# "Delivering Successful Group Lessons"
## by  Jorge Capestany -   Canada Sept 2014

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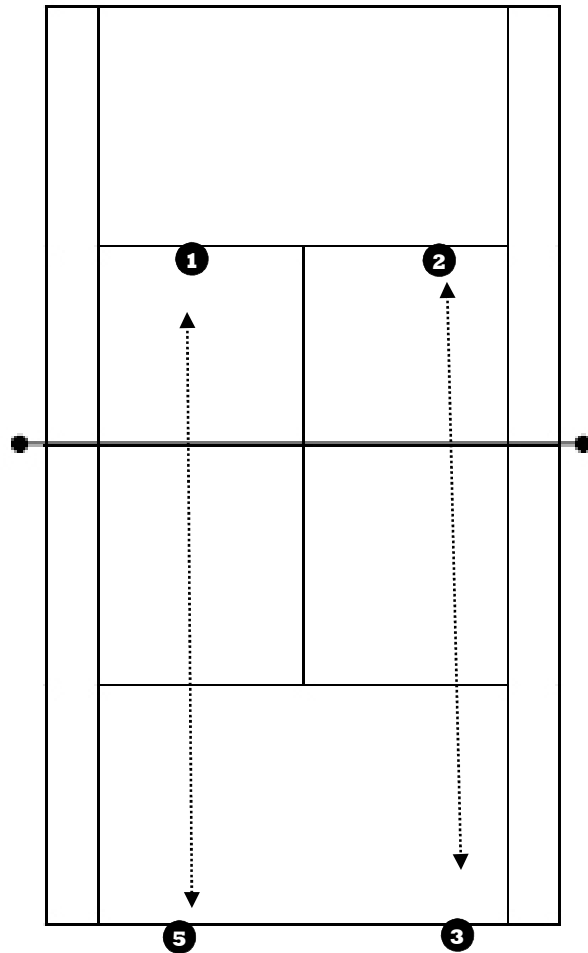
## 1) Over-Under Volleys:

This drill teaches players to hit low passing shots.

Two different rallies are played on different halves of the court.

Net players and baseline players try to sustain a semi-cooperative rally with each other.

The net player needs to call **out loud** Over or Under, based on if their contact point on the volley was over or under the net level.

Passers will typically learn that they tend to keep too many balls up high and thus make it easier for the volleyer.

By making calls **out loud**, all players learn that it is not easy to get the passing shots down at an opponent's feet.

The net players can start just inside the service line and should **not** close in to the net

After a few minutes, have all the players rotate around the court so that everyone does both jobs.
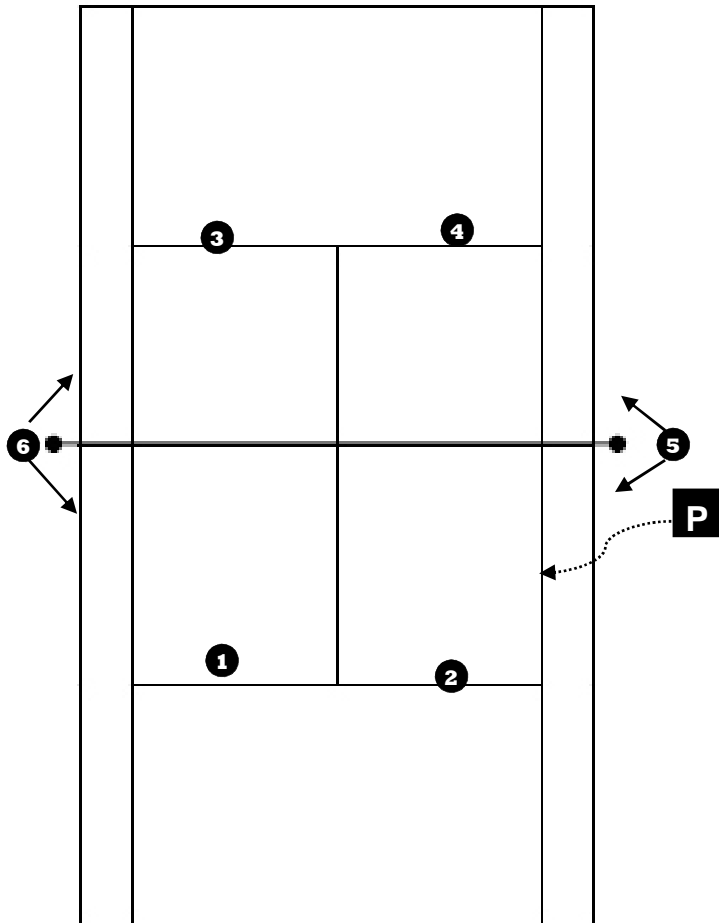
## 2) Squirrel Crossing:

