HÖGSKOLAN
I HALMSTAD

Idrottsvetenskap 91-120 hp

MAGISTERUPPSATS

Southern Sweden tennis development environments for 13-16 years old players: Perspectives of players, coaches, and parents

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Sport Psychology 91-120 hp

Halmstad 2015-06-05

Jokiaho, I. (2015). *Southern Sweden tennis development environments for 13-16 years old players: Perspectives of players, coaches, and parents.* (D-essay in Sport psychology
91-120 ECTS credits). Academy for Health and Welfare: Halmstad University, Sweden.

Abstract

The study was initiated by Swedish Tennis Syd in collaboration with Halmstad University with the intention to examine the existing tennis talent development environments for 13-16 years of age players. The purpose of the study was to (1) examine the retrospective experiences of the talent development environments among players who already passed the focal age, (2) examine the retrospective and concurrent experiences of the talent development environments among tennis coaches, and (3) examine the concurrent experience of the talent development environments among parents whose kids were active in tennis in the focal age. The study involved 14 participants whom had connection to tennis clubs within Swedish Tennis Syd's working region. Data were collected through three focus groups interviews consisting of players, coaches, and parents. Eight major themes emerged from the data analysis: atmosphere in the clubs, organization of the training groups, amount of training, quality of the training, access to expert assistance, amount of competition, combination of school and tennis, and, parental involvement. Each theme was analyzed within the group and across the three groups. The results revealed perceptions of the clubs environments and future recommendation to improve the talent development environments for tennis players of 13-16 years old.

Keyword: Athletic talent development environment, Talent development, Tennis, Youth sport.

Jokiaho, I. (2015). *Southern Sweden tennis development environments for 13-16 years old players: Perspectives of players, coaches, and parents.* (Magisteruppsats Psykologi inriktning idrott, 91-120 hp). Akademin för Hälsa och Välfärd: Högskolan i Halmstad.

Abstrakt

Studien initierades av Svensk Tennis Syd i samarbete med Högskolan i Halmstad med avsikt att undersöka befintliga talang utvecklingsmiljöer i tennis för spelare i åldern 13-16 år. Syftet med studien var att (1) undersöka retrospektiva upplevelser av talang utvecklingsmiljöer bland spelare som redan passerat fokus åldern, (2) undersöka retrospektiva och rådande upplevelser av talang utvecklingsmiljöer bland tennis tränare, och (3) undersöka rådande upplevelser av talang utvecklingsmiljöer bland föräldrar vars barn är aktiva i tennis inom fokus åldern. Studien bestod av 14 deltagare som hade koppling till tennisklubbar inom Svensk Tennis Syds arbetsområde. Data samlades in genom tre fokusgruppsintervjuer som bestod av spelare, tränare och föräldrar. Åtta huvudteman framkom i data analysen: klubbatmosfär, organisation av träningsgrupper, träningsmängd, kvaliteten på träning, tillgång till experthjälp, tävlingsmängd, kombination av skola och tennis, och föräldrainvolvering. Varje tema analyserades inom gruppen och mellan de tre grupperna. Resultaten visade på uppfattningar om klubbmiljöer och framtida rekommendationer för förbättringar av talang utvecklingsmiljöer för tennisspelare i åldrarna 13-16 år.

Nyckelord: Idrottsliga talang utvecklingsmiljöer, Talangutveckling, Tennis, Ungdomsidrott.

In collaboration between Tennis Syd and Halmstad University, there is an intention to find out how the existing talent development environments are perceived for 13-16 of age tennis players. To increase their knowledge about the environment Tennis Syd can enable an optimizing of their business. There is an interest of finding out perceptions from players, coaches, and parents which are involved in Tennis Syd's operations. The introduction will present Swedish tennis culture, previous research regarding talent development in sport from an individual and ecological perspectives, research of successful and less successful talent development environments, and, parental involvement in sport. Finally, the study's objectives are presented.

Swedish Tennis Culture

Until the 1980s, Sweden had produced a world player per decade in tennis during the last century (Carlson, 2007). The exclamation of amazement here is, of course, Björn Borg. His success led to an explosion in the Swedish tennis, regarding both recruitment and elite width. During the 1980s Sweden dominated the world of tennis - and that without Björn Borg. In 1985 there was five Swedish male tennis players ranked among the world's top 15. These won major international competitions in both singles and doubles (Carlson, 2007), e.g., Davis Cup, that Sweden has won seven times; 1975, 1984, 1985, 1987, 1994, 1997 and 1998 (Swedish Tennis Federation, 2014).

The reason for Sweden's great success in tennis during this epoch has been discussed (e.g., (Carlson, 1987; 1997; 2007; Carlson & Engström, 1986; Wijk, 2010). Carlson (1986; 1987) argued that elite players of this time came almost without exception from smaller towns and provincial, where the provision of sport often was quite limited. They grew up within small tennis clubs where there were plenty of playing time in small training groups with coaches who realized the importance of harmony and security within the tennis activity. Their coaches' had the ability to enthuse, engage, motivate, and create interest on the basis each players' potential. Furthermore, Carlson (1986; 1987) found that the successful players' experience no excessive demands to success and had good support from the family. The successful tennis players were also involved in several sports in an early age, devoting much time to the spontaneous sport and specialized in tennis only at the age of 14 years old. Carlson (1997) indicates that early specialization and "professional-like training" in tennis did not favor the development of elite players, meaning, that all-round sport engagement was more important before adolescence.

Wijk (2010) argues that the quantitative growth was strong for tennis a decade before the racing success on the world elite level. The number of members exploded in the 1960s, from about 25,000 to 55,000 tennis members - an increase of 120% in 10 years. This rapid upwards of the tennis practitioners is explained by that tennis previously had been limited to the upper social class of the population. In the 1960s the youth came from broader layers of the population. Wijk (2010)

meant that the social broadening became feasible by the Swedish model of sport. Central to this concept is usually described as the sport is conducted by local associations with the folk movement tradition, with local government contributions, and the basic idea that all citizens are welcome to participate in sport. This became especially apparent in tennis where almost all Swedish youngsters in the 1970s at least once tried the sport. Even today Swedish sport is built around this. The folk movement of sport is essentially based on the voluntary leadership. More than 600,000 leaders devote every year 140 million hours in sport, as activity leaders or elected association leaders (Idrotten vill, 2009).

Swedish Tennis Federation Guidelines

The Swedish Tennis Federation has created a "development staircase" (see Appendix 1) which regards to the time before the athlete is ready for SOC's (The Swedish Olympic Committee) top- and talent program. The development staircase includes clarity which regards to the physical levels, stake levels, performance levels and technics. The aim is that the active and their coaches will get a clear picture of what is required and what is important to reach the level of intake of SOC's top- and talent programs. The average age of Olympic medalist and Grand Slam medalist in tennis is about 26-27 years. To have something to build the development steps on, the Swedish Tennis Federation assumed that normally it is about 14-17 years when you are good enough entry in the challenger program and about 18-21 years when one is good enough to reach the top- and talent program. The Swedish Tennis Federation has presented statistics on the age of those who is active in the senior world elite in tennis (i.e., medalists at the Olympics and top 10 ATP World Tour/WTA-Tour):

Men:	Top 10 in ATP is average age 26.6 years
	Top 100 in ATP is average age 27.4 years
Woman:	Top 10 in WTA is average age 26.0 years
	Top 100 in WTA is average 25.1 years

Furthermore, the Swedish Tennis Federation has developed guidelines for the development staircase of tennis challenger ages. Development steps between the years 2014-2016 contain clarity regarding stake levels (i.e., the number of matches and level of training effort) for men and woman aged 15-16 years:

Physical activities:	20-24 hours/week
	980-1100 hours/year
	Tennis 65% (640-715 hours)
	Other Sport (physics) 35% (340-385 hours)
Number of matches:	65-80 singles
	20-30 doubles
	16-18 international competitions

At age 16, the top 100 players who were top 10 juniors shall have played 11 ITF (International Tennis Federation) competitions and 7 competitions of the ATP World Tour points.

Regarding the line of physical exercise levels, The Swedish Tennis Federation mean that aerobic exercise is a priority since it is a good period to develop the heart. Anaerobic exercise is now giving less effect. Strength training gives great power and the muscle mass increases. Mobility training is important. The technical practice should include that all players are mastering all kinds of strokes based on the player's own tactical and strategic ability. Regarding results levels, at age 15 is when a future top 100 player reach top 500 ITF Juniors, and at age 16 when a future top 100 player reach top 100 ITF Juniors. The average age of the top 100 ATP players when they won their first ATP points is 16.9 years.

Swedish Tennis Syd

Swedish Tennis Syd is working on behalf of the tennis clubs in southern Sweden, including the provinces of Skåne, Småland, Blekinge and Halland, and is the link between the clubs and the Swedish Tennis Federation. Swedish Tennis Syd's working region consist of 140 clubs and 34 000 members. Swedish Tennis Syd's operations are divided into two main areas; (1) Tennis for all, and (2) Tennis against the national teams. (1) Tennis for all means that tennis is a breadth and recreational sport where the motto is joy, community and health. Today, most of this work exists in the clubs. Tennis Syd takes an active role in representing the tennis locally and are good at to satisfy members' needs and expectations. Within this field Tennis Syd works to inspire, share the best practices, educate and help clubs to develop their activities. (2) Tennis against the national teams includes players under the age of 15 years old who show that they on their own will want to develop, have the potential and ambition to invest in tennis. Here are the motto commitment, performance and enjoyment. In order to develop and succeed as a high performance junior/senior in tennis, it is required a huge own effort by the player. This requires that the players are in good development environments with committed leaders. The region has a responsibility to help players at the beginning of this trip. This field Tennis Syd works to support clubs in their construction of good development environments. The support includes club support, school collaboration, camps, competition trips, etc.

Introduction to Talent Development in Sport

Key terms

Being able to identify talents in sports has for long been an interest in academic studies (Trackle, 2004). Even today there is no clear definition of what a 'talent' is. In literature an athletic 'talent' is described as an athlete's potential to be successful in their sport (Gagne, 1985; Helsen, Van Winckel & Williams, 2005; Tranckle, 2004). Prerequisites include both the innate potential and

how the sporting skills develop during adolescence years. It has been a research trend in sport organizations to identify athletes who might predict to excel in their sport by using advanced assessment of the prerequisites for athletic excellence (Howe, Davidson, & Sloboda, 1998).

Individual talent development perspective

It has been an interest to investigate talent development, and it is mainly done from an individual perspective (Abbot & Collins, 2004; Bruner, Strachan & Côté, 2011; Côté, Baker & Abernethy, 2007; Côté & Vierimaa, 2014). Côté et al. (2007) in the developmental model of sport participation model identified of two pathways to elite athletic performance; (1) the elite performance through early specialization that advocates early specialization and deliberate practice (highly structured, goal-oriented, supervised training designed to improve performance) leading to elite performance. (2) The elite performance through sampling that involves a gradual move from sampling many sports to further specialization in one sport, led by a gradual move away from deliberate play (intrinsically motivating, self-organized activities designed to maximize enjoyment) and toward deliberate practice. The latter path is seen as a healthier route to top-level performance (Côté et al., 2007).

Furthermore, types of sport are different with regard to their demands on athletes to reach the highest level in sport. Sports are also different in terms of age which the athletes usually specialize and achieve their peak in performance. In complex coordination sports (e.g., diving, gymnastics, figure skating) athletes start to specialize at the age of 5-7 years old to capture the most favorable periods in the motor development, and reaches peak performance at age 15-20 years (Stambulova, Alfermann, Statler, & Côté, 2009). In contrast, in endurance sport (e.g., cross-country skiing, marathon) athletes might start to specialize in the adolescence years and achieve their peak performance at age 25-35 years. This suggests that the type of sport may influence a trajectory of sport participation performance (Côté et al., 2007; Stambulova et al., 2009). It is also recommended that specialization in one sport does not need to occur before age 13 in sports where peak performance is reached in adulthood (Côté & Vierimaa, 2014). Children should be given the opportunity to diverse sampling of different sports, which can be understood from a motivational perspective. Bruner et al. (2011) argues that learning experiences of children through variation and deliberate play in sport during childhood develop physical competencies, but more importantly perceptions of competence, which further might lead to motivation for continued participation in sports. Further, motivation theories suggest that children's perceptions of competence in late childhood (ages 8–12) mostly contains with comparison with their peers. Children are not able to fully understand the effects that practice have on their performance in sport until they reach the age of 12 or 13 years. Because of this it are recommended that coaches should not overstate performance through overly structured

practices in sport during the childhood years within sports where peak performance is reach during adulthood (Bruner et al., 2011).

It is clear that talent research in sport has highly focused on the individual athlete. Researchers have extended their view from the individual athlete and taken environmental factors into account while examine talent development, and are presented below.

Ecological talent development perspective

Researchers have acknowledged that several environmental factors influence young athlete's development in sport (Côté, 1999; Ivarsson, Stenling, Fallby, Johnson, Borg & Johansson, 2015). Côté (1999) meant that the social context of the family influence the child-athlete involvement in sport. Parents provide opportunities for their children to enjoy sport and excitement through sport by financial and time commitment to their child-athlete, and support their children to effectively deal with setbacks in sports. Ivarsson et al. (2015) investigated the perceived talent development environment (e.g., long-term development focus and support networks) on the well-being (e.g., psychological distress/well-being and anxiety) of youth athletes. Ivarsson et al. (2015) showed that athletes perceiving their talent development environment as supportive and focusing on long-term development seem to be less stressed and experience higher well-being.

Furthermore, talent development in sport has also been investigated with a holistic ecological approach that focuses on the whole talent athletic development environment. This approach shifts the focus from individual talent to the athletic talent development environment, which not only has a sport club or team as a core but also looks beyond the athletes' direct interactions within the club or team (Henriksen, Larsen & Christensen, 2014; Henriksen, Stambulova & Roessler, 2010a; 2010b; 2011). The present study will use the ecological perspective in talent development; therefore the relevant models and research conducted with this approach are presented more in detail below.

Holistic Ecological Approach and Frameworks

A holistic ecological approach to talent development shifts the focus from the individual athlete to the environment which the athlete develops within. Some sporting environments are more successful than others in helping talented young athletes to make a successful transition to the senior elite level. Research in both successful and less successful environments can therefor bordering the understanding of talent development environments. The present study will use the *athletic talent development environment model* (Henriksen et al., 2010a) and *the environment success factors working model* (Henriksen et al., 2010a) as frameworks. The models are presented below.

Athletic talent development environment model

Athletic talent development environment (ATDE) is defined as a young athletes social relationships both within and outside his or her sport-social relations. The sports club or team is the core

but includes a larger context that the club or team lies within (Henriksen et al., 2014; Henriksen et al., 2010a; 2010b; 2011). The ATDE is different in every sport club or team. This can be explained by that clubs/teams interact in different ways with the broader socio-cultural context, and their degree of success in providing high performance athletes. Successful ATDEs in sport are clubs/teams that continually succeeded to produce elite athletes from their junior activities. In comparison; less successful environments are clubs/teams that despite their financial opportunities are unsuccessful in the transition from junior athlete to senior elite athletes and therefore does not succeed to provide athletes competing at the highest performance level (Henriksen et al., 2014; Henriksen et al., 2010a; 2010b; 2011).

The ATDE working model (see Figure 1) describes a particular athletic environment; it clarifies the roles and functions of the different components and relations within the environment in the talent development process. The main function of an ATDE as a system is to help promising young athletes make a successful transition from junior to top-level senior sports (Stambulova, 2003). The young prospective elite athletes, who possess qualities predicting them to reach the highest performance-level in their sport, appear at the center of the model. Other components of the ATDE are structured into two levels (micro- and macro-) and two domains (athletic and non-athletic), complemented by the past, present and future of the ATDE.

The micro-level refers to the environment where the athletes' spend a large number of their daily life and is characterized by real communication and interactions. The macro-level refers to social settings, which affect but do not contain the athletes, as well as to the values and customs of the cultures to which the athletes belong. The athletic domain covers the part of the athletes' environment that is directly related to sport, whereas the non-athletic domain presents all the other spheres of the athletes' lives. Directly surrounding the young athletes' is the club environment which includes; coaches, managers, elite senior athletes, younger athletes and experts. Other components include; school, family, peers and related teams and clubs (at the micro-level), as well as sports federations, the media, reference groups and the educational system (at the macro- level). Some of the components clearly belong to one level and one domain (e.g., school), whereas others (e.g., family) may transcend levels or domains.

