

TOURNAMENT TOUGH - COPING WITH NERVES by Peter Farrell

Playing Standard: ITN 5 to 7

Long Term Player Development Pathway: Phase 4

With the tournament season under way, it's a good time to look at one of the mental aspects of successful match play. All players feel nervous at times. How a player *cope*s with nerves is what distinguishes the champion from the also ran:

- Breathe deeply between points and relax your muscles.
- Take time between rallies – never rush into the next point.
- Learn from previous points, but don't dwell on 'what might have been`.
- Concentrate only on the point you are playing now, or about to play. Thinking about the future (*"if I win the next two games it will be one set all"*) by definition means that you are not 100% focused on what you are doing now...
- Strike the ball the same way whether you are 5-0 up or 0-5 down. Play the shot not the score.
- Remember that if you are nervous, your opponent probably is too!
- Keep at the back of your mind that the world will keep turning whether you win or lose this match...

For individual advice on this or any aspect of tennis, please contact your local Tennis Coach Ireland coach – see www.tenniscoachireland.ie

For more information on the ITN: http://www.tennisireland.ie/player_database/what_is_the_itn

For more information on the Long Term Player Development Pathway:
http://www.tennisireland.ie/coaches/player_development_pathway