

THE SPANISH TRAINING SYSTEMS AND THEIR EVOLUTION IN THE LAST YEARS

By Javier Duarte

In the glorious period of Spanish tennis players, with Manuel Orantes and José Higuera, the Spanish tennis suffered a lethargy related to the development of top tennis players. Emilio Sánchez was the first player in the new age and he gave a new perspective for the Spanish tennis players. At the same time, there were players as important as Sergi Bruguera, Albert Costa, Alberto Berasategui, Alex Corretja, Juan Carlos Ferrero, Carlos Moyá, Jordi Arrese, Pato Clavet, ..., who have contributed to reach a very good period for the Spanish tennis, and also to reach a lot of titles and satisfactions for the people involved in this sport. Obviously, the mass media have contributed a lot to increase the popularity of tennis as a competitive, healthy and social sport.

In the past, the Spanish players trained on clay surfaces, according to the tennis tradition in our country. In this sense, this work developed in clay, generated a group of players very consistent with their forehand and backhand, with some techniques lacking but with excellent groundstrokes from the baseline. Those variables allowed our players to reach 90% of their possibilities.

On the other hand, it appeared a new group with much more talent, but they do not reach this 90% as the previous, like Tomás Carbonell, Jordi Burillo, Carles Costa, etc.

Curiously, the players from the first group S. Bruguera, P. Clavet, C. Moyá, Alex Corretja, Juan Carlos Ferrero, ..., were mentally stronger than the players from the second group (T. Carbonell, J. Burillo, C. Costa, ...), and, in my opinion, for this reason they had more consistency in their game.

The evolution of the training systems, in the past, has been conducted, mainly, for several reasons as the configuration of the ATP Circuit, based in the 4 Grand Slams, and in the 9 Super Series, which they are played, normally, on hard courts.

Obviously, the 2 or 3 tournaments previous to the Grand Slams, they are played also at the same surface, for instance:

- Australian Open: Doha y Dubai.
- Wimbledon : Queens, Nottingham, Hale.
- US OPEN : Indianápolis, Cincinnati.

On clay courts we have, as important tournaments before the Roland Garros Roma, Montecarlo and Godó.

The evolution of Professional circuit, in my opinion, was created when the professional coaches take into account that during the period before the competitions, and in the free spaces that the tournament calendar have, they have to work on hard surfaces, totally different from the previous years.

Trough the time, the spanish players have been more polyvalent, with a different pattern game, improving the service and return, things that have been very criticized in players like Bruguera, Arrese, , Clavet y Berasategui, for instance.

Above the young players, with very much better service, we can talk about Feliciano López, Fernando Verdasco, Nicolás Almagro,..., but curiously, in spite of develop a very good job on hard surfaces, this players have not the same mental ability that the players with very good results like Bruguera, Arrese o Clavet, and the are more similar, from a mental point of view, to Carbonell, Burillo o Carles Costa, but with a best service and volley.

In this sense, during this presentation, we will talk about the variety of opinions concerning to what is better nowadays for the spanish tennis, how we are working with the top level players and which one are the strengths and the weaknesses of spanish training systems from the Spanish tennis players, showing some examples of usual drills