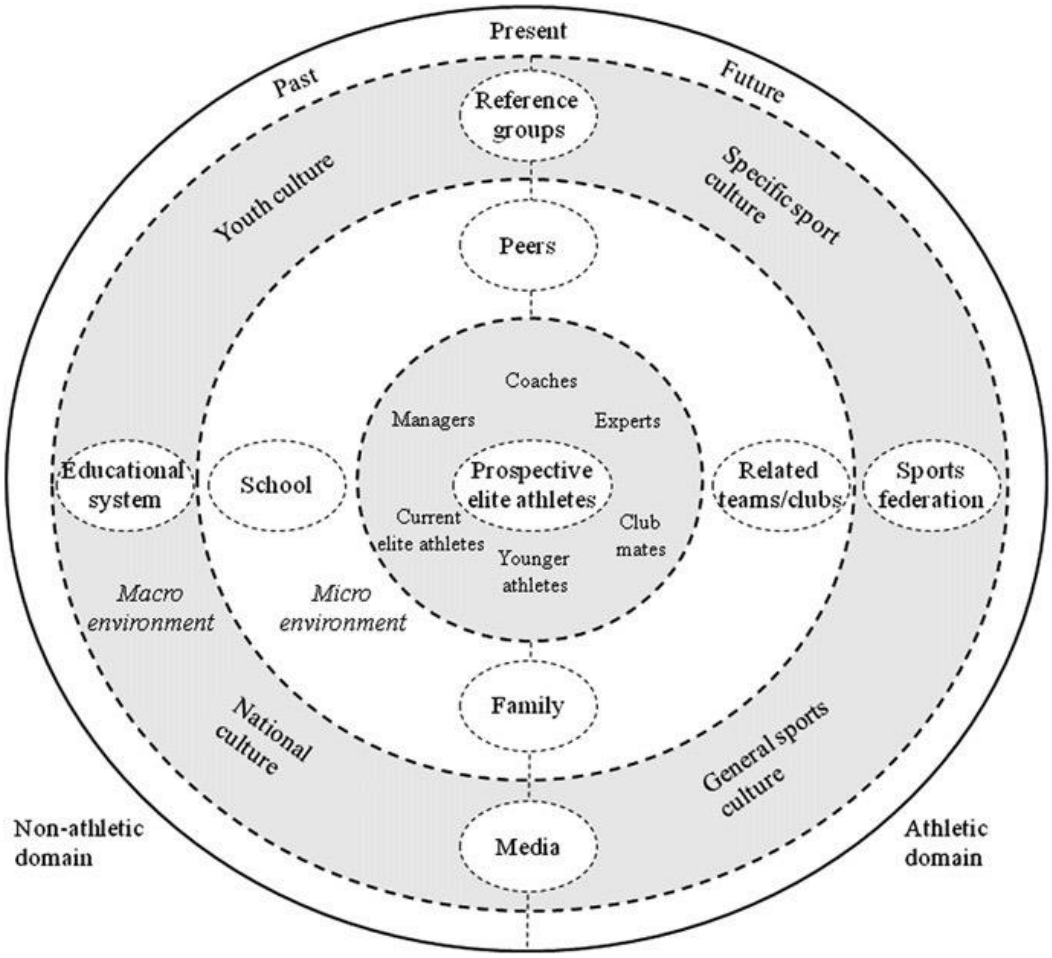

Figure 1. The athletic talent development environment (ATDE) working model (Henriksen et al., 2010a).

The macro-environment also involves various cultural contexts; national culture, general sporting culture, sport specific culture and youth culture. To illustrate the permeability and interdependence of the different components, these are marked by dotted lines. The outer layer of the model presents the past, present and future of the ATDE, emphasizing that the environment is dynamic; the athletes and their contexts are constantly changing and influencing each other in a reciprocal manner. This model is ecological for it regards the development of an athlete, influenced by the context which development takes place. The model is holistic in three senses: it includes both the athletic and the non-athletic domain; it includes both the micro and the macro-level; and it includes the development (past, present and future) of the environment.

The environment success factors working model

The environment success factors (ESF) working model taking as its starting point the preconditions provided by the environment, the model illustrates how the daily routines (process) have three outcomes: athletes' individual development and achievements, team achievements (in team sports), and organizational development and culture (Henriksen et al., 2014; Henriksen et al., 2010a; 2010b;

2011).. Each component interrelates with each other and influences the environment's success (see Figure 2). "Preconditions" include human (e.g., coaching and management resources), material (e.g., training and accommodation facilities) and financial factors. The preconditions are necessary for the talent development process but none of them guarantees success. "Process" refers to every-day activities in the environment. These activities can be diverse and specific to the environment, but elements such as training, camps, competitions and social events are expected. "Individual development and achievements" refers to the athletes' accession of psycho-social competencies and athletic skills, and the way these in combination lead to sporting success. "Team achievements" refers to the team's athletic success and is thus mainly relevant to team sports. Individual and team achievements are a product of the process, most notably countless hours of training, but are also a product of organizational development and culture (Henriksen et al., 2014; Henriksen et al., 2010a; 2010b; 2011).

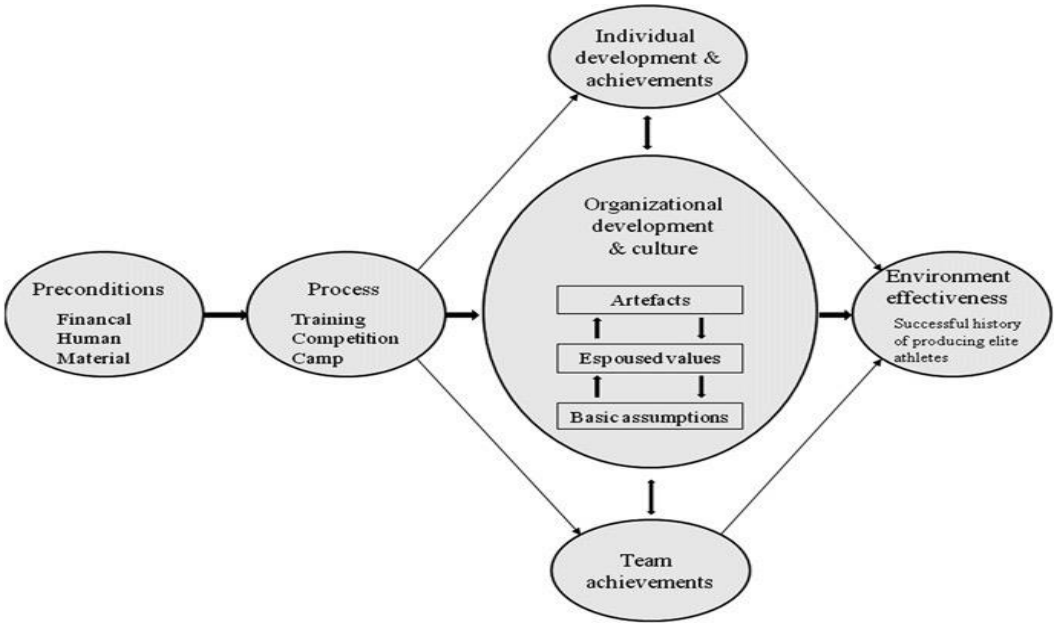

Figure 2. The environment success factors (ESF) working model (Henriksen et al., 2010a).

"Organizational culture" is central to the ESF model and consists of three levels: cultural artefacts, espoused values and basic assumptions. "Cultural artefacts" include stories and myths told in the environment and also customs and traditions, as well as physical cultural manifestations such as clothing, buildings and organization charts. The artifacts are easy to observe but hard to decipher. "Espoused values" are the social principles, norms, goals and standards that the organization shows to the world; they exist in the minds of the members and serve as visible motivations for actions, although these espoused values (i.e., what the members say they do) do not always correspond to the enacted values (i.e., what they actually do). "Basic assumptions" are underlying reasons for ac-

tions. They consist of beliefs and assumptions that are no longer questioned but are taken for granted and which exist at a level below that of the members' consciousness, and are therefore derived by the researchers. Organizational culture is characterized by the integration of the key basic assumptions into a cultural paradigm guiding socialization of new members, providing stability and adapting the organization to a constantly changing environment. The ESF working model therefore predicts that the ATDE's success (i.e., effectiveness in producing senior elite athletes) is a result of the interplay between preconditions, process, individual and team development and achievements, with organizational culture serving to integrate these different elements. Previous research where the ATDE model and ESF working model has been applied is presented below.

Research on Successful and Less Successful Talent Development Environments

The relationship between elite athletes and the prospective athletes is central to the successful environments. The training activities are custom after the elite athletes' needs and wishes, but the elite athlete passes through their knowledge regarding sporting skills and everyday life experience to the prospective athletes when training is often organized together with these two groups (Henriksen et al., 2011; 2010a). The culture of the environments revolved around the group of elite athletes and coaches sharing their knowledge to the prospective athletes, and the idea of individual responsibility for one's own excellence existed in the successful environments (Henriksen et al., 2010a; 2010b). Knowledge given to the elite athletes from experts (e.g., meteorology, physical training, sport psychology, nutrition and physiotherapy) is also shared to the prospects. The elite serve as role models for the prospects and are a central quality for the successful environments. This interaction between prospective athletes and elite athletes had been reported as absent in less successful talent development environments (Henriksen et al., 2014).

In one of the successful environments it was found that coaches had variety of core competencies. This allowed the coaches to exchange their views and inspire each other and to overcome practical problems, e.g., creating convenient schedules (Henriksen et al., 2010b). One coach can have obligations primarily towards the elite athletes but gives as much help as possible to the prospects, because in a long-term perspective, the coach job is to deliver senior elite athletes to the national team, so paying attention the prospects is also considered as important (Henriksen, et al., 2010a). In the less successful athletic environment, the coach is only seen as technically and theoretically provider. If non-sporting problems occur the prospective athletes do not relay on the coach (Henriksen et al., 2014).

Within the successful environments it is common that practice and knowledge is shared across the clubs or teams borders with other clubs and nations when opportunity is given, e.g., when abroad at training camp or regularly visiting a neighboring club (Henriksen et al., 2010a; 2010b).

Athletes with parents who had been involved in sports at the elite level mention that support was given from parents by nourish an elite mentality, e.g., demanding commitment to training. Athletes with parents who had no earlier experiences of elite sports perceived their parents supported them but were not particularly involved in their elite initiative (Henriksen, et al., 2011). Either sports background, athletes perceived that they could rely on the parents' financial support. This was found in the less successful environments as well (Henriksen et al., 2014).

In the successful environments it was common that the prospects occasionally coached younger athletes, both from the environment and outside the environment (Henriksen et al., 2010a; 2010b). Motives for this were: earn money to finance their sport, to learn by teaching others, personal growth through sharing knowledge, to get to know athletes outside their own club. To take the role as a coach prompts the prospects to be responsible and being more aware of the knowledge and values they share. In this way, the club prepares future coaches on the assumption that not all athletes have the potential to reach the top-level in their sport. Those who fail may still love the sport and have a strong identification with their club, and further want to become coaches (Henriksen, 2010b).

In the successful environments communication between school and sport works well. The teachers have an understanding of elite sport and adjust school to fit the needs of the students-athletes, e.g., letting them eat during a class, arranging extra classes rather than expecting them to do much homework (Henriksen et al., 2011). The athletes need to be focused and structured to be able to combine school and an elite initiative in sport. Research in the less successful environment shows a lack of communication between school and sport. The prospects experiences that teachers do not care about their involvement in sport which results in having much school work during intensive periods in sports, and the coaches does not know when the prospect is overloaded with homework (Henriksen et al., 2014). Another example is the lack of dialogue between the school coaches and club coaches. The athlete needs to negotiate the different inputs he or she gets in the two different environments and sometimes ends up bewildered by conflicting advice and demands. The same goes for a lack of dialogue between coaches and experts, the coaches does not actually know what the prospects talk about during sport psychology courses. This results in that the coaches cannot consider that during practices. Further, experts as physiotherapists and sport psychologists have limited contact with the athletes. Their competences are most often used for acute treatment rather than long-term performance support (Henriksen et al., 2014).

Within the successful environments the sport federation is a cohesive force in the overall environment. It is the center of excellence; it deals with sponsorships and strengthens relations with the broader sporting community (Henriksen et al., 2010a; 2011). The federation also helps the prospective athletes plan their athletic career, for example help planning which competitions to participate,

their education, organizing their training and selections for the talent group and the national team. The federation also provides indirect financial support, for example by lending cars to enable athletes to attend a competition or by selling on second-hand equipment at an affordable price.

The social support from parents has been addressed within bot the successful and less successful environments. To gain a greater understanding of parental involvement in sport, previous research in this area is presented below.

Research on Parental Involvement in Sport

That parents' involvement in youth sport affects their children's participation in sport is well known (Delforge & Le Scanff, 2006; Fredricks & Eccles, 2004; Gould, Lauer, Rolo, Jannes & Pennisi, 2006; 2008; Hoyle & Leff, 1997; Wuerth, Lee & Alfermann, 2002). Parental involvement can be defined as the pressure or support children perceive that they receive from parents (Hoyle & Leff, 1997). Good support contributes to a sound development of the parent-child relationship and in turn, the child will enjoy participating and excelling in sport. Pressure is referred to the behaviors and attitudes from parents that children experience as unwanted expectations and demands for elusive achievements in sport. This may result in the child feeling insufficient, and therefor drop-out in sport (Hoyle & Leff, 1997).

Parents have an important role in children's socialization to sport throughout their sporting career (Wuerth et al., 2002). Fredricks and Eccles (2004) mean that parents carry out three fundamental roles in their child's sport experience. These are; the "provider" (e.g., finance, transport), the "interpreter" of the sport experience for their child (e.g., emotionally reacting to competition in adaptive manners), and finally, the "role model" (i.e., modeling the ideal attributes and behaviors in sport). The extent to which these roles are carried out by parents influences the child's beliefs and values and therefore their motivated behaviors and performance in sport. Behaviors such as punishment are considered to be unfavorable for the child's personal and sporting development. This contributes to a low degree of autonomy and low self-esteem which also have a lowering effect on motivation, and can affect sports participation negatively by drop-out in sport (Delforge & Le Scanff, 2006)

To understand the parent's role in tennis talent development and success, research has been conducted with an emphasis on gaining a broader view of positive and negative parental behaviors and actions. In general, coaches experience that the parents had mostly a positive involvement and it is a minority of parents that cause problems (Gould et al., 2006; 2008). Coaches recognized that parents are crucial to the development of junior-tennis players, and parents can create positive experiences in tennis. Positive parental behaviors was mentioned from coaches; parents that focused on developing key values such as emphasizing the importance of hard work, having a positive attitude,

and keeping success in perspective. Parental behaviors perceived from coaches to negatively influence player development; parents who over-emphasized winning, had unrealistic expectations, criticized the child, and pushed the child to play tennis. Coaches meant that these actions of parents probably were aimed to motivate their child, but resulted in inhibited player development (Gould et al., 2006)

In summary, research in talent development has had a high focus on the individual athlete to be able to predict athletes that might reach the highest performance level in sport (e.g., Abbot & Collins, 2004; Côté et al., 2007; Howe et al., 1998). Researchers have shifted their focus from the individual athlete and have taken a holistic ecological approach in talent development (e.g., Henriksen et al., 2014; Henriksen et al., 2010a; 2010b; 2011). Previous research in this area tells us e.g., that the relationship between the prospective athletes and elite athletes is essential for the environments that are successful in producing senior elite athletes, and also that a communication between the academic context and sporting context is important for the prospective athletes. In contrast to this, these parts seems to be absent in the less successful environment. Parents are an important aspect for the prospective athletes as they support their kids finically and their elite initiative in sport, but that a too excessive involvement can harm kids participation in sport (e.g., Fredricks & Eccles, 2004; Henriksen et al., 2010a; 2010b; 2011; Hoyle & Leff, 1997). Sweden has historically had great success in tennis (Carlson, 2007; 1987; Carlson & Engström, 1986) and is eager to break into the international world elite again where the Swedish Tennis Federation has created guidelines for young tennis players to reach the senior world elite. Swedish Tennis Syd that operates in the south of Sweden has the intention to bordering their understanding of how their talent development environment is perceived to enable an optimizing of their business.

