

DOUBLES POSITIONS

by Peter Farrell

Playing Standard: ITN 1 to 6

Long Term Player Development Pathway: Phase 4/5

We all know the standard positions used in doubles when we are the serving team. But is there anything unusual we can throw at our opponents to get them thinking “*what’s going on here?!*” Below are three options that just might pay dividends in your next two-a-side match.

THE AUSTRALIAN FORMATION

THE SET-UP: Both partners take up positions on the same half of the court. For example, if you are serving to the deuce court, both you and your partner are on the right hand side of the court. The server starts close to the centre mark, and after hitting the serve moves to cover the left side of the court.

WHY? If the receiver is hitting great crosscourt returns, using the Australian Formation forces her to return down the line.

PLANNED POACH FROM THE RETURN

THE SET-UP: Before the point begins, the serving team partners decide that shortly after the serve is hit, the servers partner (at the net) will move across to cover the servers side of the court and vice versa.

WHY? If the movement is timed right, there is a good chance that the volleyer will be able to contact the cross-court service return when it is still above net height, and so be able to hit a winning volley.

THE “I” FORMATION

THE SET-UP: The server starts close to the centre mark, his partner crouches at the net straddling the centre service line. Before they get into position, the serving team has decided that shortly after the serve is hit, one player will move to cover the deuce side of the court, and his partner will move to cover the advantage side of the court.

WHY? The serve receiver wants to keep the ball away from the net player, but the receiver does not know where the net player plans to be...

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