

# Long Term Athlete Development Model/Squash Canada Coaching Program

Scientific research has concluded that, as a broad guideline, it takes a minimum of 10 years and 10,000 hours of training for a talented athlete to reach elite levels. This translates into slightly more than 3 hours of general physical activity, directed training or competition daily for 10 years.

It is athlete centered, coach driven, and administration, sport science and sponsor supported.

The LTADM identifies 7 stages of development which are based on developmental age – the maturation level of an individual – rather than chronological age. The program takes into consideration the athlete's biological and training ages to create periodized plans specific to their development needs.

- **Active start** - for males and females from 0 – 6 years of age
- **FUNDamentals** - for males 6-9 and females from 6-8 (*1-2 training years*)
- **Learning to Train** - for males 9-12 and females from 8-11 (*2 – 3 training years*)
- **Training to Train** (growth rate dependent) - for males 12-16 and females from 11-15 (*3 – 6 training years*)
- **Training to Compete** - approximately males 16-23+/-, females 15-21+/- (*5-8 training years*)
- **Training to Win** - for males 19 +/-, females 18 +/- (*8 – 10 training years*)
- **Active for life** – entry at any level

The Canadian Squash Coaching Program, in conjunction with the National Coaching Certification Program, is designed to meet the needs of these athletes by certifying coaches who have been trained, evaluated and certified in a coaching context. This is reflected in our Participant Development Model and our Coach Development Model.

Squash is classified as late specialization sport. The ages are the norm. There will always be some earlier and later learners in each group.

In the Instruction Stream, prospective coaches must start by taking all the training in the Intro to Squash Context and be certified as a Squash Instructor (certified to teach beginners) before they can progress to the Instruction Intermediate Context (certified to teach intermediates). It is in the former context that the terminology and teaching methodology is addressed and will be continued throughout the coaching program. These coaches will then move into the Competition Stream.

**Active Start** is primarily home and school based and stresses daily physical activity with focus on proper movement skills; running, jumping wheeling, twisting, kicking, throwing and catching.

Well-structured 'munchin fun 'n games' programs are offered in some squash clubs. Gymnastics and swimming compliment the program.

The Squash Canada Coaching Program trains and certifies coaches for the **Intro to Squash context** which covers the **FUNDamentals** and **Learning to Train** stages of development.

**FUNDamentals** covers fundamental movement skills and overall motor skills with the focus on athleticism, ability, balance, coordination, speed and FUN. Competition is in the form of skill awards and in squash-related games rather than squash matches and tournaments.

**Learning to Train** is a major skill learning stage. In the Intro to Squash context, basic squash skills, technical, tactical, mental and physical are introduced.

Recommendation: Squash specific training 3 times a week; participation in other sports 3 times a week.

*Intro to Squash context: Coaching Foundations Course, Multi-sport Modules Part A, and evaluation for certification as a Squash Assistant or a Squash Instructor.*

The Squash Canada Coaching Program trains and certifies coaches for the **Instruction Intermediate** stage of development.

**Learning to Train**, as covered in this context, progresses to complete the training of all basic squash skills required by intermediate players.

All basic squash skills should be taught before entering the Training to Train stage.

*Intermediate Instruction context: Intermediate Coaching Course, Multi-sport Modules, Part B, and evaluation for certification as an Intermediate Instructor.*

The Squash Canada Coaching Program trains and certifies coaches for the **Intro to Competition** stage of development.

**Training to Train** covers practices to develop excellence in technique and tactics, and further development of mental skills. This is also a major fitness development stage.

Recommendation: Sport specific training (technical, tactical, mental and physical) 6 – 9 times a week including complementary sports.

*Intermediate Instruction context: Intermediate Coaching Course, Multi-sport Modules, Part B, Squash Canada Requirements and evaluation for certification as a Club Coach.*

The Squash Canada Coaching Program trains and certifies coaches for the **Competition Development** stage of development.

**Training to Train** further develops the athlete's abilities in all performance factors, excellence in technique, strategies and tactics, and refines mental coping strategies. This again is a major fitness development stage.

**Training to Compete** now prepares to integrate the training into match performance. Physical conditioning, technique, strategies and tactics and advanced mental preparation is competition specific. The athlete specializes in this sport and trains 9 – 12 times a week.

*Competition Development context: Provincial Coaching Course, 6 Multi-sport Modules, and evaluation as a Provincial Junior Coach gradation and Provincial Senior Coach gradation.*