Objectives

The aim of the study is to examine the experiences of the talent developmental environments in tennis in the focal age 13-16 years, within clubs under Tennis Syd's operation. The present study has three objectives.

(1) Examine the retrospective experiences of the talent development environments among players who already passed the focal age.
(2) Examine the retrospective and concurrent experiences of the talent development environments among tennis coaches.
(3) Examine the concurrent experience of the talent development environments among parents whose kids of the focal age are active in tennis.

Method

Research design

The design of the study was influenced by Tennis Syd's requests. Using focus groups made it possible to gather qualitative data containing a range of opinions of people across different groups which enabled comparison of data across the groups (Krueger & Casey, 2015). The study included three focus groups; (1) players who have already passed the focal age. The decision to use players who have already passed the focal age was to obtain retrospective experiences of tennis players in a higher maturity age. (2) Tennis coaches who had experience of coaching tennis players in the focal age for about 10-25 years. The coaches were active as coaches today and could thus share their retrospective experiences as well as concurrent experiences. (3) Parents who had kids active in tennis that could share their concurrent experiences of their kids' tennis involvement.

Participants

In the study there were 14 participants representing nine different clubs in total. Four tennis players who all were 19 years old, and came from four different clubs in the focal age where three clubs were located in the south of Sweden, under Tennis Syd's working area, and one from the north of Sweden were Tennis Syd does not operate. Five tennis coaches were representing five different tennis clubs. Five parents were representing three different tennis clubs. All the participants had in the current situation connection to tennis clubs going under the Tennis Syd's working area.

Focus group interview guide

The study had a qualitative approach using a semi-structured interview guide with open questions which encouraged for explanations and opinions on the discussion questions (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Using focus groups made it possible to gather qualitative data containing a range of opinions of people across different groups which enabled comparison of data from across the groups (Krueger & Casey, 2015). The interview guide (see Appendix 2) was created based on "features of successful ATDEs" (Henriksen, et al., 2010a; 2010b). The question route was conducted based on recommendations of Krueger and Casey (2015). The interview started with background questions regarding years of involvement in tennis of the players and the parents' kids, and years of coaching in tennis. In the second part of the interview the participants discussed questions regarding club atmosphere, organization of the training groups, amount of practice, access to expert assistance, amount of competing, and combination of school and tennis – all in reflection to sport experiences of 13-16 years old tennis players.

Procedure

The arrangements of the focus groups interviews were conducted by Tennis Syd's operation manager, who invited players, parents, and coaches to participate in the study by e-mail, time and place for the collection of the data was also set. The interviews took place at two different tennis clubs in the south of Sweden, in the clubs conference room. All the participants was informed about the purpose of the study and why this may benefit the clubs, ethical issues were presented and a consent form (see Appendix 3) was signed by all participants before the interview began (Krueger & Casey, 2015). The interviews was audio recorded by voice memo with an iPhone 5s, and each focus group interviews lasted 24 minutes (players), 66 minutes (coaches), and 75 minutes (parents).

Ethical issues

The participants' identities were kept confidential; information making possible to identify individuals was collected and stored, but carefully protected. All names were changed in the transcription, as well as other information that might reveal the participants' identity, and the audio recordings were kept safe. Focus groups can be said to be more ethically appealing when the participants have their say on terms which more are their own, and because it is about conversation in a group the participant can - even if it is not desirable for the researcher - not to speak when the group strays into areas that are sensitive to him or her (Wibeck, 2010).

From the researcher side no information regarding the identity of participants or statement of the group was released. The possibility to cancel the participation in the study was communicated.

Data analysis

The data were transcribed verbatim from the audio recordings into 55 pages of single spaced text (Krueger & Casey, 2015). An example of how the transcription was formed can be seen in Appendix 4. All the interviews were transcribed and analyzed in the following order:

Step 1: The audio files from the interviews were transcribed verbatim into three different files, one for each focus groups interview.

Step 2: Each transcript were read several times to get a good picture of the content of the interviews.

Step 3: Eight major themes emerged from the transcripts reflecting major questions of the interview guide.

Step 4: Each theme was analyzed from the three different groups and summarized in a table.

Step 5: The table enabled comparison between the groups and each theme was compared between the three different groups in the comparative table.

The qualitative data were used to find out perceptions of the talent development environments in order to identify what was perceived as good, and recommendations for improvements in the eight major themes.

Results

Structure of the results

The results are structured to follow eight major themes the focus group discussions were organized around. These themes included: atmosphere in the clubs, organization of the training groups, amount of training, quality of the trainings, access to expert assistance, amount of competitions, combination of school and tennis, and parental involvement. Within each theme, players' reflections will be reported first and followed by reflections of coaches and parents. Further, the summary of results will be presented as a thematic framework (see Table 1).

Atmosphere in the clubs

Players

The players expressed that it was a good atmosphere in the clubs; it was fun to come to the training but at the same time they felt that it was a serious training to be carried out, regardless which club they came from. One player said: "It was very fun to come to the training and you felt that it was very serious, yet fun of course"

Another player stressed that tennis was not a game during those years, by saying this: "It was very competitive… Thus prestige, it was not as if you went there and played. Everyone wanted to succeed tennis."

The atmosphere was also described that it differed depending on which level the players performed at, as one player said:

> There were not so many good players there [i.e., in the players club] /.../ It was quite mixed atmosphere when it came to what level you were at /.../ I thought it was a blast, I did not take tennis very seriously at that time. I thought it was fun that was the reason I played.

Coaches

The coaches shared the same view regarding the atmosphere of the clubs. There were/are many active tennis players and everyone has different aspirations. As one coach said:

> Everyone is welcome in the foundation ... there is room for everyone and then at that age [i.e., 13-16 years] it differs quite a lot between those who want to become professionals, but that does not mean they do not have fun.

Parents

How the parents described the atmosphere was slightly different between each other. Some parents described their kids as very competitive with a competition-oriented climate during training,

and they did not feel that their kids went to training for play. Another parent claimed that their kids were not only looking for competing, but also for the social exchange:

> I can say for my kid, it is not only competition, indeed for her part, it is much that they are talking about that they should see each other for a while before [i.e., practice] or that they stay a little while after [i.e., practice] but often they meet some time before, and talk.

One parent considered tennis like a job and explained that the interaction between the parents and the coaches make the kids' involvement in tennis serious. This was said:

> For her it is currently a work /.../ in terms of actual training /.../ it is focused on her to become successful /.../ there we also have some guilt, or some advantages; we set the demands as well. I think the interaction between us and the coaches makes it probably quite seriously.

Organization of the training groups

Players

The players were mainly talking about that training groups were organized regarding levels they performed in tennis, that is, players who were at the same level trained together, regardless of gender and age. Something the players also brought up was *upwards training* and *downwards training*, where upwards training was defined as playing against better competitors. Downward training was the other way around, where the competitor is inferior. This is how one player described the organization of the groups and upwards and downwards training:

> It did not matter if it was a girl or a boy just what level they were on /.../ The trainings were organized around me /.../ I was the only one that kept a fairly good level /.../ in some trainings, I play against those who were less good and other times I got to play against my coach, who was better, so it is varied/…/it is important, you must have that /.../ if you practice against those who are less good you have to practice to steer, steer and play how you want. When you practice against those who are better you get yourself to try and fight to be as good as them. That is important.

The players appreciated the concept of upwards and downwards training as the training became more varied. The concept will prepare the players for competing against different competitors, which they have to handle/face in the process of becoming a senior elite tennis player.

Coaches

The results showed that the group organization differed among the clubs. Some argued that the players were grouped by tennis level, that is, those who wanted to compete trained together due to more training needed with more intensity. Those who were in tennis school and not competing trained together.

It was revealed that four different groups in the focal age existed in some clubs. The group constellation depended on the developmental and ambition level. The elite operation in this age was based on ambition, attitude and level of tennis. Tennis levels were not solely decided from the rankings, but on the potential as well. One important consideration was to separate the groups by gender

in order to equalize the maturity levels, hence, create good social environments. This was not possible in all clubs, as one coach described:

> As we are a small club we are slightly limited. We cannot always separate girls and boy, they need to train together in order to run the club activities, and it has been great as well. Girls and boys have different playing styles and it can sometimes be useful for girls to play with boys and vice versa. So it is a challenge for the social [i.e., environment] sometimes.

The issue of upward and downward training arose, and the coaches said that they wanted to avoid these terms, and that they were mostly applied by players and parents. It was explained that players got the opportunity to practice with better or less good players, but coaches meant that there is nothing called upward or downward training. One coach explained it like this:

> My philosophy is that nothing like that exists [i.e., upwards and downwards training]. You can find so many different areas within it; [i.e., when] people are talking about upward training, it is about those who have achieved better results might have higher tempo that is upwards training for many. But it can be a technical aspect as well; you can bring in a player so they can learn from that player who is more technically developed. Even if they are performing better results than that player you can learn from them if we look at the physical parts and so on.

Another coach added:

> It was exactly what I was coming to /.../ avoid down this 'up and down' and talk about the environment the player should be in order to develop best/…/ we try to talk a lot about the environment, rather than upwards and downwards training.

Coaches meant that players and parents had a hard time understanding this, which was explained as follows by one coach:

> And this part, players and parents do not understand. It is not upwards training, it is only sparring. You can always focus on what you want to work on, so you can work with your thing against anyone, but they [i.e., parents and players] do not understand that.

Parents

The parents had the perception that the training groups were organized based on levels the players were at in tennis. They also perceived that gender division occurred. They believed that the ground setting was that players would get a leveled training (i.e., players at the same level training together), and also that the players received upwards and downwards training. Upwards training was defined by parents as playing against players that was - in terms of results - better, often older players. Downwards training was defined as playing against not as good players who usually were younger. The parents explained that upwards training did not in all cases occur against an older player, and that downwards training was not always against a younger player. The fact that their kids were involved in upwards and downwards training were seen as something positive because the player does not always encounter equally good players in competitions, but then has to face both less good and better players. Parents meant that players get to practice different skills depending on the level of the opponent.

One parent also perceived that the groups were organized by the players' attitude towards tennis, and explained this as following: "I think they seem to have organized based on how kids' attitude towards tennis is, how seriously they are committed tennis, which I experience here [in the club that the kid was active in]."

The parents explained that the clubs had been successful organizing the training groups. It was important that girls and boys trained together but also in homogeneous groups. They explained that their kids understood the meaning of the upwards and downwards training and also that they appreciated the arrangements.

Amount of training

Players

The players explained that the number of training sessions per week varied between three to seven tennis sessions a week and excluding one to two strength workouts. This amount of training was considered as good, generally. However, some players wanted to increase the amount of training. In some cases it was impossible increase the training due to school and other activities taking time**.** One player stressed that if one player had trained more, the player might have become tired of tennis: "I had no time for anything else and I think if I had trained more than I had probably become tired of it. Then I probably would not be sitting here today."

Coaches

The coaches described a very wide variety. Some players' had one to two tennis sessions per week, meanwhile the most ambitious players had seven to eight tennis sessions per week, and strength training a few days a week. When it was discussed how relevant the amount of trainings was, the coaches meant that it was impossible to generalize this. Some players managed a high training dose, while others were not. One coach explained it like this:

> I dislike, or have difficulties to talk about 'them' [i.e., as a group] when [i.e., I] talk about training. Instead [i.e., I] talk about every individual and see what the needs are and so on. Some players may be at a very high dose [i.e., of training] It probably depends on how physically ready, mentally ready, technically ready they are /.../ some [i.e., players] are not ready, but perhaps performing the same results. They think they can have the same amount [i.e., of training]. I mean, "It does not suit you as a player". There is no answer.

The coaches stressed that the training dosage should be determined on an individual level, and that quality should be prioritized before quantity. Furthermore, it was discussed that in an international perspective the players in the focal age were practice significantly less than their international competitors. The Swedish school system makes it hard for players to practice more than they already do today. The coaches' discussed the importance of quality in the training sessions; thus, make the most of the training. One of the coaches explained this:

> We have a different school system /.../ they have long school days. I know myself, they have been practicing before school, going in school all day, comes here [i.e., to the training] and it is not often they [i.e., the players] have energy for the second session with high quality. They will train for 1, 5 hours to 2 hours as well, they might need a 45 minute workout [i.e., instead].

The coaches explained that they are trying to regulate the amount of trainings for those players who, they believed, cannot handle a higher dose of training. When the coaches have given recommendations to the parents and the players, they noticed they still bought private tennis sessions in order to increase the amount of training. A wish from the coaches was that the parents would have greater confidence in them. One coach explained this problem:

> We have 12, 13, and 14 years old players who travel abroad every two weeks and they are not even among the top five to seven in Sweden in their age. They [i.e., the parents] put an extreme amount of money, time and pressure on the kids early. Although we have recommended they should not do it, NOW. It is hard trying to teach both kids and the parents. There is no answer of course, but you are trying to guide at least.

Furthermore, the coaches discussed the kids' confusion of having a lot of different coaches, since different directives are given. Although different coaches were trying to teach the same things, this was done in different ways, which confused the kids. Coaches advised the parents to go through the club first, when I came to private training. The majority of the parents listen to the recommendation with a few exceptions.

They also mentioned that the pressure on the kids was deeply rooted in the tennis culture were they felt an increase during the recent years. The spontaneous tennis playing seemed to have disappeared (i.e., when kids play outside the organized training), instead, the parents hire private coaches for the kids, which were not positive at all times. One coach said: "They [i.e., the kids] do not play by themselves. It is very difficult to get them to play by themselves. Spontaneity, friends... no, they must have a coach, it has to be organized."

Parents

When the parents described the amount of training per week regarding their kids, it was a wide variety; between four tennis sessions to 10-11 hours of tennis and between two to five strength trainings. A total of about 15 hours practice per week was reported and the clubs served for about 12 hours of these. The rest of the training took place outside the club activities together with the parents or private coaches. In a discussion whether they thought the amounts of training were reasonable or not, the parents explained they had never heard from their kids that it was too much training. Parents addressed that in an international perspective their kids' amount of training was not enough. Parents argued that in other countries there were other school systems and the federations had more money. Parents meant that it were impossible for their kids to practice more tennis due the school system and the amount of competitions. As one parent said:

> In an international perspective we do not train enough, really. We can talk about the double [i.e., amount of training]. Often there are other school systems abroad and the federations have more money, it is a little different. I do not really know how we would have time to train more, it is pretty much, and then it is competitions all the time too /.../ I do not know how many hours per week they stand on the tennis court and play matches. Then of course the sport dose is considerably higher than them 15 hours. With our school you can probably not get more practice.

The quality of training

Players

The quality of training, quality of coaches, and perceptions of the facilities were included in this aspect. The players had different perceptions of the quality of the coaches. Some were very satisfied and some thought they were just good. Something that was raised was that they had several coaches, which led to that various directives were given. This was described by one player:

> I cannot say that it was really good, it was good. We had several coaches; it was two-three a week. It was like, he said one thing, and then the other [i.e., coach] told me another thing. But they were good.

This club had many members and there was an understanding that it was hard to adjust having the same coach more often. Some players expressed that the quality of the tennis coaches and strength coaches were very good.

How the players experienced the facilities differed, due to the players came from different clubs. They were often satisfied with the indoor facilities but expressed that outdoor facilities had a poor standard. They were satisfied with the access to fitness centers which had a good standard. Some players had wanted better training schedule, due to that late practice resulted in that the schoolwork suffered. Players wanted greater access to tennis courts during weekends. It was communicated that it was difficult to get access to the courts; they had to book several weeks in advance. A few players were completely satisfied with the quality of training during the focal age.

Coaches

The coaches perceived that there were many coaches who lacked education, while some expressed they worked along well-educated coaches. They argued that in an international perspective, the Swedish coaches lacked in education. One coach explained this in the following way:

> Viewing from an international perspective, many of us have gone the Swedish training program/.../ it is very low in number of hours when you looking at France, Spain, etc. /.../ we are not near the education that has been internationally /.../ that is something the federation has a lot to work with.

