2.5 Mentoring Drills

Return of Serves

1. Introduce self, volunteers and ask for players to introduce themselves
2. Quick review of last week Serves & asks if players practiced during the week and results? Give library book to a player who has practiced during the past week.
3. Warm up with some dinks (5-10 minutes)
4. Explain the purpose of the drill. You don’t want your opponent to get to the net before you get there. A slow high looping return provides you with extra time to advance to the NVZ. Have one of the volunteers demonstrate a high looping return.
5. Mark off the ¼ line from the backcourt line. Divide the group in half with some on a court with the Tutor Pickleball Machine and the remaining on a second court. Volunteers to hit 5 pickleballs to the player to return to the opponent’s side. Set up the Tutor to hit deep to the returner’s forehand. Similarly on the second court have the volunteer serve deep to the returner’s forehand. Switch after everyone has participated. To make it more fun players get 1 point if the return ball lands in the back ¼ of the server’s (tutor) court. All players keep their own scores. Volunteer can call short, long, or good.
6. Return the serve to the opponent’s backhand side. WHY? Most players are right handed and have a weak backhand. Use Tutor machine on one court and volunteer servers on the second court. Place hula hoops on the weak side. Have all players serve 5 balls with 1 point for getting it in the backcourt and 3 points for getting it in the hula hoop. All players keep their own scores.
7. Ask all players to raise their hands if they scored more than 1 point, then drop hand if they scored less than 3, then less than 5, etc.
8. Play a short game during the last 15-20 minutes to side out and then switch to the other side. Rotate everyone into the game. Stress deep serves, deep returns, to the backhand and getting to the NVZ.
9. Review return of serves and the purpose and goals. Urge players to practice until next meeting.
10. Explain next week’s drill – dinks