Doubles points while scrambling around.

Teams are: Players 1 & 2 / 3 & 4 / 5 & 6

Players 1 & 2 start out playing just one point against players 3 & 4. The wining team stay in to play and the losing team splits and each goes to a net post.

Players 5 & 6 wait by the net post and <u>quickly</u> move into position on the side where the team that just lost was.

The pro feeds a variety of shot and the players must always let the feed bounce before they hit it.

This is a great game that sometimes causes confusion for the net post players making them look like a squirrel in the road as they decided where they should be going (hence the name of the drill)

**V:** Have the players play 2 points instead of 1 point with only the 2nd point determining who exits and who stays in to play.
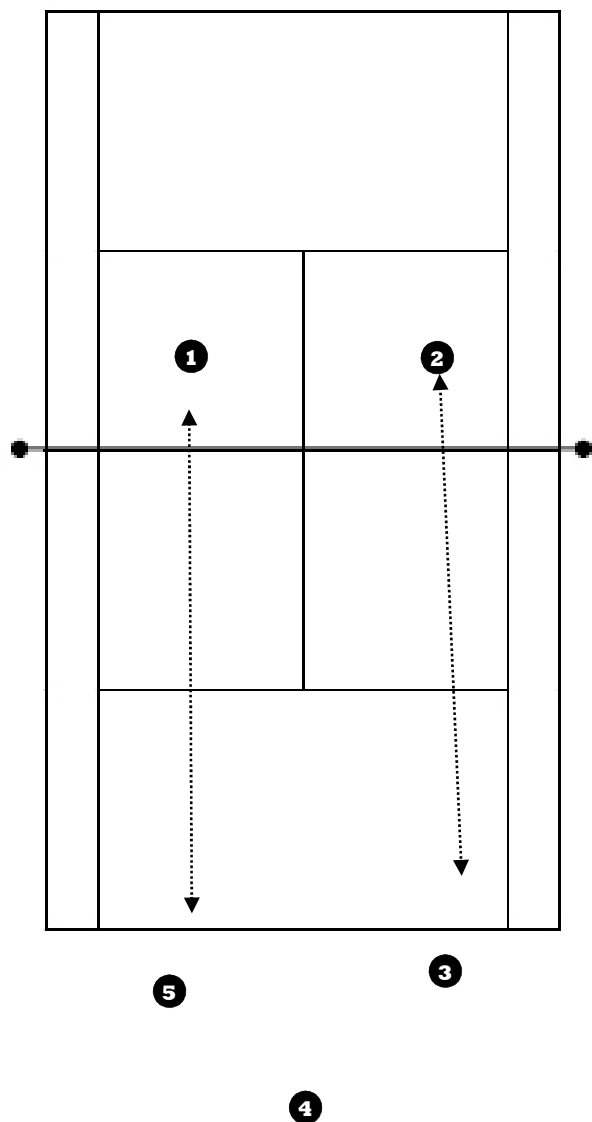
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## 3) Every Other - Volleys:

Players shift from playing steady to playing aggressively.

Players 1 & 2 are the champs and players 4-5-6 are the challengers. Two different games are played on each half of the court.

<u>Odd Points</u> (Cooperative) – does not count for points, but it sets the point value of the even points.

<u>Even Points</u> (competitive) – are the ones that are used to keep score.

If an odd point reaches 4 rallies (counting <u>only</u> the **volleys** made), then the players stop and play the even point which will be worth 4 points to the winner. Points are never worth more than 4 points to the winner.