The coaches seemed satisfied with their indoor facilities but wished they had more control over the outdoor courts (when the municipality in the current situation owned them). It seemed to be a perception that there were too few outdoor courts as well. Furthermore, coaches discussed that it should exist a better exchange between the clubs. Geographically, the clubs was located near each other, but that no exchange was taken place between them. Some clubs had collaborations with

clubs in the same region, but collaborations with clubs located geographically further away also existed. Why an exchange between the clubs which were located close to each other did not exist in a larger extent today was explained as follows by one coach:

> It is like that phenomenon that one has a relative in the same city as you, and you never visit that one, you take it for granted. There is much work with that /.../ it should be organized. Personally I think it is an interesting thing.

Another coach had this view of the non-existing exchange between the closest clubs:

> There is more time and resources that are needed/.../ many [i.e., players] quit when they are around 13-16 years. It is hard to get them [i.e., the players] to stay [i.e., in tennis]. If we can get them together [i.e., the clubs] perhaps more stick together outside the club limits. That might eventually provide some more dividends [i.e., that more players stay in tennis].

Parents

The parents were satisfied with the quality of the coaches. It arose that parents might have wished for another organization of the training sessions. They found that the variation of the trainings were insufficient. The parents wished for more technical training and more individualized training. It was also stated that there were too many players who trained together and the number of coaches were not enough to enable a satisfying training. The parents meant that this was a question of resources. The parents communicated that the clubs lacked in technical training. Their kids got technical training by buying private sessions outside of club activities. Almost all parents bought or had bought private tennis sessions to their kids. One of the parents meant that without their involvement in tennis, their kids had not been at the level they are at today, by saying this: "These girls we represent would not have been anything without the commitment we [i.e., the parents] put in private training".

The parents understood that the coaches tried to educate technical training and that it is difficult to implement technical training in large training groups with few coaches. One parent meant that a fair pathos also had something to do with this:

> Since we are of course in Sweden with a fair pathos that pervades the most part, we have the non-profit associations and it is very difficult for a coach to take out some [i.e., players] and practice extra, without others wanting it as well. It does not simply work. We are in the hands of a system that may not benefit much competition, thus utmost competitive elite. That is probably why it looks like it does in the Swedish tennis today.

The parents seemed satisfied with the training facilities, but they wished for more outdoor courts. They thought that the geographical location of the facilities was important so the kids could take the bus to the facilities instead of being dependent on the parents driving them. It was raised that they had limited access to the tennis courts outside the organized training. Parents expressed that it were almost impossible for the kids to play tennis on the weekends, since the courts were often fully booked. They communicated that the booking costs were too high and suggested a higher discount to book courts or that it should be free of charge. None booked courts allowed the play-

ers to use them for free. It was not possible to book the courts for private coached tennis sessions without costs. This complicated the accessibility for spontaneous tennis playing. One of the parents explains this as follows:

> In some way it is /.../ what should we say a form of marketing [i.e., that the clubs talented players use their courts] A positive one, you can always hope /.../ I think that clubs can pay back in the form of that, because the clubs know that they cannot create good tennis player without mighty help of us [i.e., parents] financially. I think then you can get some hours, avoid paying for the courts at least if you hire a trainer for 500 SEK. Then you can avoid the 300 SEK for the court. I think that.

Access to expert assistance

Coaches

The coaches explained that they did not have this expertise within the clubs but that they had networks and cooperation so that they could recommend players to expert help. One club had cooperation with a sport psychology consultant who helped with parental education and some clubs had help from a strength coach a few times a week. The coaches meant that if a player needed expert help, they could recommend who or where they were able to make contact, as one coaches describes it: ”We may not have it on place. We have some physiotherapists and masseurs we can contact, maybe not sports psychologists, but then we find solutions to it.”

Parents

The parents experienced that they had to go externally to get expert help. Some parents were aware of some collaboration with physiotherapists while some did not know that this cooperation existed. They said that the coaches did not guide them; instead the parents alone had to contact the physiotherapists etc. This question divided the parents and some parents felt that the coaches did not care about this, while others thought the they did but that no shortcuts for the players to get help existed, which was explained like this: “They care but there is no one that take hold of it, like no shortcuts, no one [i.e., the coaches] is having any contacts. We have to arrange it by our self.”

Parents would have preferred that there were physical therapy closely linked to the club and the players. The parents seemed dissatisfied regarding how much the clubs provided for their kids’ tennis involvement, as one parents described it:

> You have to buy the technical part [i.e., outside the club activity] on the basis of them [i.e., the coaches] having no time [i.e., for technical training during club trainings]. They are good at group training, physical training, well not good, they provide it and make sure it exists. But the physiotherapist part does not exist.

Another parent added: ”You can think of, if you searched whole this /.../ what does the club mean in my daughter’s tennis, 50% maybe? The rest we get to self-organize, I would say.”

The parents brought up the lack of a "package" surrounding their kids’ tennis involvement. They compared with the tennis academies existing abroad, which offered holistic and complete so-

lutions and this is something that parents wish existed in the clubs. They explained that they had a lot of responsibility in their kids' tennis involvement and what the clubs provide was not sufficient, which was explained by one parent:

> What is missing /.../ a package or something around the players. We must of course take care of this ourselves. We have to the book strength training /.../ physiotherapists /.../ tennis training and we take care of private technical training ourselves. There is no one holding together a package around them which is needed today.

Amount of competitions

Players

The amount of competitions in the focal age was discussed by the players, coaches and parents. Some of the players explained that they competed very much during the focal age, while some players competed a lot but had higher focus on three to four major competitions per year. The players reported that many competitions existed and that it was up to them to decide how frequently they participated in competitions. In average it seemed that the players competed between two-three times a month. As one player described it: "It was different periods, during certain months there are more competitions. In average it was maybe two or three competitions in the month, it was a lot."

The players were not limited to only compete in Sweden, they could also compete abroad. Some players competed two to three times a year abroad while some players competed up to ten times a year abroad. The players said that there were many competitions located near them, so they did not have to travel abroad to compete.

Coaches

The coaches reported that players competed constantly in the focal age. It was reported that the best players in the club participated in about 20 competitions per year, e.g. about 1, 75 competitions per month. The coaches felt that the players were competing with high frequency and that it would be desirable to implement two to three competition-free periods per year. One coach explained it like this: "Sometimes it is too much [i.e., competitions]. I know that the region have the ambition /.../ that there should be sanctions for no competitions in September? /.../ I think that would have been very, very good."

One coach reported that there was too much focus on competitions and not on the actual performance. Each competition seemed to be the most important. Was to change this were the suggested competition-free periods and also that all competitions would not be counted in the ranking system. The coaches wanted to be more involved in the players' competition calendar, but they experience that the players together with their parents booked competitions and that this was the reason for the amount of competition had become so high. One coach described it:

> I think it is important that coaches help players to plan out the competitions, especially when parents and players are booking 20 competitions [i.e., per year]. Help them to prioritize /.../ look at it together with their training etc. /.../ they sign themselves up competitions now a day.

The coaches claimed they tried to regulate when players competed too much but also when they competed too seldom. The coaches tried to see what each player needed. Some players managed to compete frequently while others did not. They reported that the players also competed abroad. It seemed to be a perception that the players began competing abroad too early, often before they had started to win competitions in Sweden. They recommend the parents and players to start winning competitions in Sweden before they begin to competing abroad. To compete abroad was also seen as a preparation for the players for future competitions abroad if they become very good.

The coaches wished for more categorized competitions. A very good player can face a less good player early in a tournament, which often eliminated the less good players early in tournaments. If you could categorize the competitions so equally good players face each other in the beginning of the tournaments, they believed that more players would start competing in tennis. A coach described this as follows:

> /.../ the ones who have the best ranking always is far ahead, so two novices can compete because they know that they will meet each other. The winner then meet a little better player, the one that won meets one that is better. If you are a beginner who is really good you get to meet those who are talented but you have to have won five matches before. In Sweden, all of a sudden you play against the best and then "thank you" [i.e., get eliminated early]. I do not think it makes players wanting to compete and the parents do not want to drive to competitions because it is no fun.

The clubs wanted become better at creating tennis players who reach the world elite. They meant that they manage to create players who will reach to be among the top ten in Sweden, but not higher than that. They had no suggestion how to take the next step, but they were aware of that they will need time and resources to achieve this. They argue that it costs a lot to become an elite player in tennis.

Parents

The parents reported that their kids competed between 70-143 times per year. The parents felt that their kids were competing very much. It was the parents who registered their kids to the competitions. The players also needed to participate in several specific competitions, according to Tennis Syd's criteria. Some parents reported that their kids were not involved in the planning of competitions, while other parents involved their kids in the planning. Why the kids compete so much in the focal age seemed to depend primarily on the point system to the ranking. A parent described competition system in the following way:

> Our arrangements are completely crazy, we have competitions always. Of course you can say that "it is just not to compete", but that is not possible/.../ we have a points system which then forms the basis of competitions /.../ there is no one who dares to drop it really. You could perhaps have four to five week periods, six to seven [i.e., when

> you do not compete] where you might practice and build up [i.e., strength, technic etc.] /.../ as other sports do. We do not have that in tennis.

The parents explained that they let the players compete abroad as long they can afford it. Some of the parents' kids had not competed abroad yet. They argue that even if they went abroad, they may face the same opponents as in Sweden. The international races in Sweden (Tennis Europe) did not seem to be popular, and the parents expressed it more like a Swedish championship.

Something that the parents wished for was that the coaches supervised more competitions, since it is when the players should perform. The parents meant that the coaches should be able to coach their kids so they could transfer what they trained on to matches in a better way. The parents experienced that there were too few coaches during the competitions so they could not see all the kids play.

Combination of school and tennis

Players

Some of the players reported that it was perceived to be a lack of communication between the school and the clubs during the focal age. Often they gave their school schedules to their coach so they knew when they were in school. But some players felt that the coaches did not take the schedule into account and it resulted in that they had to train late nights which in turn affected their schoolwork. A player shared the experience: "Sometimes it was very late practices. Then you came home and you would study, it was not on top /…/ you got to study a little before [i.e., practice]. It was never any fun time /…/ fun time at home."

At the same time the players explained that they still had time for school because they had learned how to plan their time, mainly due to the stress. It was suggested that athletes generally were better at planning because of this. Other players had experienced good communication between school and sport, where the teachers had an understanding that they trained a lot and that there was no problem with submitting school assignments after a deadline, if they had been in the away traveling and competing. As one player described it:

> There was good communication between the school, coaches, and teachers. We trained in the morning /.../ they [i.e., the teachers'] knew that we would come [i.e., to school] /.../ they could be a little more flexible with us tennis players with assignments and homework /.../ they realized that we practiced a lot.

One of the players explained that due to much school work, tennis trainings had to be skipped. A perception of an understanding that the teachers was experienced when it came to allowing time off from school for competitions and training camps. A dream scenario regarding the combination of school and tennis was that the players could determine the time planning by themselves, meaning that they decide when they should be at school and when they should train tennis. But it was an

understanding that this was not realistic. It seemed that the players still managed to deal with school in a good way during the focal age.

Parents

Some of the parents felt that the combination of school and tennis could be stressful to the kids, especially among girls because they felt they wanted achieve better results in school. They felt that their kids could not fully focus on either the school or tennis and that both parts were suffering. They had the perception that it was not any problem to get time off from school when it is was needed because of tennis as long as the kids did their schoolwork properly. Yet it was important to have a dialogue with the teachers and coaches about this. One of the parents described this as follows:

> Actually, they [i.e., the teachers] are not allowed to give so much time off like they do /.../ the Swedish sports life and the Swedish school does not collaborates' at all /.../ you just need to go down to Germany, France and Spain, it is a huge difference, a different system.

The parents felt that the school suffered to some extent. A proposal from a parent was that it should be opportunities for distance education enabling that kids could train more tennis. Or even that the players could choose to attend to secondary school for four years instead of three years, as is today. This was explained as following:

> Yes it is of course they have time [i.e., for school] /.../ if they would have more time they could have done better [i.e., in school] /.../ if they had only played tennis they would probably have been better [i.e., in tennis]. If you could find other forms /.../ distance schooling or something/…/ instead of going to secondary school for three years, you could choose attend in four years/.../ then you get to play much more tennis.

It was brought up that one could choose to go athletic high school for four years instead of three years to combine tennis and school. But the parents meant that kids needed more tennis training already before the focal age, one parent explained this as follows:

> Then they [i.e., the players] are so old. We would need to have that investment /.../ I would say already in year 3 [i.e., of primary school] /.../considering how it looks in other countries if we are able assert ourselves in an international perspective.

The parents did not believe that the players should flourish until they were 20 to 21 years old, which were the general expectations from a tennis player today. This was described by two parents as follows:

- Here (in Sweden) they should of course not flourish until they are 20-21 after all (Parent 1)
- No, this belief remains (Parent 2)
- Yes but it is what they (the coaches) do (say) for us to stay here (Parent 1)
- It is odd that the results shows otherwise (Parent 2)
- If you have not, now I'm very mean, but have you not done anything (accomplished good results) when you are 15-16 years old, then you will not reach the top level in any way (Parent 1)

Parental involvement in tennis

Questions about parental involvement in tennis were not included in the interview guide route, but was a subject that was raised among the coaches and parents.

Coaches

The coaches perceived the parents were a resource, especially regarding the financial part. The parents pay a lot of money for their kids' tennis activities. One coach explained they could use parents help during competitions. Parents see their kids play more than the coaches do. To teach parents to ask suitable questions to the players and help guiding the player during competitions could be a good resource for the coaches. This was explained by one coach: "They [i.e., the parents] see the kids play more tennis matches than we do/…/ they could ask two-three questions to their kid after one match in a certain way. Maybe guide them/…/ it would be great."

The coaches thought that this could be made possible through parental education in the clubs.

Another thing that was brought up by the coaches was situations when they thought the parental involvement became too excessive and the tennis took damage of it. They further explained this; they found it difficult to distinguish between what was tennis related problems (i.e., where you as coach could speak up) and what was the upbringing of the parents (i.e., where you as a coach cannot intermarry). As one coach describe it: "I believe in the big cities the parents create a lot [i.e., problems] which affecting our working environments and the kids' environments". Another coach explained this further: "Tennis looks a little different in comparison, for example, with football. [i.e., tennis] Requires more of the parents/…/ they have to be more engaged [i.e., than parents in team sports]".

Some coaches explained that they had parental educations in their club two times a year together with a sport psychologist. During this education coaches shared their perceptions and have discussions with the parents. The sport psychologist describes the scientific recommendations within parental involvement in sport. All parents do not participate in these educations but the coaches are glad if some parents find this useful. Generally the coaches experienced that most of the existing parental involvement was healthy. But there were also parents who had a too excessive involvement. Something that the coaches wished for here was that the parents did not put pressure on their kids, and that parents did not focus too much on their kids results in tennis.

Parents

The parents described their involvement in their kids' tennis as huge. They pay for private tennis sessions, planning the competitions calendar, drive their kids' to tournaments etc. One parent described the parental involvement in the following way:

> What we are doing [i.e., the parents] is barely health care and it is definitely no health care for the families who is in this /…/ even if this [i.e., tennis] is something the kids love more than anything else it is often associated with stress, conflicts and it wears in the families/…/ there is maniacs [i.e., parents], it is crazy. They are totally focused on this [i.e., their kids' tennis], entire families and they drop everything else. I do not think it is healthy.

It was described that this creates pressure on the kids' tennis involvement. The parents meant that this kind of parental involvement is unavoidable. They have to be this engaged otherwise it does not work. They felt they have to push everything; this is described by one parent:

> I just want to be the nice parent who drive occasionally /…/ to experience the kids come home happy when they have played and that I know that it is good training [i.e., in the club] and that you can fully trust [i.e., the club, coaches etc.]. I think everyone [i.e., parents] would like to have that. Then you might show up anyway [i.e., during training, competitions] then it is more of an interest than of coercion /…/ I know if we [i.e., parents] are not there [i.e., during training, competitions etc.] they [i.e., the kids] get no courts, then there will be nothing.

