

Embracing Equally Matched Opponents

At MTC, we advocate for playing with opponents of similar skill levels to enhance overall game improvement. While challenging yourself against stronger players has its merits, the most effective progress often arises from matches where all four players are evenly matched. This dynamic ensures heightened focus, a variety of skills on display, and a highly competitive atmosphere that benefits everyone involved.

Playing with Stronger Players:

Engaging with stronger players can be beneficial, provided they share a genuine interest in developing others. It is crucial for players to possess the right mindset, as aimless play with superior opponents can lead to distractions and the development of unfavorable habits. Effective collaboration involves practicing shots essential for improvement, enabling both players to refine their skills.

"Playing Up" Etiquette

Seek Permission and Provide Options:

When aspiring to play with stronger players, approach with politeness. Request permission with an option for them to decline gracefully, such as, "Do you all mind if I join in, or would you prefer to continue playing separately?"

Timing Matters:

Choose opportune moments to ask, preferably during warm-ups or cool-downs. Avoid interrupting higher-level play, and if you do, inquire if you can join them later, respecting their flow.

Accommodate Their Flow:

If approaching mid-game, be considerate of their momentum. Ask if you can join in before they finish, allowing them to continue their play seamlessly.

Courteous Bow Out:

After a few games, make it easy for them to transition to other players of their level. Express understanding, stating, "I see you're getting a good game with those guys; I'll step back this time, and maybe we can play again later."

Engage Actively:

Show appreciation by hitting to them consistently. This not only enhances your skills but also makes the game more enjoyable for them, increasing the likelihood of future play.

Gratitude and Openness:

Express appreciation for their time and any feedback they provide. Keep an open mind to suggestions, fostering a positive playing environment.

Stay Humble:

Avoid assuming superiority based on individual performance. Recognize that stronger players may be focused on personal improvement rather than winning every point.

"Playing Down" Guidelines

Remember Your Journey:

Acknowledge those who helped you progress and pay it forward. Dedicate time to playing with less experienced players regularly, nurturing a supportive community.

Clear Communication:

If immediate play isn't feasible, communicate when you would be available, fostering transparency and managing expectations.

Set Time Limits:

When engaging with less experienced players, communicate your intended play duration beforehand. For instance, "I'd love to play a game or two, then join other players."

Challenge Yourself Positively:

Focus on personal improvement rather than winning. Choose specific skills to work on during these games, maintaining a challenging yet encouraging atmosphere.

Limited Feedback:

During play, limit feedback to one aspect, avoiding overwhelming less experienced players. Post-game, seek permission before providing additional insights, maintaining a positive and constructive approach.