If the odd point reaches only 3 rallies (volleys made), then the next even point is worth 3 to the winner.

It is the <u>Even</u> (competitive) points that determines if the challenger replaces the net man. The second feed should be fed very nasty and for a winner if possible.
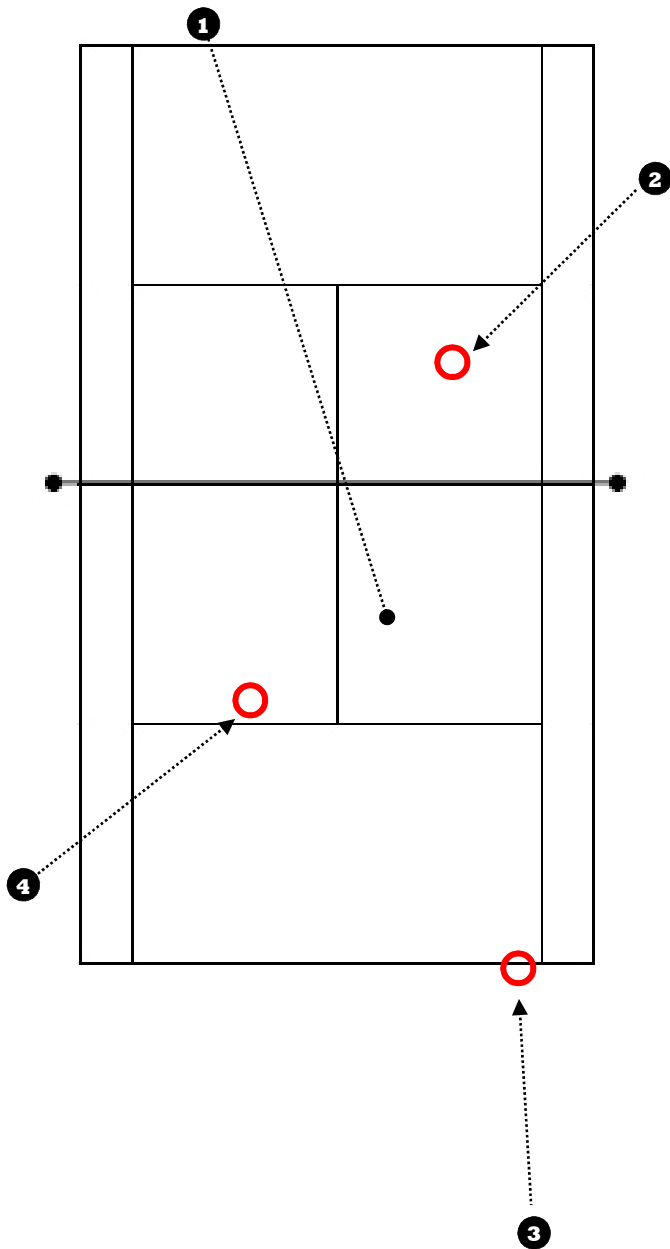
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## 4) Pre-Moving Doubles:

Players take an unusual doubles starting position which will ensure they will be moving when the point starts

**Player 1** is the **server** and he is the only player that starts in the traditional position.

**Player 2** – is the **server's partner** and would typically start where the red circle is, but must start as shown in the diagram.

**Player 3** – is the **returner** and would typically start where the red circle is, but must start as shown in the diagram.

**Player 4** – is the **returner's partner** and would typically start where the red circle is, but must start as shown in the diagram.

**As soon as the server <u>releases</u> the ball toss**, the rest of the payers hustle into their normal staring positions and play out the point.