Another parent added this:

> If you let go you notice [i.e., bad] results immediately. If you let go and frankly do not care about it [i.e., private training, no parental involvement] and let others [i.e., the club, coaches] take care of your kid then it is not good [i.e., enough practice for the kids].

The parents felt that the club and coaches did not follow the agreements of the practice for their kids. Parents had to be involved so their kids could get good training. One parent also stressed that it was easier when having own background in tennis and meant that parents which had no experience of how tennis practice should be carried through must have a really hard time. They also felt that the clubs were not designed to create elite tennis players and that Sweden in general was not able to do this.

The parents would be happy to avoid accompanying all the competitions that their kids participate in. They pay a lot of money for hotels and food costs when they are forced to go with the whole family. Parents wished that more coaches and leaders in the club went to competitions so they could take care of the players in order to avoid parents having to accompany. The parents meant that it would be cheaper for them to pay for accommodation for their kids instead of for the whole family. They have an understanding that it would need a lot of administrations for the clubs for this to work. More staff and coaches would be needed to accompany the competitions to take care of all the players. Parents meant that this would be cheaper for both the clubs and themselves, in comparison of how it looks today. The parents were willing to pay for this to be feasible. They also felt that the coaches could ask the parents for help (since they already helps to such an extent)

to accompany competitions if they needed help to look after all the players. Then parents could take turn on this instead of going to every competition.

A summation of the results is presented as a thematic framework (see Table 1), using the participants own words.

Table 1. Thematic framework of the results.

Major themes	Players	Coaches	Parents
Club atmosphere	- Very fun to come to training - Always a good atmosphere - It was felt that it was very serious - Prestige - Many players as the club invested in	- Mixed depending on whether it was tennis school or elite players - Some wanted to become professional tennis players, some just wants to play for fun	- The children is competitive - There is no play - Not only competition - Tennis is at the moment a job - The training is focused on that the children become good in tennis - The interaction between parents and coaches makes it seriously
Organization of the training groups	- Level of how good you were as a tennis player - Upwards training and downwards training - Mixed girls and boys	- Level tennis players - Those who want to compete in a group (require more training) - Divide girls and boys is important for the social environment (maturity) - Upwards and downwards training	- After tennis ability - Sometimes mixed players (age, skill level) - Leveled training - Upwards and downwards training - Very much by gender
Experiences of the organization of the training groups	- Upwardly training helped - Variety is important	- Limited by the size of the club - Girls and boys are training together which was good - different playing styles of the sexes - benefit both groups - Each player has a training schedule optimal for them - Want to avoid the terms "upwards and downwards training" - more focus on which environment the player develops in	- Good that girls and boys is divided - This has been successful with both upwards, downwards, and leveled trainings
Amount of training	- Varied between 3-7 tennis sessions a week - Varied between 1-2 strength workouts a week	- Varied between 1-8 tennis sessions a week - Strength workouts a few days a week	- 4 tennis workouts a week - Strength workouts 2-4 times a week - 10-11 hours of tennis a week - 4-5 hours of strength workout a week
Experience of the amount of training	- Good - Had wanted to train more	- Some players managed to be at a high training dose, while some were not ready - Quality before quantity - Internationally the players trains less than their competitors (the school system makes it difficult to find time to exercise more)	- The amount of training is good - That it would be too much training, parents have never heard the children say this - Internationally the children does not train enough (school system and competitions makes it difficult to find time to exercise more)

Quality of the trainings	- Strength training was perceived as both good and poor between the different clubs - Good quality of the coaches - Many different coaches was perceived as less good (many different directives was given)	- Poor education of the coaches - Well educated coaches - Internationally, the coaches in Sweden is poorly educated	- Strength workouts in the clubs works well - The quality is good of the coaches
Recommendations for training	- Had wanted to practice more - Better training schedule, it was often late trainings (school suffered)	- More confidence in the coaches - Listen to coaches recommendations more - Better exchange between the clubs in the region - Wanted to be able to bring players to an international level - More spontaneous tennis	- More technical training - Add calmer periods of training - the variation is too poor - The individual adaptation is not enough - A package or something around the players
Experiences of the training facilities	- Indoor webs good - Outdoor courts were disaster (bad and worn) - Access to nice gym - Poor indoor courts and no outdoor courts - Really excellent courts both indoors and outdoors	- Satisfied with the facility - Access to the gym and other sports activities - Indoor courts fine - outdoor courts poor	- Good training facilities, we have everything - Stunning facility - Good geographical location (the children can take the bus to the training)
Recommendations regarding the training facilities	- More access to courts on weekends	- More control over the outdoor courts (the municipality owns them)	- More outdoor courts - More access to courts on weekends - Better prices for renting courts with a coach - Avoid paying for renting courts with a coach
Amount of competitions	- A lot of competitions - 2-3 competitions a month - focused on the major competitions, 4 per year	- Constant, every weekend - 1,75 competitions a month - About 20 competitions per year - 100 matches at least (per year)	- Between 70-143 matches per year
Competitions abroad	- 3-10 competitions per year	- Competitions abroad occurs	- As much as the wallet allows
Experiences of the competition calendar	- Just right - They decided how much they wanted to compete - If one wanted to compete much there were opportunities for this	- Too much focus on each competition than on the performance (every competition is the most important) - Some players compete too much	- The concept is crazy, we compete all the time - Parents sign their children to the competitions - Many times children do not know where or what tournaments they will play - Some children are very involved in the planning of competitions - Some competitions should be played on the basis of Tennis Syd

Recommendations regarding the competition activities		- Competition-free periods - That some competitions are not counted in the rankings - More ”compete-training" - Win competitions in Sweden before the players start to compete abroad - More spontaneous Tennis - Get more players of the club to start competing - Categorization of competitions to reduce eliminations early	- More match supervision - More coaches on site - Calmer periods without competition
Access to expert help as physiotherapists, doctors and sports psychology consultants		- Does not exist within the club but they have networks - Coaches can recommend sport psychology consultants and physiotherapists - Players only contact if they become injured, no prevention	- Must seek help outside the club - Access/cooperation from the clubs does not exist - Cooperation with physical therapist/chiropractor exist (all parents did not know this) - The coaches do not control this, if players are injured, the parents must handle it themselves - No experts that examines the players continuously - The coaches do not care
Combination of school and tennis	- Experienced both good and poor communication between school and sport - Late trainings resulted that the players could not cope with school work - The school had an understanding and were flexible when it came to late submissions of school assignments - Had to miss tennis sessions to keep up with school - It was no problem to take time off from school for competitions and camps	- Some went behind in school	- The school creates a tremendous pressure - both the school and the tennis suffers - Good support from the school for taking time off for competitions - The school suffers, if they had had more time for school assignments they had been even better in school - A dialogue between the parents, the coaches and the school is important

Recommendations regarding the combination of school and tennis **Parental involvement**	- More individualized when you would be in school, and when you could train	- Parents are a resource, especially financially - Some parents have a too excessive involvement - Difficult to distinguish between what was tennis related problems and what was the upbringing of the parents - Most of the parental involvement was healthy	- Possibility of distance education - Get the opportunity to attend secondary school for 4 years instead of 3 years (fewer lessons and more tennis) - Parents involvement is huge which create pressure on the kids - This kind of involvement is unavoidable - They have to be this engaged otherwise it does not work
Recommandations regarding perental involvments		- Coaches could use parents help during competitions - Teach he parents how to guide players during competitions - Parental education - Parents should not focus too much in their kids result - Parents should not pressure their kids	- Coaches could ask parents for help - Avoid accompanying competitions

The thematic framework shows perceptions of each theme and future recommendations. It also shows similarities and differences in the perceptions between the groups.

Discussion

The aim of the study was to examine the experiences of the talent developmental environments in tennis in the focal age 13-16 years, within clubs under Tennis Syd's operation. The present study had three objectives.

(1) Examine the retrospective experiences of the talent development environments among players who already passed the focal age.

(2) Examine the retrospective and concurrent experiences of the talent development environments among tennis coaches.

(3) Examine the concurrent experience of the talent development environments among parents whose kids of the focal age are active in tennis.

The discussion section will be structured to follow the eight major themes: atmosphere in the clubs, organization of the training groups, amount of training, quality of the trainings, access to expert assistance, amount of competitions, combination of school and tennis, and parental involvement. Each theme will be discussed based on the participants' perceptions and linkage with theoretical frameworks and previous research. Following this methodological reflections, implications, and conclusion will be presented.

Atmosphere in the clubs

Perceptions

The results indicate that the clubs atmosphere is perceived as competitive among those players who want to succeed in tennis. Players describe the atmosphere as good and that training is conducted in a serious manner. Coaches mean that the atmosphere varies due to ambition levels the players have. A competitive climate is found among the players with high ambitions in tennis. These results relates to Côté et al. (2007) and Stambulova et al. (2009) where sport specialization with highly structured practice is appropriate to occur in the focal age. Parents also describe the atmosphere as highly competitive. They stressed that their kids enjoy the social exchange they get in their tennis participation, e.g., want to meet their friends in tennis before or after tennis session. The parents mean they make their kids participation in tennis serious by their own involvement. Some of the parents had athletic background in tennis and Henriksen et al. (2011) displayed that parents who had been involved in sport nourished an elite mentality to their kids e.g., demanding commitment to training. Similar results were also found by Gould et al. (2008; 2006).

Organization of the training groups

Perceptions

The results show that players perceived that training groups is mainly formed by the players' performance level. Players mean that training groups is mixed regardless of gender and age. The upwards and downwards training that occurred is perceived as important for players development in tennis. This results relates to Henriksen et al. (2011; 2010a; 2010b) where in the successful environments athletes get the opportunity to train together with athletes both at higher and lower performance level. This enables that the athletes can learn from athletes at higher performance levels and serve as role models for the younger athletes, or athletes at lower performance level. The results show that these conditions seem to be found in the tennis clubs.

On the other hand, coaches explains they want to avoid the terms 'upwards' and 'downwards' training and instead use the term 'environment' which the player develops best in. To train with players that allow different types of skill development were found in the clubs, which may be related to Henriksen et al. (2011; 2010a; 2010b). The results show that coaches mean that it is important to divide the genders during training. In that way the social context is optimized for the maturity levels among the genders.

Parents perceived that division between the genders occurred. They believed that training groups were mostly formed by players' performance level. A leveled training was perceived as important for their kids. Although, parents' also perceived upwards and downwards training as important since their kids encounters players in different performance levels in competitions. Parents

mean that their kids can practice difference skills in the upwards and downwards training **(**Henriksen et al., 2011; 2010a; 2010b).

The results indicate that tennis players in the focal age receives a leveled training but also gets the opportunities to train together with tennis players at a higher performance level, as well as players at a lower performance level. These findings can be related to Henriksen et al. (2011; 2010a; 2010b) findings within successful talent development environments. These training conditions can tentatively prepare players in the focal age of the transition between junior to the senior tennis, (Stambulova, 2003) when players get the opportunity to experience higher levels of performance and to create a relationship with the performance-related better players (Henriksen et al. 2011; 2010a; 2010b).

Amount of training

Perceptions

The results show that the players reports that the amount of training varies between three to seven tennis sessions a week and between one to two strength trainings a week among in the focal age. The amount of training is considered as good among most players.

The results show that the coaches mean that different players can handle different amounts of training and therefore cannot generalize the amount of training in the focal age. The coaches mean they give individualized recommendations of the training amount for each player. That coaches are trying to individualize training can be seen as supportive for the individual athlete. This relates to Ivarsson et al. (2015) whom showed that athletes perceiving their talent development environment as supportive when focusing on long-term development and experience high well-being. Further, the results show that coaches mean that internationally the players train less than their international competitors.

Parents reported that the amount of training varies a lot between their kids which can be explained by age difference. Tennis sessions varies between four sessions (i.e., six hours) a week up to 10-11 hours tennis, and strength trainings between two times (i.e., 2 hours) a week up to 4-5 hours. Training is conducted mostly in the clubs but parents also buy private tennis sessions so their kids get to practice more on their technical skills. From the results, it seems that parents create good opportunities for their kids' development in tennis, and can be understood as that parents acknowledge and accept their kids' dedication to tennis, which relates to features of successful ATDEs (Henriksen, 2010a). On the other hand, this might create that their kids experiences unwanted expectations and demands for elusive achievements in tennis (Hoyle & Leff, 1997). Further, parents mean that internationally their kids training amount is not enough.

Aspects where improvements are needed

Some players wanted to have a higher amount of training but perceived that this was impossible because of school and other activities.

Coaches wished that parents had greater confidence in them, meaning that parents should listen more to their advices regarding amount of practice for their kids. The coaches' meat that parents created pressure on their kids by having a high amount of training when this was not suitable for that particular player. Hoyle and Leff (1997) meant that pressure from parents is unwanted expectations and demands on their kids' achievement in sport. Pressure from parents can affect kids' sports participation negatively when this can lowering kids self-esteem which further have a lowering effect on motivation to sport, which in turn may lead to drop-out in sport (Delforge & Le Scanff, 2006; Gould et al. 2008; 2006). Coaches also recommended more spontaneous tennis training among the players, that is, players practice together without coaches.

Based on the Swedish Tennis Federation guidelines (see Appendix 1) tennis players aged 15-16 years old should practice 20-24 hours a week where tennis sessions should account for 65% (i.e., 13-16 hours) and strength workout account for 35% (i.e., 7- 8 hours). In the present study parents had kids under the age of 15 which can explain the lower amount of training than the Swedish Tennis Federation recommends. Otherwise it seems that some players remain close to the recommended amount of practice. It should be noted that some of the parents' had kids who were under the age of 15, where the Swedish Tennis Federation do not have any guidelines for amount of practice.

Quality of training

Perceptions

The results indicate that the quality of the trainings, e.g., preconditions found in the EFS working model (Henriksen et al., 2010a), was perceived differently among the players. Some is very satisfied with the quality of the coaches during the focal age, while others mean that the quality was good. The results show that the coaches and parents are satisfied with their indoor facilities, and the results also indicate that the parents are satisfied with the quality of the coaches.

Aspects where improvements are needed

The results showed that some players had two-three coaches during one week of practice with was not appreciated in that way that coaches gave different directives in practice. That players had to negotiate different inputs from different coaches was also found in the less successful environments (Henriksen et al., 2014). Players also wanted improved training schedules to avoid late trainings to be able to deal with schoolwork's. Players had also wanted more access to tennis courts during weekends. Having to book courts weeks in advance complicated this.

Regarding the coaches, results show that they experiences that many coaches lacked in education, especially in an internationally perspective. Research in successful talent development environments, Henriksen et al. (2010a) found the existent of coaches with a variety of core competence allowed them to exchange their views and inspire each other, this results can related to the present study. Tentatively, coaches in the present study might take advantage of the different competencies that exist in the environment (Henriksen et al., 2010a).

Coaches perceived that they had too few outdoor courts and less control over these when the municipality owns them. The coaches also thought there should be more collaboration between the clubs in the region which is absent today. Some believed that collaborations between the clubs might generate that more players stays in tennis in higher ages. This can be related to research in successful environments (Henriksen et al., 2011; 2010a; 2010b), where it was common that practice and knowledge was shared across the clubs borders with different clubs and also different nations.

In the results it is shown that parents had wished for another organization of the training sessions; more variation, more technical skill training, more individualized training. Parents mean that more coaches are needed for this. Parents also wish for more outdoor courts. There is also a wish for greater access to the tennis courts outside the organized training, to a better price or to avoid payment for booking courts. Overall, it seems that the preconditions, included in the ESF working model, regarding human (e.g., coaching and management resources) and material (e.g., training facilities) in the clubs environment needs improvement (Henriksen et al., 2010a).

Access to expert assistance

Perceptions

The results showed that it do not exist any expertise assistance in the clubs but coaches mean that they have collaborations and contacts for this to recommend parents and players when this is needed. Further, the result shows that some parents experienced that they had no internal help from the club for expert assistance, while some knew about the collaboration that existed.

Aspects where improvements are needed

The results show that parents wish for a ”package” surrounding their kids tennis involvement, and that the clubs provide today is insufficient. The package should contain every aspects of training; tennis training, technical training, strength training and access to expertise help. Parent’s wish of a package can be related to the preconditions in the EFS working model (Henriksen et al., 2010a).

