, under all circumstances, but that ball back into the court which I think is something that players lose sight of, when all that they are trying to do is hit the ball by somebody.

You can hit the ball by somebody and it can hit the fence in the air, and you've accomplished your goal! [laughter] But if your goal isn't a little bit more fine-tuned with respect to a spot in the court that is in play, then it's not doing you as much good.

So that's a drill that I like a lot as far as [inaudible] and I think there are certain things that there is just no reason to reinvent the wheel-- cross court backhands, cross court forehands. Just up the line shots where one person hits the ball across court and one person hits the ball up the line and moving back and forth like that. But I think whatever puts you into a situation where you are generating a consistent rhythm and that drill, I think Ian, is critical because that rhythm is what's giving you that sense of 'I'm hitting the ball in the center of the strings every time. This feels good, I feel confident and I can hit this shot in my sleep.'

And you get that level of confidence with one particular stroke, or if you're lucky enough to have it happen on both sides, then that will manifest itself by way of confidence that you can take into a competitive situation, then shift it into a more strategic utilization of those skills but if you're not working on it from the standpoint of generating rhythm first, I think you are putting the cart before the horse.

**Ian Westermann:** Let's finish up. Give please one suggestion for those doubles players out there, people who play all doubles or mostly doubles, what would you suggest for a good cooperative drill for them?

**Andy Zodin:** I love that drill that I was kind of describing earlier, that tracking drill with 2 up and 2 back, and the ground strokers have to stay back. And I know it's not necessarily the way that you would want to play, but I think if you watch pro doubles, you'll see that there are situations where these guys just aren't invited into the net. The situation has not presented itself and too often, at the 4.0 or 4.5 level, people will just come in behind anything.

My wife, when she and I play mixed doubles, she'll hit a return of serve and she is coming right at a 5.0 guy who has a shoulder high volley, and I know what's coming. I see the big smile on his face and I realize what he's going to do-- he doesn't even have to hit it hard.. Just any shot that will put her off balance and I think people have to realize that you can't just come into the net. So for 2 up and 2 back, and for those groundstrokers to just have to feel like they've got to learn to feel that they are patient and hit a good groundstroke and the volleyers to just say, OK, all we are here to do is defend the net. Not attack the net, we are here to defend the net and there is a lot to that.

If you watch the top doubles players in the world, maybe one out of every 5 opportunities of a shot to put away comes along as opposed to the other 4 out of 5, I've got to put this one back deep into the court. Got to put this one over there. It's not a matter of always getting in there and taking the racket back like it's a machete, you're going to hack away at a volley. It's keeping your hands forward, it's moving to the proper position, it's as I said before, going to an area that is a high percentage area for your opponents to hit to, knowing where that is and why. And knowing based on where the ball is, who of the two of us, should be taking that ball and making sure that we are not both standing in the same area.

A lot of that can be cleared up in this tracking drill, where you move side to side, and you cover the court. Just make sure that our goal is to not let anything through. And man, does that make you a nice, solid team that will be steady and hit a lot of balls back, and when the opportunity comes to move forward and close on a volley and put it away, your competitive instincts will, in all likelihood, will take over and you'll know to do that. What you won't always know to do is to just tone it down a little bit and keep it in a steady mode where 'gosh if these guys are going to hit the ball this hard, this often, if we can make them hit 3 or 4 balls per point, we can beat this team and we don't have to incur much risk in doing so.

**Ian Westermann:** Andy, thank you very much for being on the show and for talking about this topic with me. And John M., I'm sure you've had your questions answered here today. If you have any follow up questions or anybody else listening, if you guys have any comments or questions, please feel free to email myself or post in the forums, and I can send those along to Andy as well. But Andy, thanks very much for your time. You've been a great guest, I love having you on the show because it's very easy to tell by listening to you talk, that you have a love for the game and a passion for the sport. So thanks very much for spending the time with me and my listeners.

**Andy Zodin:** It's always fun to be with you Ian, and you ask great questions so it makes it easy for me. So I look forward to reciprocating and having you come on in the Tennis Zone here in the next few weeks, so be sure and let your listeners know that we're going to do that and we'll definitely have some fun and it's always a good time, so whenever you need me, I'd love to come on with you.

**Ian Westermann:** Awesome. I'll definitely let my listeners know when I'll be on your show and I appreciate that very much. And in the meantime, definitely check out Andy's show that is going to be starting in the next week, Andy's 3rd season will be starting up and you can check that out on... What's the website again?

**Andy Zodin:** Well if you go to [TennisZone1510.com](http://TennisZone1510.com) you can get all the archived podcasts anytime and then [milehighsports.com](http://milehighsports.com) -- my show is from 10-noon on Sunday's

and that is mountain time. So out on the east coast, it would be 12-2, [milehighsports.com](http://milehighsports.com) you go to listen to live and you can catch it live on the stream.

**Ian Westermann:** Awesome. Andy, thanks again and I look forward to having you back on the show in the future.

**Andy Zodin:** Thanks a lot Ian.

**Ian Westermann:** That does it for today's episode of the Essential Tennis Podcast episode #104. Thank you very much for listening to today's show, I appreciate you downloading the file and supporting Essential Tennis in that way. Next up, I want to do a shout out to four very important people this past week that donated to Essential Tennis and some real nice donations this week and I really appreciate these people so much.

First of all, Carl in Texas donated \$120 to Essential Tennis -- Carl you are the man. I appreciate that so much. Also, Carlotta in New Jersey start a \$5 a month subscription donation. Norman in California sent a \$50 donation to Essential Tennis. And William in Missouri started a \$10 a month subscription donation. So Carl, Carlotta, Norman and William, thank you to you four new donators this past week. I appreciate that so much and I want to let you guys know, I don't take these funds and go to Pizza Hut, or buy myself a new TV. These really go towards paying my hosting services and I have several monthly expenses that are associated with the website that control all kinds of different parts of the website and I am always trying to come up with new ideas as well, in fact this past week, I experimented with some new software that I just purchased that will allow me to do live video conferencing and do live video technique and also tactical and strategy analysis for members in the future.

I'm working on that right now-- I just did a test run this last week with several members of the forums so these funds do really go to help improve the website. So thank you guys so much and if this podcast helped you improve your tennis game, please consider donating to Essential Tennis. Just go to [EssentialTennis.com](http://EssentialTennis.com) and on the front page on the bottom, there is a link that says donate.

Alright, that does it for this week. Thanks again everybody. Take care and good luck with your tennis.