This **pre movement** almost always make players play better.
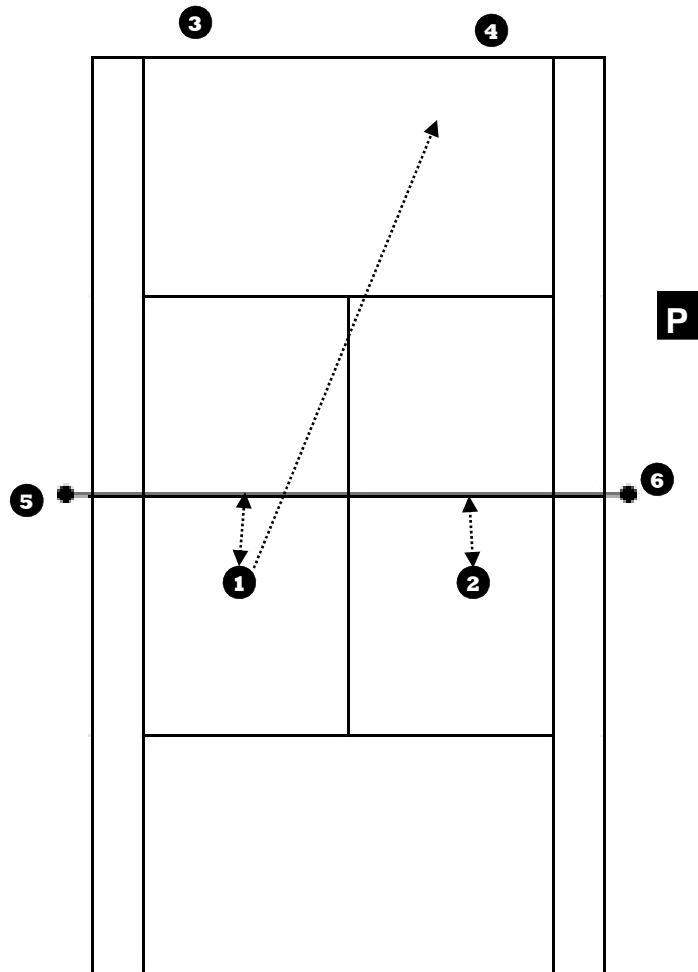
## 5) Lobster - Doubles:

Players learn to lob against a net team.

Doubles teams are 1 & 2, 3 & 4, 5 & 6.

Players line up with one doubles team at the net, another at the baseline, and the third team split with one player at each net post.

The net team always feeds the baseline team (using a bounce feed) that must land past the service line, and then the net team must also touch the net strap. The baseline team must lob the first ball then the point is played out.

After each point, the losing team exits to the net posts and the winning team starts at (or moves to) the baseline with the new incoming team always taking the net position and feeding the ball.

This is a great drill to get players to lob more often while teaching the net players to handle tough lobs. If the lob is hit well, the net team will have little chance to win the point, but that is OK.
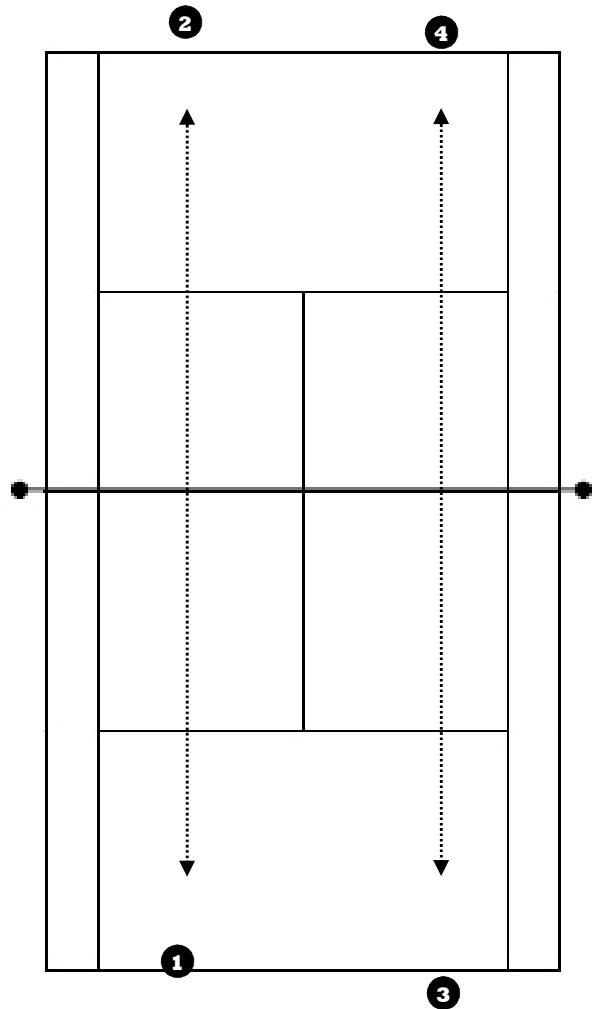
## 6) Cincinnati Shuffle:

This is a groundstroke game that allows players to win a "hustle" point

Player 1 plays 2 while player 3 plays 4 each on their own half of a court.