Amount of competitions

Perceptions

The results showed that some players competed in a large extent e.g., 2-3 times a month, while some had higher focus on a few competitions per year in the focal age. The amount of competitions is decided by players themselves.

The coaches perceived that players in the focal age compete regularly and sometimes too much (about 20 competitions a year, at least 100 matches). Coaches perceived that to compete abroad was a good preparation for future successful tennis players. Regarding the parents, results show that they perceive that their kids compete a lot (between 70-143 matches a year) and this was mainly because of the ranking system.

Aspects where improvements are needed

The results indicated that coaches want to implement two to three competition-free periods per year, also that not all of the competitions should be counted in the ranking system. Coaches want players to focus on the results in fewer competitions, instead of every competition. The coaches also want to be more involved in the planning of player's competition calendar. The results show that coaches perceived that players went abroad competing too early. A recommendation from the coaches is that players should first win competitions in Sweden before they compete abroad. The results also indicate that coaches want competitions in Sweden to be more categorized by performance level. Coaches want to be able to create tennis players who reach the world elite level.

The results showed that parents want more supervision of competitions by coaches. Results within the successful environments show that the federation helps athletes to plan their competition calendar and training (Henriksen et al., 2011). A suggestion would be that the Swedish Tennis Federation and Tennis Syd should have more control over the competition calendar in the focal age. The Swedish Tennis Federation's guidelines regarding competition (see Appendix 1) recommended that players aged 15-16 years participate in 65-80 single matches and 20-30 double matches a year, of these should about 16-18 be international competitions. The results do not indicate how many of the matches are single or double that the players participate in are. Either way, based on the Swedish Tennis Federation's guidelines, it seems that some players in the focal age compete in a too large extent. Furthermore, it should be noted that the parents in the present study had kids who were under 15 years of age, and that the Swedish Tennis Federation does not have guidelines for tennis players under 15 years of age. Tentatively should the Swedish Tennis Federation and Swedish Tennis Syd create clearer guidelines for the amount of competitions for tennis players under 15 years of age, to be able to regulate the amount of competitions for these players.

Combination of school and tennis

Perceptions

Some players perceived that it were good communication between school and sport. Teachers had an understanding of their limited time for schoolwork, players could therefor submit school assignment after deadline if they had been away at competitions or camps. These results are also found in successful talent development environments (Henriksen et al., 2011; 2010a; 2010b).

Parents explained that the combination of school and tennis is stressful, due to their kids could not fully focus on either school or tennis, which relates to the less successful talent developments environment (Henriksen et al., 2014). To get time off from school when competitions occurred was reported to not being a problem from both the players and the parents, as long as the players and their kids manage school.

Aspects where improvements are needed

The results shows that some players perceive a lack of communication between school and sport in the focal age which resulted in late trainings, and finding time for schoolwork and spare time was hard. Players mean that they learned to plan their time due to the stress. The results also show that players had to skip tennis sessions when it was needed to keep up with school. The result relates to the less successful talent development environments (Henriksen et al., 2014). In comparison, successful talent development environments perceive a good communication between schools and sports e.g., arranging extra classes rather than expecting student athletes to do much homework (Henriksen et al., 2011). It was also displayed that the students-athletes need to be structured to be able to combine school and an elite initiative in sport, which also was found in the present study.

The results shows that parents thought that distance education should be an option to enable more tennis training. They could also imagine their kids being able to attend secondary school for four years instead of three years so their kids could have fewer school lessons per day to be able to train more tennis. To attend athletic high school would mean that their kids could choose to attend high school for four years to be able to train more tennis, but parents mean that investment (i.e., early sport specialization and highly structured practice) should be implemented already when the kids is in primary school. This relates to Côté et al. (2007) pathway "early sport specialization leading to elite performance". Previous research has recommended that specialization in one sport does not need to occur before age 13 in sports where peak performance is reached in adulthood (Côté & Vierimaa, 2014; Stambulova et al., 2009). Carlson (1997; 1987) also supported this, meaning that early specializations in tennis do not favor the development of elite players, and that all-round sport engagement was more important before adolescence. Therefore, children should not specialize in tennis early, but instead pursue various sports before the age of 13 in order to develop physical

competencies and to increase the motivation to stay in sport (Bruner et al., 2011; Carlson, 1997; 1987; 1986).

Parental involvement in tennis

This issue was not included in the focus group question route, but arose among coaches and parents during the focus groups interviews.

Perceptions

The results show that coaches perceived parents as a resource, especially because they finance their kids' tennis participation. This relates to Fredricks and Eccles (2004), where one fundamental parental role in their kids sport experience is the "provider", meaning that the parents provide financial support which enabling their kid's sport participation. Côté (1999) also mean that parents provide opportunities for their children to enjoy sport by financial and time commitment to their child-athlete. The coaches mostly experienced healthy parental involvement, but there also exist parents with too excessive involvement which can harm their kids' involvement in the sport (Gould et al., 2008; 2006). The results show that parents are highly involved in their kids' tennis participation in the way that they are planning most of their competitions and private tennis sessions. Parents mean that this creates pressure on their kids and that this kind of involvement is unavoidable thus their engagement is needed for their tennis involvement to be successful. Research in successful talent development environment shows that a close parental involvement is not appreciated neither by the coaches nor by the players (Henriksen, 2010a). It was explained that "Mature athletes require mature parents" (Henriksen, 2010a, pp. 217). Further, Carlson (1987; 1986) found that Sweden's successful tennis players during the 1980s had experienced good support from their families where no excessive demands on success were found. Therefore, a too excessive parental involvement in tennis should be deprecated. This is also supported by Delforge and Le Scanff (2006), Hoyle and Leff (1997), and Gould et al. (2006; 2008).

Aspects where improvements are needed

Coaches' mean that they could need parents help during competitions when they see their kids play more often than the coaches do. Teaching parents how they could help their children during competitions would be a great help for the coaches.

The results show that coaches perceive that it is hard to distinguish parents' upbringing and a too excessive involvement in their kids' tennis. Coaches recommend that parents do not pressure their kids' tennis involvement and that parents should not focus too much on kids' results in tennis. This is also recommended in research of tennis parents' involvement (Carlson, 1987; 1986; Gould et al., 2008; 2006).

The results indicate that parents perceive that they have too excessive involvement, due to their kids to get the training needed for development. It shows that parents would gladly avoid this involvement, but mean that is unavoidable when the tennis clubs cannot deliver deliberate practice for their kids. This also involves having to accompany competitions. Parents perceive that too few coaches are accompanying competitions so the coaches cannot take care of all the kids by themselves. Parents are willing to pay for competitions trips in order for themselves to stay at home.

Methodological reflections

Using focus groups interviews to collect the qualitative data was a fruitful approach that allowed getting different opinions and experiences on a subject. As the moderator of the focus groups interviews, I learned a lot from each interview, with the result that I improved my approach from the first interview to the last. The consequences of this may be that more follow-up questions were asked during the later interviews which may have resulted in a loss of information in the first conducted interview.

The present study had 14 participants who represented nine different clubs. The present study examined shared features of these clubs, kept in mind that clubs might be different. Swedish Tennis Syd's working region consist of 34 000 members and 140 clubs, meaning that the number of participants and clubs in this study is a small portion of their entire business and therefore the results can only be consciously generalized across the population (Mitchell & Jolley, 2010). The present study intended to go in-depth into the topic talent development environment in youth tennis; therefore the research had a small number of participants (Krueger & Casey, 2015). A strength of the present study is that it serves valuable in-depth information, both retrospective and concurrent, from the perspectives of players, coaches and parents. To ensure the accuracy of the results I have listened carefully to the participants during the interviews, transcribed each interview verbatim, and analyzed the results in a systematic way (Krueger & Casey, 2015). A limitations of the study is that the issue regarding "access to expert assistance" was not brought up in the players interview, as well as the issue regarding "combination of school and tennis" was not addressed in the coaches interview. This affects the results by information loss in these two themes.

Implications

Players, coaches, and parents have addressed future recommendations regarding training, competition, combination of school and tennis, and parental involvement. The thematic framework (Table 1) summarizing results of the study can preferably be discussed by Swedish Tennis Syd and the clubs.

Strong points regarding training of existing ATDE

The amount of training was generally considered as good. The concept of upwards and downwards training was perceived as important for players' development and was an appreciated activity in the clubs. There was a perception that players get to practice different skills in tennis depending on the level of the opponent. This form of training was also perceived to prepare players to encounter players at different levels in competitions which were perceived as positive. These results relates to Henriksen et al. (2014) where community of practice with athletes both at a higher and lower performance level is a feature of successful ATDEs.

Overall, there was a perception that the quality of coaches was good and that the coaches are trying to carry out the training in the best possible way. The perceptions of the indoor facilities were often good, meaning that players, coaches, and parents was generally satisfied which the indoor courts.

Recommendations regarding training

The participants in the study mean that improvements can be made regarding the training activities. It is recommended that players in the focal age need more training and this includes that players should have more access to tennis courts during the weekends, as well as more affordable prices for bookings of the courts or gain access to the courts for free. If this is made possible, opportunities for an increased amount of technical training and more spontaneous tennis would be allowed. The clubs also want access to more tennis courts than in the current situation, as well as more control over those which are available today.

Further recommendations also include improved training schedules, meaning avoidance of late training in order to have more time for schoolwork. It was also claimed that more individual adaption of training is needed as well as more periodization of training, e.g., implementing lighter and heavier training periods. It was recommended from coaches that parents and players should have more confidence in the coaches, meaning listen more to coaches' recommendations regarding amount of training.

It was recommended that a greater exchange between the clubs in the region should exist, e.g., visiting neighbor clubs for exchange of training, and better cooperation between the coaches in the region. The clubs also want tools to be able to take their players to the international elite level in tennis. The coaches did not have an idea of exactly what tools are missing to enable this, but they understood that more resources are needed. Finally, a wish for a "package" surrounding the players was addressed. The package should include all sorts of training, e.g., technical tennis training, strength training, and competition activities, e.g., traveling, accommodations, meals, and supervision.

Strong points regarding competitions of existing ATDE

It was reported that players themselves could control how much they want to compete in the focal age. Many competitions are located near their hometowns which mean that the opportunity to compete much is easily accessible for the players.

Recommendations regarding competitions

The participants in the study wanted to implement a couple of competition-free periods per year, and also that not every competition in counted in the ranking point system. This would allow more opportunities to training matches, friendly games and spontaneous tennis. It was also recommended that competitions in Sweden should be categorized by skill level to reduce early eliminations of players who are beginners in the competition activity. This could also enable that more players begin to compete, which the clubs want.

A further recommendation is that more coaches and staff go to the competitions in order to be able to take care of all the players. This would allow parents not having to go to every competition which was recommended. More coaches at competitions would also mean that the supervision of the matches could be improved. Finally, it was recommended that players should concentrate on winning competitions in Sweden before they go to compete abroad.

Strong points regarding combination of school and tennis of existing ATDE

Some of the players had experiences of a good communication of school and tennis where the teachers had an understanding of their elite initiative in tennis. It was taken to account that players could submit assignments after deadline during periods when they competed and traveled a lot. These perceptions relate to Henriksen et al. (2014) “features of successful ATDEs”, where support of sporting goals by the wider environments are found, as well as coordination and communication between sport and school.

Recommendations regarding combination of school and tennis

Regarding combination of school and tennis a more individualized studies plan was recommended. This included opportunities to determine their own school hours and times for practice tennis. The participants meant that a possibility of distance education would enable a more individualized school plan that would allow more time for tennis. It was also recommended that the opportunity to attend secondary school for four years instead of three years as it is today, which further mean that players in the focal age would have fewer lessons at school per day and the possibility to implement more tennis training would increase.

Strong points regarding parental involvement

Parents were perceived as a resource, especially regarding the financial part, which enables kids’ participation in tennis. The existing parental involvement was generally perceived as healthy. A healthy parental involvement relates to Henriksen et al. (2014) where family acknowledges and

accepts the athletes' dedication to sport.

Recommendations regarding parental involvement

The participants recommended that parents could be used to help coaches during competitions, for example, for supervision of matches and help cake care of players. It was recommended that patents should not have a too excessive involvement in their kids' tennis participation, for example, put pressure on their kids and focus too much on their kids' results (Carlson, 1987; 1986; Delforge & Le Scnaff, 2006; Gould et al., 2008; 2006; Henriksen, 2010a; Hoyle & Leff, 1997). It was suggested that healthier parental involvement could be made possible through parental education in the clubs.

Conclusion

The study was requested by Swedish Tennis Syd. The study had three objectives: to (1) examine the retrospective experiences of the development environment among players who already passed the focal age; (2) examine the retrospective and concurrent experiences of the development environment among tennis coaches; (3) examine the concurrent experience of the development environment among parents whose kids are active in tennis in the focal age. The results presented eight major themes which showed positive aspects in the environments as well as recommendations were improvements could be made. In conclusion, the future recommendation raised in the study can hopefully serve as a basis for discussions on how the talent development environments can be optimized within tennis clubs under Swedish Tennis Syd's working region.

Acknowledgments

First of all I would like to thank Tennis Syd's operation manager, Christer Sjöö, and his colleague Ola Mårtensson, whom made this collaboration possible. Thank you for all the organizational help you have given me.

I would also like to thank the participants of the study. Thanks for sharing your thoughts and experiences with me – this study could not have been conducted without your participation.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Natalia Stambulova. Thank you for all the great feedback and help you have given me throughout the year.

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Appendix 1

KRAVANALYSFRÅGOR OCH UTVECKLINGSTRAPPA MED MÅLET INTAGNING TILL SOK´S TOPP OCH TALANGPROGRAM SENAST 2016

Tennis Herr

SVENSKA TENNISFÖRBUNDET/SWEDISH TENNIS ASSOCIATION
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Appendix 1

Inledning
Uppdraget består i att skapa en utvecklingstrappa med avseende på tid innan idrottaren är redo för SOK:s Topp- & Talangprogram (T&T). Utvecklinstrappan a innehålla tydlighet med avseende på fysnivåer, insats, resultat nivåer och teknik.

Syfte
Syftet är att både OSF, aktiva och deras tränare ska få en klar bild av vad som krävs och är viktigt för att nå nivå för intag i T&T. Utvecklingstrappan kan även vara ett bra verktyg vid selektering av idrottare.

Antagande
Medelålder på olympisk medaljör och Grand Slam medaljör i Tennis är ca 26-27 år. För att ha något att bygga utvecklingstrappan på utgår vi ifrån att man normalt är ca 14-17 år när man är tillräckligt bra för ingång i Utmanarprogrammet och ca 18-21 år när man är tillräckligt bra för att nå Topp- & Talangprogrammet.

Ålder och antal år i grenen på de aktiva i seniorvärldstoppen (= medaljörer på OS + topp 10 ATP):

Medelåldern i topp 10 ATP är 27,6 år
Medelåldern i topp 100 ATP är 27,4
Medelåldern vid ingång i topp 100 är 23,0 år
Bästa ranking är vid 25,3 år

Tävlingsfrekvens
Hur ofta tävlar de bästa i seniorvärldstoppen nationellt och/eller internationellt

Topp 10 ATP Tour Herrar

Nr.	Spelare	Ålder	Antal matcher (2012)	
1	Novak Djokovic	26 år	87 matcher	(75-12)
2	Rafael Nadal	27 år	48 matcher	(42-6)
3	Andy Murray	26 år	72 matcher	(56-16)
4	David Ferrer	31 år	91 matcher	(76-15)
5	Tomas Berdych	27 år	84 matcher	(61-23)
6	JM Del Potro	24 år	83 matcher	(65-17)
7	Roger Federer	32 år	83 matcher	(71-12)
8	Jo-W Tsonga	28 år	80 matcher	(55-25)
9	Richard Gasquet	27 år	64 matcher	(42-22)
10	Stanislav Wawrinka	28 år	55 matcher	(55-20)
		27,6	**74,7**	**(59,8-16,8)**

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Insats för de aktiva i seniorvärldstoppen

Hur stor är insatsen i timmar/pass per år för träning och tävling på seniorvärldstoppnivå samt uppskatta insats vid ingång i T&T (ca 5-6 år innan medelåldern på OS-medaljörerna).