Players self-feed a ball and the point is played out from the baseline. Neither player can approach the net unless their opponent's ball lands short (inside the service box.)

After each regular point, the players race to the net and tap it. The first player to reach the net earns the "**hustle**" point

This drill teaches players to keep the ball deep, because of they allow their opponent to get to the net they will for sure lose the race to the net and the hustle point.

If a player forgets to run up to the net, his opponent can set him back 3 points by touching the net and running back to the service line and touching the net again before his opponent touches for the first time.
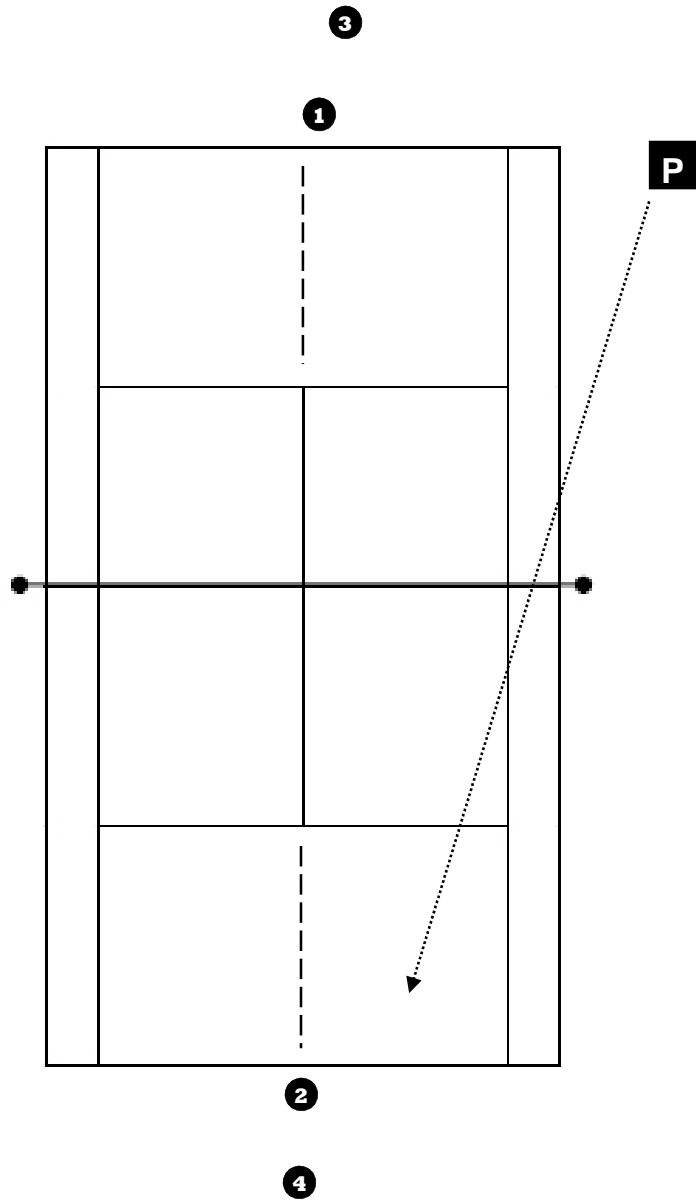
## 7) Far Side Cross-Court:

Learning to play high percentage tennis from the baseline.

Players 1 & 2 play against each other while players 3 & 4 do the same.

The pro feds a ball in to the player on the far side (player 2) And the point is played out from the baseline with the rule that the players in the far side (away from pro) may only hit their shots **cross-court** while the players in the pro's side of the court may hit anywhere they want.

After 3 points the players switch ends of the court so they play with both sets of rules.

This is a great drill to introduce the concept of patterns of play and is interesting because while the far side player have a restriction, it is a high percentage restriction and many times they are the side that scores the most points.