Seniorvärldstoppen (Topp 10 ATP)
Tävlingsinsats för topp 10 ATP = 75 matcher (spridning 48-87)

Träningsinsats för topp 10-100 ATP
-
Ingång i Topp- & Talang, ca 19-21 år
(ca 5-6 år innan medelåldern för Topp 10 ATP/ålder vid bästa ranking = ~25-27år)

21 år och äldre (Talang/Topp)

Fysiska aktiviteter 23-24 tim/veckan
1100-1150 tim/året
Tennis 70 %
Annan idrott (fys) 30 %
(Mer fokus på fys än annan idrott)

Antal matcher 80-100 singlar
30-50 dubblar
ca 22 internationella tävlingar
Vid 22 respektive 23 år är seniorkarriären i gång på ITF, WTA/ATP Tour.

Idrottens/grenens Utvecklingstrappa för idrottens/grenens Utmanaråldrar.
Utvecklingstrappan skall för år 2014+2015+2016 innehålla tydlighet gällande

Insatsnivåer (antal matcher och nivå samt träningsinsats)
15-16 år
Fysiska aktiviteter 20-24 tim/veckan
980-1100 tim/året
Tennis 65 % (640-715 tim)
Annan idrott (fys) 35 % (340-385 tim)

Antal matcher 65-80 singlar
20-30 dubblar
ca 16-18 internationella tävlingar
Vid 16 års ålder har topp 100 spelare som var topp 10 som juniorer spelat 11 ITF tävlingar och 7 tävlingar om ATP poäng.

17-18 år
Fysiska aktiviteter 23-24 tim/veckan
1100-1150 tim/året
Tennis 70 % (770 tim)
Annan idrott (fys)30 % (330 tim)

Antal matcher 80-100 singlar
30-50 dubblar
ca 16-18 internationella tävlingar
Vid 18 års ålder har topp 100 spelare som var topp 10 som juniorer spelat 8 ITF tävlingar och 22 tävlingar om ATP poäng.

19-20 år

Fysiska aktiviteter 23-24 tim/veckan
1100-1150 tim/året
Tennis 70 %
Annan idrott (fys)30 % (Mer fokus på fys än annan idrott)

Antal matcher 80-100 singlar
30-50 dubblar
ca 20 internationella tävlingar

Fysnivåer

15-16 år
Aerob träning skall prioriteras då det är en bra period att utveckla hjärtat. Anaerob träning ger nu mindre effekt. Styrketräning ger stor effekt, muskelmassan ökar. Snabbhet, explosivitet och koordination blir nu svårare att utveckla. Viktigt att hålla igång smidighetsträningen.

17-18 år
Har ökad tolerans vid aerob träning. Stor tolerans för ökad träningsmängd inom anaerob träning men sämre förutsättningar till att förbättra denna del. Bra förutsättningar till att utveckla styrkan. Snabbheten är svårare att träna men genom att bli starkare kan snabbheten påverkas. Nu är det mycket svårt att utveckla koordinationen. Fortsatt viktigt att hålla igång smidigheten.

19-20 år
Stor tolerans för ökad träningsmängd inom anaerob träning men sämre förutsättningar till att förbättra denna del. Bra förutsättningar till att utveckla styrkan. Snabbhet och Explosivitet är svårare att träna nu men kan påverkas av styrketräning. Nu är det mycket svårt att utveckla koordinationen. Fortsatt viktigt att hålla igång smidigheten.

21 år och äldre
Stor tolerans för ökad träningsmängd inom anaerob träning men sämre förutsättningar till att förbättra denna del. Bra förutsättningar till att utveckla styrkan. Snabbhet och Explosivitet är svårare att träna nu men kan påverkas av styrketräning. Nu är det mycket svårt att utveckla koordinationen. Fortsatt viktigt att hålla igång smidigheten.

Teknik
15-16 år
Behärska samtliga slag utifrån spelarens egna taktiska och strategiska förmåga.

17-18 år
Fortsätta utveckla samtliga slag utifrån spelarens egen taktiska och strategiska förmåga och spelstil. Mycket matchträning.
19-20 år
Mycket matchliknande träning som skall bygga på spelarens identitet som spelare
21 år och äldre
Seniorkarriären i full gång på ITF, WTA/ATP Tour. Nu skall spelarens spelstil vara klar och det är utifrån denna spelstil som arbetet med tekniken fortsätter. Träningen skall bygga på spelarens starka sidor.

Resultatnivåer

Vid 15 år når en framtida topp 100 spelare topp 500 ITF Juniors
Vid 16 år når en framtida topp 100 spelare topp 100 ITF Juniors
Genomsnittsåldern för topp 100 ATP spelare när de vann sin första ATP poäng är 16,9 år

Vid 17 år når en framtida topp 100 spelare topp 50 ITF Juniors och får en ATP ranking
Vid 18 år når en framtida topp 100 spelare topp 20 ITF Juniors och topp 1000 ATP
Vid 19 år når en framtida topp 100 spelare topp 700 ATP

Vid 20 år når en framtida topp 100 spelare topp 500 ATP
Vid 21 år når en framtida topp 100 spelare topp 350 ATP
Vid 22 år når en framtida topp 100 spelare topp 200 ATP

Medelåldern vid ingång i topp 100 är 23,0 år
Medelåldern i topp 10 ATP är 27,6 år

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Tennis Dam

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Uppdraget består i att skapa en utvecklingstrappa med avseende på tid innan idrottaren är redo för SOK:s Topp- & Talangprogram (T&T). Utvecklinstrappan a innehålla tydlighet med avseende på fysnivåer, insats, resultat nivåer och teknik.

Syfte
Syftet är att både OSF, aktiva och deras tränare ska få en klar bild av vad som krävs och är viktigt för att nå nivå för intag i T&T. Utvecklingstrappan kan även vara ett bra verktyg vid selektering av idrottare.

Antagande
Medelålder på olympisk medaljör och Grand Slam medaljör i Tennis är ca 26-27 år. För att ha något att bygga utvecklingstrappan på utgår vi ifrån att man normalt är ca 14-17 år när man är tillräckligt bra för ingång i Utmanarprogrammet och ca 18-21 år när man är tillräckligt bra för att nå Topp- & Talangprogrammet.

<u>Ålder och antal år i grenen</u> på de aktiva i seniorväldstoppen (= medaljörer på OS + topp 10 WTA):

Medelåldern i topp 10 WTA är 26,0 år
Medelåldern i topp 100 WTA är 25,1
Medelåldern vid ingång i topp 100 WTA är 21,3
Bästa WTA ranking är vid 22,9

<u>Tävlingsfrekvens</u>
Hur ofta tävlar de bästa i seniorväldstoppen nationellt och/eller internationellt

Topp 10 WTA Tour Damer

Nr. Spelare	Ålder	Antal matcher (2013)	
1 Serena Williams	33 år	84 matcher	(79-5)
2 Simona Halep	23 år	54 matcher	(40-14)
3 Petra Kvitova	24 år	75 matcher	(53-22)
4 Maria Sharapova	27 år	46 matcher	(38-8)
5 Na Li	32 år	60 matcher	(46-14)
6 Agnieszka Radwanska	25 år	76 matcher	(56-20)
7 Caroline Wozniacki	24 år	63 matcher	(51-22)
8 Angelique Kerber	26 år	69 matcher	(47-22)
9 Eugenie Bouchard	20 år	63 matcher	(39-24)
10 Ana Ivanovic	26 år	63 matcher	(40-23)
	26,0 år	**65,3**	**(48,9-17,4)**

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Appendix 1

Insats för de aktiva i seniorväldstoppen

Hur stor är insatsen i timmar/pass per år för träning och tävling på seniorväldstoppnivå samt uppskatta insats vid ingång i T&T (ca 5-6 år innan medelåldern på OS-medaljörerna)

Seniorväldstoppen (Topp 10 WTA)

Tävlingsinsats för topp 10 WTA = 65 matcher (spridning 46-84)

Träningsinsats för topp 10-100 WTA
-

Ingång i Topp- & Talang, ca 19-21 år (ca 5-6 år innan medelåldern för topp 10 i WTA/ålder vid bästa rankning= ~25-27 år)

21 år och äldre (Talang/Topp)

Fysiska aktiviteter	23-24 tim/veckan 1100-1150 tim/året Tennis 70 % Annan idrott (fys) 30 % (Mer fokus på fys än annan idrott)
Antal matcher	80-100 singlar 30-50 dubblar ca 22 internationella tävlingar Vid 22 respektive 23 år är seniorkarriären i gång på ITF, WTA/ATP Tour.

Idrottens/grenens Utvecklingstrappa för idrottens/grenens Utmanadeåldrar.
Utvecklingstrappan skall för år 2014+2015+2016 innehålla tydlighet gällande
Insatsnivåer (antal matcher och nivå samt träningsinsats)

15-16 år

Fysiska aktiviteter	20-24 tim/veckan 980-1100 tim/året Tennis 65 % (640-715 tim) Annan idrott (fys) 35 % (340-385 tim)
Antal matcher	65-80 singlar 20-30 dubblar ca 16-18 internationella tävlingar Vid 16 års ålder har topp 100 spelare som var topp 10 som juniorer spelat 11 ITF tävlingar och 7 tävlingar om WTA poäng.

17-18 år

Fysiska aktiviteter	23-24 tim/veckan 1100-1150 tim/året Tennis 70 % (770 tim) Annan idrott (fys) 30 % (330 tim)

Antal matcher 80-100 singlar
30-50 dubblar
ca 16-18 internationella tävlingar
Vid 18 års ålder har topp 100 spelare som var topp 10 som juniorer spelat 8 ITF tävlingar och 22 tävlingar om WTA poäng.

19-20 år

Fysiska aktiviteter 23-24 tim/veckan
1100-1150 tim/året
Tennis 70 %
Annan idrott (fys) 30 % (Mer fokus på fys än annan idrott)

Antal matcher 80-100 singlar
30-50 dubblar
ca 20 internationella tävlingar

Fysnivåer

15-16 år

Aerob träning skall prioriteras då det är en bra period att utveckla hjärtat. Anaerob träning ger nu mindre effekt. Styrketräning ger stor effekt, muskelmassan ökar. Snabbhet, explosivitet och koordination blir nu svårare att utveckla. Viktigt att hålla igång smidighetsträningen.

17-18 år

Har ökad tolerans vid aerob träning. Stor tolerans för ökad träningsmängd inom anaerob träning men sämre förutsättningar till att förbättra denna del. Bra förutsättningar till att utveckla styrkan. Snabbheten är svårare att träna men genom att bli starkare kan snabbheten påverkas. Nu är det mycket svårt att utveckla koordinationen. Fortsatt viktigt att hålla igång smidigheten.

19-20 år

Stor tolerans för ökad träningsmängd inom anaerob träning men sämre förutsättningar till att förbättra denna del. Bra förutsättningar till att utveckla styrkan. Snabbhet och Explosivitet är svårare att träna under denna period men kan påverkas av styrketräning. Nu är det mycket svårt att utveckla koordinationen. Fortsatt viktigt att hålla igång smidigheten.

21 år och äldre

Stor tolerans för ökad träningsmängd inom anaerob träning men sämre förutsättningar till att förbättra denna del. Bra förutsättningar till att utveckla styrkan. Snabbhet och Explosivitet är svårare att träna nu men kan påverkas av styrketräning. Nu är det mycket svårt att utveckla koordinationen. Fortsatt viktigt att hålla igång smidigheten.

Teknik

15-16 år

Behärska samtliga slag utifrån spelarens egna taktiska och strategiska förmåga.

17-18 år

Fortsätta utveckla samtliga slag utifrån spelarens egen taktiska och strategiska förmåga och spelstil. Mycket matchträning.

19-20 år
Mycket matchliknande träning som skall bygga på spelarens identitet som spelare
21 år och äldre
Seniorkarriären i full gång på ITF, WTA/ATP Tour. Nu skall spelarens spelstil vara klar och det är utifrån denna spelstil som arbetet med tekniken fortsätter. Träningen skall bygga på spelarens starka sidor.

Resultatnivåer
Vid 15 år når en framtida topp 100 WTA spelare topp 100 ITF Juniors
Vid 16 år når en framtida topp 100 WTA spelare topp 50 ITF Juniors och topp 1000 WTA.
Vid 17 år når en framtida topp 100 WTA spelare topp 20 ITF Juniors och topp 600 WTA.
Vid 18 år når en framtida topp 100 WTA spelare topp 10 ITF Juniors och topp 500 WTA
Vid 19 år når en framtida topp 100 WTA spelare topp 400
Vid 20 år når en framtida topp 100 WTA spelare topp 300
Vid 21 år når en framtida topp 100 WTA spelare topp 200
Vid 22 år når en framtida topp 100 WTA spelare topp 100

Medelåldern vid ingång i topp 100 WTA är 21,3 år
Medelåldern i topp 10 WTA är 26,0 år

Intervjuguide: Spelare

1. Berätta ditt namn, och berätta hur länge du har spelat tennis
2. Hur var atmosfären i er klubb? - Hur var klimatet under träningarna?
3. Hur var träningsgrupperna organiserade? - Efter åldrar/utvecklingsnivå? - hur upplevdes detta? - Vad var bra/vad kunde varit bättre?
4. Hur mycket tränade ni i denna ålder 13-16? - Upplevdes detta som mycket/lite/lagom? - Kvaliteten på träningarna? träningsupplägg teknik/fys, hur såg fördelningen ut? - Kvaliteten på tränarna? - Hur var träningsanläggningarna? - Hade ni tillgång till experter som sjukgymnast/läkare/idrottspsykologer om detta behövdes? - Vad var bra/vad kunde varit bättre?
5. Hur mycket tävlade ni i denna ålder? - Tävlingar i Sverige/utanför Sverige? - Hur upplevdes tävlingskalendern? för mycket/för lite/lagom med tävlingar? - Vad var bra/vad kunde varit bättre?
6. Kombinationen av skola och idrott, hur fungerade det under högstadiet? - Hann ni med skolarbetet? - Hann ni träna/tävla så mycket ni ville? - Vad var bra/vad kunde varit bättre?

Intervjuguide: Tränare

1. Berätta ditt namn, och berätta hur länge du har varit tränare inom tennis
2. Hur var atmosfären i er klubb? - Hur är klimatet under träningarna?
3. Hur är träningsgrupperna organiserade? - Efter åldrar/utvecklingsnivå? - Varför organiseras spelarna på detta sätt? - Vad är bra/vad kunde varit bättre?
4. Hur mycket tränar spelarna i åldern mellan 13-16 år? - upplevs detta som mycket/lite/lagom? - Hur ser träningsuppläggen ut? teknik/fys, hur ser fördelningen ut? - Har ni någon uppfattning av kvaliteten på tränarna? - Vad tycker ni om träningsanläggningarna? - har era spelare tillgång till experter (via klubben) som sjukgymnast/läkare/idrottspsykologer om detta behövs? - vad är bra/vad kunde varit bättre?
5. Hur mycket tävlar era spelare i åldern mallen 13-16 år? - Tävlingar i Sverige/utanför Sverige? - Hur upplevs tävlingskalendern? för mycket/för lite/lagom med tävlingar? - Vad är bra/vad kunde varit bättre?

Intervjuguide: Föräldrar

1. Berätta ditt namn, och berätta hur länge ditt barn har spelat tennis
2. Hur mycket kollar ni på träningarna? - Vad vet ni själva? - Hur mycket berättar barnen?
3. Hur är atmosfären i klubben? - Hur är klimatet på träningarna?
4. Hur är träningsgrupperna organiserade? - Efter åldrar/utvecklingsnivå? - Vad är bra/vad kunde varit bättre?
5. Hur mycket tränar era barn? - Upplevs detta som mycket/lite/lagom? - Har ni någon uppfattning om kvaliteten på träningarna? träningsupplägg teknik/fys, hur ser fördelningen ut? - Har ni någon uppfattning av kvaliteten på tränarna? - Vad tycker ni om träningsanläggningarna? - Har era barn tillgång till experter (via klubben) som sjukgymnast/läkare/idrottspsykologer om detta behövs? - Vad är bra/vad kunde varit bättre?
6. Hur mycket tävlar era barn? - Tävlingar i Sverige/utanför Sverige? - Hur upplevs tävlingskalendern? för mycket/för lite/lagom med tävlingar? - Vad är bra/vad kunde varit bättre?
7. Kombinationen av skola och idrott, hur fungerar den tycker ni? - Hinner era barn med skolarbetet? - Hinner de träna/tävla? - Vad är bra/vad kunde varit bättre?

Informerat samtycke

Fördelaktiga utvecklingsmiljöer för unga tennisspelare

Hej!
Jag heter Isabell Jokiaho och jag studerar på Högskolan i Halmstad. Jag ska skriva magisteruppsats som handlar om fördelaktiga utvecklingsmiljöer för unga tennisspelare. Syftet med uppsatsen är att studera hur miljön i tennisklubbar, som går under Tennis Syd, upplevs från spelares, föräldrars och tränares perspektiv. Dessa resultat kommer att analyseras för att sedan kunna ge eventuella rekommendationer för att optimera Tennis Syds verksamhet.
Du har bjudits in till att delta i en fokusgruppsintervju som beräknas ta ca 60 min. Intervjun kommer att spelas in. Studien är konfidentiell, det betyder att din identitet är skyddad vilket innebär att ingen kommer se vad just du har svarat. Svara därför så ärligt, uppriktigt och spontant som möjligt! Studien är frivillig och du kan när som helst, utan att ange orsak avbryta din medverkan. En rapport kommer att sammanställas där ni får ta del av resultatet om så önskas.
Är det något du inte förstår eller vill fråga om något får du gärna kontakta mig.

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- Jag har blivit informerad om studiens syfte.
- Jag har blivit informerad om hur information kommer att behandlas.
- Jag har blivit informerad om att mitt deltagande är frivilligt.
- Jag har blivit informerad om att jag, när som helst, kan avbryta min medverkan.

Baserat på de villkor som presenterats ovan samtycker jag till att delta i projektet.

_____

Signatur

Transkribering: Spelare

1 har spelat tennis i 12 år
2 har spelet tennis i 14 år
3 har spelat tennis i 13 år
4 har spelat tennis i 14 år

Hur var atmosfären i er klubb? Hur var det att komma till träningen, kom man dit för att ha kul, leka eller var det mer prestations inriktat?
1: Jag gick inte i en tennis syd klubb då men det kanske inte spelar någon roll?
Nej det spelar ingen roll.
2: Jag hade det väldigt bra i min klubb, jag är i från xxxx och har spelat för xxxx i hela mitt liv. Så de hade en sån här tennis profil på högstadiet, så vi fick spela på skoltid. Jag tyckte det var väldigt kul att komma på träningarna och alltid bra stämning... och bra sparring och bra tränare och bra tränings möjligheter och allting.
Hur var det för er andra?
E: jag var med i xxxx som xxxx och det var som han sa, det var väldigt kul och komma på träningarna och man kände att det var väldigt seriöst men ändå roligt så klart. Så just den perioden var väldigt bra för mig.
2: det var ju väldigt tävlingsinriktat... alltså prestige, det var ju inte så att man gick dit och lekte. Alla ville ju liksom bli bra i tennis.
3: jag bytte klubb när jag var 13, och därefter, ja det var bra, seriöst klubb, bra tränare, ganska bred, alltså väldigt många dom satsade på om man säger så. Det var väldigt många på banan när man kom dit alltså det var kul, framförallt kul runt omkring.
1: jag spelade för xxxx tennisklubb och det var inte så många bra spelare där, men jag hade en jätte bra tränare så det var en rätt blandad atmosfär när det gäller liksom vilken nivå man var på. Men jag tyckte det var skitkul jag tog inte tennis jätte seriöst just den tiden. Jag tyckte det var kul det var därför jag spelade.
Hur var träningsgrupperna organiserade?
3: nivå skulle jag säga, nivå och ja.. och ja enbart nivå för mig alltså. hur bra man var, man spelade med jämn bra spelare och så ibland hade man uppåt träning och ibland neråt.
Så det kunde variera från träning till träning?
3: ja men oftast så var det nivå, alltså så jämt som möjligt.
1: alltså det spelade ingen roll om det var tjej eller kille, bara vilken nivå man var på. och just för mig var det att träningarna var organiserade efter mig för jag var, liksom den enda som höll hyffsad nivå. så att vissa träningar fick jag spela mot de som var sämre och så vissa fick jag spela mot typ min tränare som var bättre, så det är varierat.
Hur kändes det att gå emellan och få ett sämre motstånd och gå mot en tränare?
1: det är viktigt, det måste man ha för att, träna liksom, om man tränar mot dem som är sämre då får man träna på att styra liksom, styra och ställa hur man vill och när man tränar mot dem som är bättre då får man själv liksom försöka kriga sig till och vara lika bra som dom.. så det är viktigt.
Ni andra, hur såg det ut?
2: det var bra organiserat, alltså en tränare har gjort ett jävligt bra jobb sen han kom hit liksom, lagt upp tider till alla, scheman och allt sånt så man har alltid haft koll på när man ska spela och vad man ska göra på träningen och sånt, han har alltid vetat vad som är bäst för varje spelare. Man spelade mest med dom som var jämn bra liksom. Jag gick ju ofta ner och spelade med sämre spelare men jag har inga problem med det, det är ju jävligt bra träning att spela mot samma ch så är det ju kul ibland att få uppåt också.
Fick ni många möjligheter att träna med dom som var bättre?
E: jag tränade ofta med killar, och det tror jag hjälpa mig väldigt mycket, jag fick mycket uppåt träning det tror jag hjälpte mig jätte mycket faktiskt.
2: man kanske fick spela mot dem som kanske gick på gymnasiet någon gång då och då.
Kändes det som en bra grej att få göra det?

2: ja jag tycker det ska vara så istället för att spela mot samma människor, att få lite variation och så. För det kommer ju vara så sen, om man blir något inom tennisen, man kommer inte alltid möta någon som är jämn bra, kommer alltid vara någon som är sämre eller bättre eller lika bra.
Vad var det som var riktigt bra med hur grupperna var organiserade?
1: att det blev varierat.
Både upp och ner, att man fick möta bättre motstånd men även att ni fick styra mer då när ni mötte sämre spelare?
1: mm, ja.
Hur mycket tränade ni i veckan när ni var i den åldern?
4: Alltså vi på tennisprofilen hade ju lite mer så här tuffa, medel och lätta veckor. Men i snitt så var det väl ett pass om dagen minst så var det tisdagar och torsdagar två pass, sen fys...
2: ett, tre, fyra, sex sju... ja sju.
E: ja sju
Sju pass, och det var...
4: det var tennis
2: sju tennis pass
Och fys utöver det blir?
4: jag vet inte...
3: är det här, menar du på skoltid då eller?
i klubb och skoltid.
2: vi hade rätt så mycket fys efter varje pass på eftermiddagen
4: men det var en hel del fys också
2: ja på eftermiddagarna var det de efter varje pass, man var ute och sprang eller spelade lite fotboll eller...
Ni körde eget då?
2: njaa alltså vi hade ju teman så här liksom denna vecka ska vi springa, denna vecka ska vi..
4: cirkelträning
2: ja cirkelträning.
3: jag hade väl max, max ett pass om dagen.. tennis och sen fys, ja två gånger i veckan. Fysen var...
Alltså det var bara eget.
Det var eget fys?
3: ja.
1: jag hade fyra eller tre tennis pass i veckan och ett fyspass.
Nu var träningsmängden lite olika men hur upplevde ni träningsmängden, var det lagom eller ville ni träna mer eller hade för lite fritid?
4: för mig var det väldigt bra, jag upplevde det som bra.
3: jag hann inte, alltså jag hade så mycket i skolan också jag gick inte någon tennisprofil som de här så det var det enda jag fick in.
1: samma här jag gick i musikklass så jag läste så här sju timmar extra musik i veckan så jag hade inte tid med något mer och jag tyckte, om jag hade tränat mer då hade jag nog ledsnat och då hade jag nog inte suttit här idag.
2: Jag hade nog velat spela lite mer
(skratt bland de andra deltagarna)
Du hade velat träna mer?
2: ja
Om vi går in på tränarna, hur var kvaliteten på dem, om man tänker både tennis-mässigt och fys-mässigt, nu hade du (F) ingen fys?
3: nej det var någon men det var latjolajban alltså...
(skratt)
Men tennisbiten hur var kvaliteten på tränarna tyckte ni?
2: jag tyckte det var skit bra, riktigt bra.

3: alltså skit bra kan jag inte säga att det var, alltså, det var bra. Alltså vi hade flera tränare så det var två-tre olika i veckan, så det blev som att han sa en sak och så sa den andra en sak. Men ja, de var bra.
Hade du velat ha en tränare kanske lite oftare?
3: ja lite mer, fast det är svårt, det var en väldigt stor klubb så det är ganska svårt att anpassa det.
Är det någon som ni andra känner igen också, att man gått runt på många tränare?
2: nej
4: nej
Hur var det i xxxx, hur var tränarna där?
1: alltså jag tyckte.. tränarna.. alltså min fystränare han tränar ju xxxx i hockey och han är riktigt bra och sen så hade jag två tennistränare och en av dom var alltså riktigt bra i tennis och den andra tyckte jag också var bra så jag.. jag trivs nästan bättre med tränarna i xxxx än vad jag gör här, faktiskt.
Hur upplevde ni träningsanläggningarna?
3: njaa...
2: de var bra
3: Ja ni hade det bra men... (skratt). Alltså inomhushallen var ganska bra, det var roligt för det fanns allt möjligt och ja man stannade ju kvar efter och spelade badminton och sånt. Men utomhusanläggningen var katastrof, det var, banorna var dåliga och slitet.
Hade ni någon tillgång till något gym?
3: Nja... jo vi hade ett gym men det var sista året då när jag var 16 så var det ett nytt gym och det var ju väldigt bra och det fick vi tillgång till, så det var bra.
1: Vi hade riktiga jävla skrutt banor inomhus och utomhus spelade vi knappt för det var ju snö på banorna till juni och sen gym hade vi rätt bra faktiskt. men nej, inga bra förutsättningar på banorna där.
Ni som har varit här i xxxx?
4: vi hade det jättebra
2: 14 utomhusbanor, 6 inomhus.
1: Två inne, två ute...
Och fysverksamheten, gym?
2: ett grymt gym
4: tillgång till gym hela tiden
Är det någonting som ni känner kunde varit bättre träningsmässigt om man tänker både på tränar biten och hur anläggningarna var? var det något specifikt som man kunde önskat?
1: alltså jag kunde ju spela hur mycket jag ville, för ingen spelat ju tennis i xxxx så det var ju alltid ledigt, typ här kan man ju inte alltid få bana och det var ju bra, det var ju bara att banorna inte var så bra men... och men det var bra tyckte jag.
3: Tvärtom där jag var, en stor klubb, aldrig en bana ledig liksom på helgen när man ville spela och man var tvungen att boka två veckor innan.
Så mer tillgång till banor?
3: Ja
1: I xxxx bokad man inte, man gick bara dit.
3: sen var det lite jobbiga tider också som man spelade på, alltså schemat, det blev inte bra, jag spelade sena kvällar och gick i skolan och så blev.. jag hade mycket i skolan där i slutet.
Och i xxxx, var det något som ni kunde önska var bättre?
4: Inte vad jag kommer på just nu, det var bra
2: nej, helt nöjd.
Hur mycket tävlade ni i denna ålder?
1: mer än vad jag gör nu
3: ja mycket, väldigt mycket
1: två-tre gånger i månaden, två gånger i månaden i snitt kanske.

3: det var ju olika perioder, vissa månader är det mer tävlingar men i snitt var det kanske två- tre tävlingar i månaden, det var mycket.
2: där vid 14-15 var det ganska mycket för jag tävlade så mycket när jag var 11-12-33 år det som när jag var 14-15, men det var mycket mer än vad det är nu liksom. Men det var bara för att det alltid fanns så här P-14... det gick på varandra hela tiden.
3: Mycket resor och sånt
4: jag tror jag tävlade jättemycket innan jag var 13-16 år. sen har det blivit lite mer större tävlingar som spelade, man prioriterade att träna upp sig till dom. så det var ju fyra stora tävlingar som man verkligen ville satsad på, så spelade man tävling här och där, men det var inte så jätte mycket för min del. bara lite mer större tävlingar.
Var det tävlingar som bara låg i Sverige eller var man utomlands och tävlade?
3: nej
4: man var utomlands också
3: ja
4: alltså man var 16, 15 då börjar man väl gå utomlands lite grann.
Hur ofta var man utomlands och tävlade?
3: 5
1: 3-4 gånger per år
3: nja mer tror jag
4: mer
3: det är lite olika, vissa har spelat mer än andra, det är lite olika
4: det var ju mest Norge, Danmark, så där nära
3: ja mycket...
4: det ar ju inte så där att man åkte till ja..
3: Tjetjenien...
3, sa du 5 gånger per år?
3: nej det sa jag nog inte... men alltså, kan det ha varit 10 gånger... ja du kan ju tänka dig 16 års ålder, 15-16, kanske 10 gånger.
2: Jag spelade inte alls mycket utomlands, jag spelade mest här i Sverige, i närheten, för det finns ju väldigt mycket i närheten då i den åldern.
Hur upplevdes tävlingskalendern, mycket tävlingar eller var det för lite?
4: Lagom för mig, det kändes bra
1: man bestämde själv
3: ja man kan ju själv bestämma
2: fanns ju tillgångar så ville man tävla mycket så fanns det ju möjligheter absolut.
Okej så man får bestämma lite själv hur mycket man vill åka iväg?
4: ja
2: mm
3: ja
Var det samma i xxxx?
1: ja man fick ju resa helvetes långt men... det gick ju om man ville
Hur fungerade kombinationen av skola och idrott under den här tidsperioden?
1: jag hade ingenting, jag tränade aldrig på skoltid.
Hade man tid till att göra läxor?
3: Ja det var ganska dålig kommunikation mellan skolan och idrotten, men samtidigt så, jag vet inte jag fick in det, skolan på något sätt. jag blev mer strukturerad när jag hade lite stress och jag vet inte, jag vet inte jag tror det är generellt alla som idrottar planerar bättre.
På vilket sätt upplevde du att det var dålig kommunikation mellan skolan och idrotten?
3: men så här med schema, när man lämna in schemat till tränaren, kändes inte som dom, jag vet inte, gjorde det som man ville men det är lätt att säga, de kanske får in kanske 100 scheman.
Ni lämnade in era skolscheman så de kunde se hur ni gick i skolan?

3: ja exakt, så de kunde se när vi kan träna.
Kändes det inte som de tog hänsyn?
3: nej då blev det ibland väldigt sena kvällar, träning, oh så kom man hem och så skulle man plugga, så blev det inte på topp.
Hann man inte plugga så mycket då?
3: nej alltså man fik ju plugga lite innan, det blev ju aldrig liksom någon, rolig tid, alltså vet inte hur jag ska säga, rolig tid hemma.
Fritid?
3: Ja fritid... exakt
Hur var det i xxxx då?
2: det var bra kommunikation mellan skolan och tränarna och lärarna. Vi tränade på morgonen, tis-dagar och torsdagar, två timmar, och sen var det liksom, dom visste att man skulle komma så man försökte bara skynda sig och dom liksom, dom var med på att dom kunde vara lite mer flexibla med oss tennisspelare med inlämningar och läxor och så sånt, dom förstod att vi tränade liksom. Alla lärare var ju väldigt bra, de funkade bra med det, så det var bra.
Och du hade ingen tennis på skoltid? (1)
1: nä men fick ju hoppa över tennispass om man hade mycket i skolan och så sen så kände jag alla mina lärare och... så de visste ju att ibland lämnar jag inte lite grejer sent för jag har haft tävlingar och varit borta mycket och sånt.
Gick det bra att få ledigt från skolan för att man skulle iväg och tävla?
3: där var det bra
1: man fick vara ledig hur mycket man ville
3: ja
Var det någonting som kunde ha varit bättre tycker ni?
F: lätt att säga, men mer individuellt, det vill ju alla, det är en dröm. Att allt är som man vill, man tränar då, gå i skola då, men det går inte riktigt. Annars tycker jag, jag fick ihop det ganska bra. Så jag är nöjd.

Isabell Jokiaho
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