This also shows player that when they hit down-the-line they have farther to recover for the next shot.
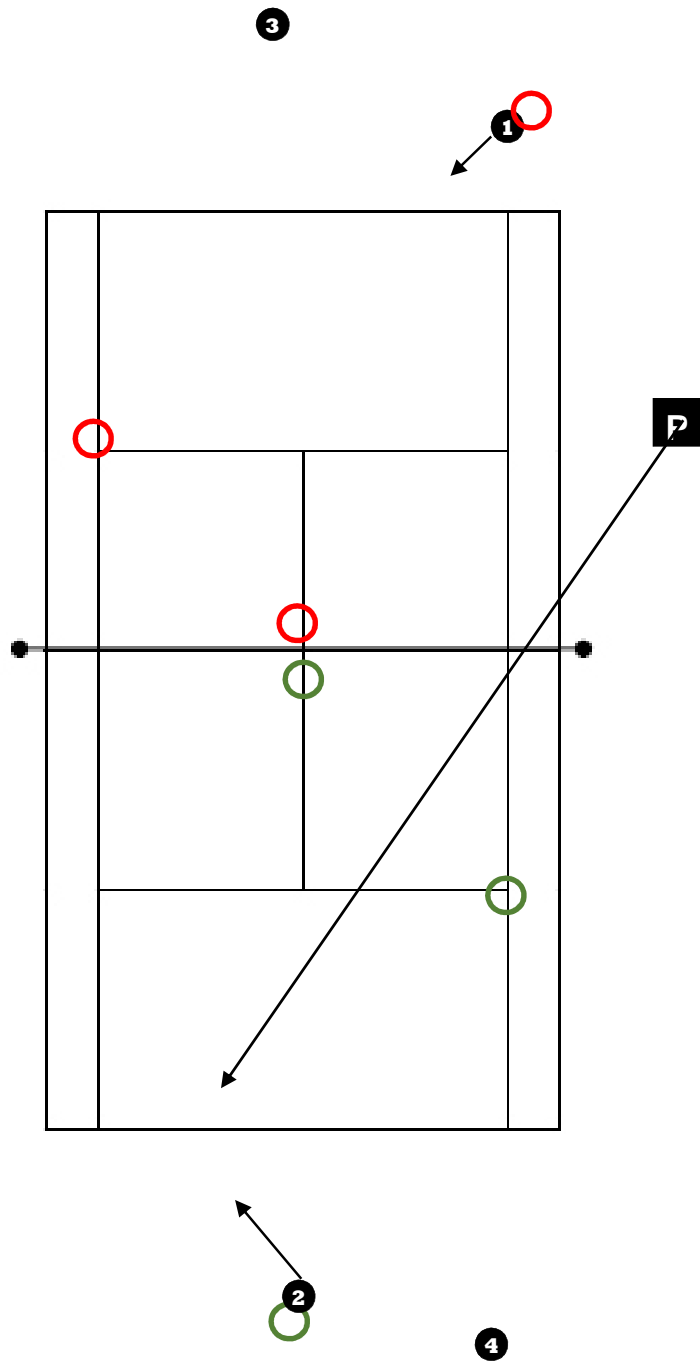
## 8) On the Spot

Points are played with players starting in unusual positions.

Players 1 & 2 play each other while players 3 & 4 wait to do the same

Players must start on any of the 3 spots located on their side of the net. They will play 3 points out and must pick a new spot to start each time.

Once the players pick their spot, the pro simply feeds in a ball and the point is played to completion. Then the players continue doing this until 3 points are completed and then they switch ends of the court.

When players 1 & 2 are done, players 3 & 4 come in and do the same thing.

This drill is great to creating emergency situation which is a common occurrence in tennis.
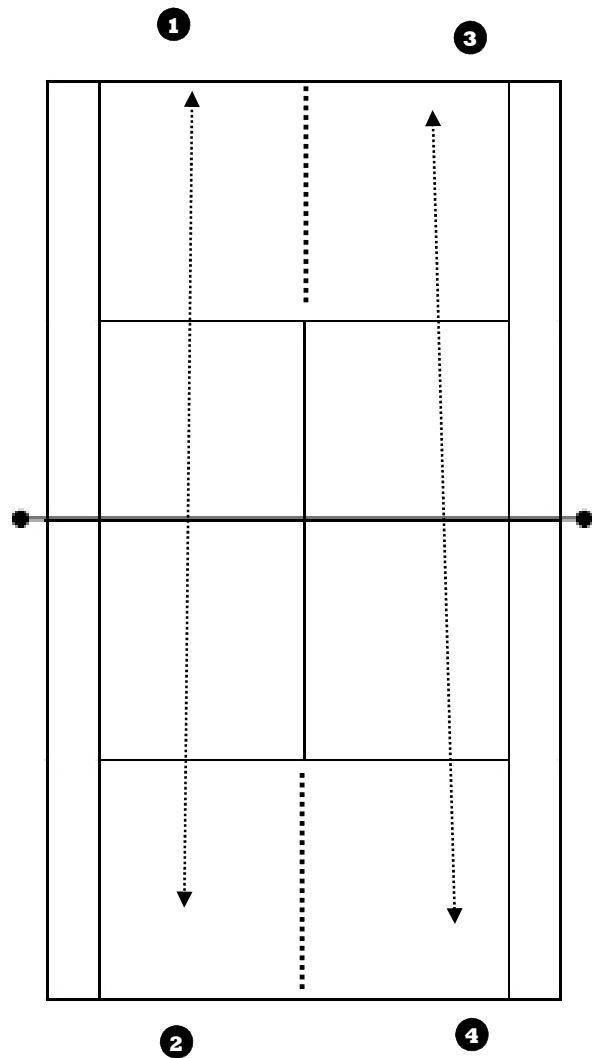
## 9) Consistency Battle:

This drill helps players extend the rally.

Players 1 & 2 are partners and competing against players 3 & 4. Points are all played straight ahead on half of a court.

Partners are working cooperatively to sustain a rally longer than their opponents.

**There are two ways to score points…**

1) Have your rally go longer than the other pair of players

2) Get to 10 shots in a row <u>before</u> the other pair does it.

   (Having option #2 keeps players from trying to moonball or "push" the ball as a way to win by outlasting the other team)
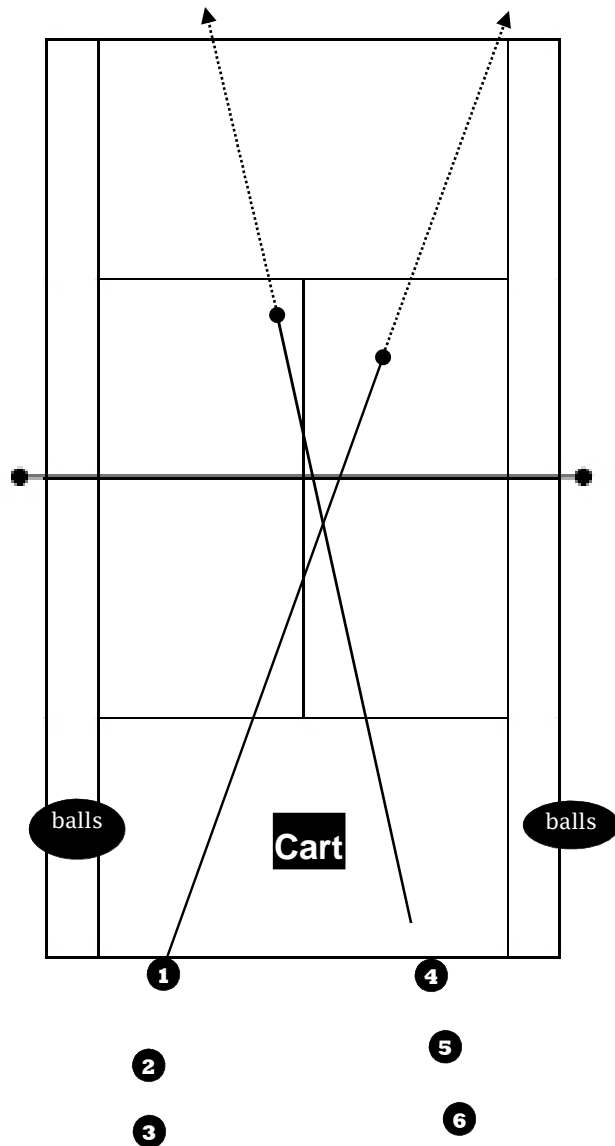
## 10) Serving Eliminator:

Two teams of at least 3 players start at the baseline in a single file line. One team in position to serve into the deuce court and the other team in position to serve into the add court.

The ball cart in located in no-mans land. Each team has a pile of 7-10 balls in their alley about as far back as no-mans land. The object of the game is to eliminate your pile of balls before the other team does. Pro starts the game and the players, serving one at time, take turns serving.

If the player makes the serve in to the proper box (or smaller target area for better players) they get to run forward to their pile and get a ball for the next team mate in line.

If the server misses the serve, they must run forward and get a ball out of the regular cart. Either way, the person that just served must get a ball for their team mate who is next in line. The team that eliminates all their balls first is declared the winner.

V= If you are getting people that just "poke" the serve in, make a rule that the second bounce on the serve must be past the baseline.

V= For advanced players, you may want to have them hit to a smaller designated target area in order to have it count.
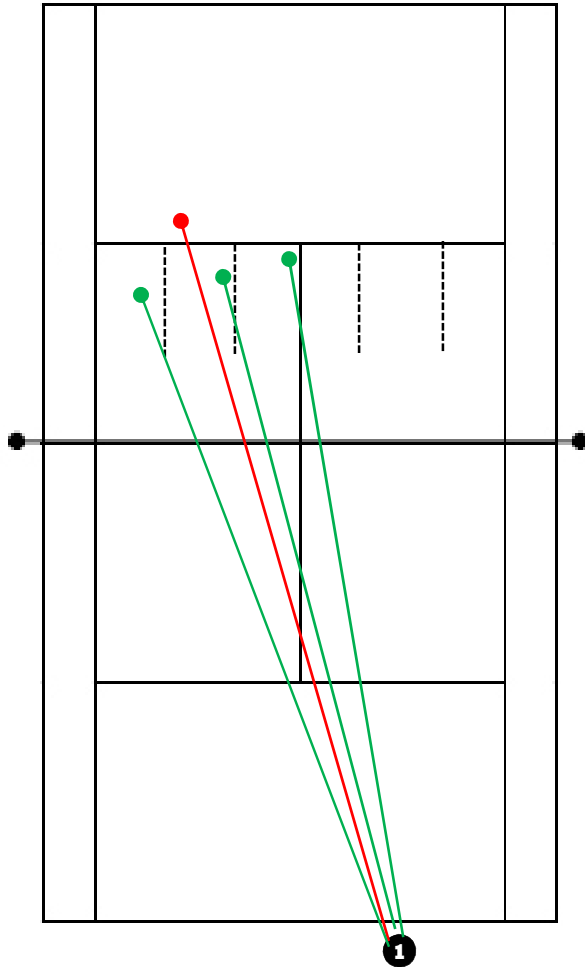
## 11) Serve Number:

This is another game that emphasizes accuracy as the most important aspect of an effective serve.

The goal of the **Serve Number** game is to get players to have a tangible number that they can know as their own. This will make it easy to compare where players stand in relation to other players or against themselves as they improve over time.

To determine a player's serve number, the player must start in area 1 and keep hitting serves until they hit that area, after they hit area 1 they may proceed through the rest of the areas. Your serve number is the total number if serves it takes you to hit all six target areas. The goal is to use the fewest balls to accomplish hitting all 6 areas. The perfect game would be 6.

Pros should put a power rule on each serve, for example the 2nd bounce, must go past the baseline in order to count. This will remove any temptation to hit the patty cake serve.

V: For strong players make the power rule be that the 2nd bounce must be up against the back fence or curtain on order to count.

Note: If doing this game with a group of players, have half the players start in area 4, 5, or 6 and just move through the numbers. This will eliminate any waiting for area 1.

For example – a player may start aiming at area 4 then 5, then 6, then 1, then 2, then 3.