



## READY FOR CLAY? PART 6

### HOW TO KEEP A COOL HEAD AGAINST CHEATS

**TENNIS IS RENOWNED AS A GENTLEMEN'S SPORT UNFORTUNATELY ONE ALSO COMES ACROSS CHEATS.**

Jonas grins. He knows his opponents' ball just scratched the line. With just four hairs of a very fresh ball. Jonas knows, that there will once again be a discussion. And at the end it will be "Two new ones". So Jonas grins because he sees the fury in his opponent Lowered glance. Negative talking to himself. A fast determined walk to the net to ask whether he can view the ball imprint.

Jonas waves his opponent over. Of course his opponent may look at the backhand longline ball imprint. It is 4:4 and 15:30 in the first set. Several points have been played. Many imprints are to be seen at the scene of the crime. Jonas shrugs his shoulders. His search for the right ball imprint proves uninformative.

Two new ones. Jonas opponent turns gesticulating wildly and muttering to his next serve and significantly produces a double fault.

### **DO NOT ALLOW CHEATS ANY POWER.**

What can you do to combat cheats like Jonas? The most important rule of thumb is : you must not allow the cheat any power. That sounds easy in theory. But in fact it is tricky. Tennis is an emotional sport. If in addition a cheat is standing on the opposite side of the net it is easy to reach boiling point.

But do you really want to give your opponent more power then he already has? Do you really want to give him the pleasure of seeing your annoyance? That would be the same as if you sat cross legged on the base line waiting for his serves. Put your racket aside. And begin to meditate.

Naturally you do not do this. You prepare for the return. You try to judge the shot and return it as well as possible. You do everything within your power to return the shot well. You must react in exactly the same way when you have exposed a cheat. How to do this you will learn later in this article. Next, let us take a look at the worst mistakes you can make.

### **THREE MISTAKES YOU MUST NEVER MAKE WHEN DEALING WITH CHEATS.**

1. Show your displeasure. What is it during a tennis match that you can hardly control?  
Your body language. You are so occupied with technique, tactics and strong serves that your body language shows your inner displeasure at any time. When Jonas once again proclaims a ball out which you know was on the line do not show annoyance. Do not show Jonas directly how his trick infuriates you. But you do show Jonas. Due to your body language. This reassures Jonas. He realizes his tactics are working. You are upset. It brings you out of rhythm You are distracted. And carelessly give away points
2. Be still put out two ball exchanges later.  
The ball concerned is now already two exchanges into history. In that time you have already made a slight mistake. With a good service your opponent has easily won another ball exchange.
3. And you are still raging about the ball imprint.  
This is how you once again give power to your opponent. You also give away most of your service game. And for a certain time are completely out of the game. In the worst case you lose the match.

### **HOW YOU KEEP IN CONTROL AND LEVER THE CHEAT OUT.**

Smile. Nothing will confuse the cheat more than a smile. Your opponent judges a ball out that you saw perfectly. Remain polite. Put on a friendly smile and ask if he is really sure. Do not go onto the other side. Do not look at the ball imprint. Do not bother to discuss the matter.

The cheat wants you to come over to his side. He wants to infuriate you. His aim is for you to start a discussion to get you off track. But if you refuse to play his game - then there is no game. In this way you will not give away power to your opponent. Instead you should pick out a team colleague, who stays as a spectator for the whole of your match. Give this colleague the job of watching close balls very carefully. Agree on hand signals with him. Whether a ball was in or out. Of course you can also solve these problems officially and call a referee onto the court. However it is far more important how you have reacted to your opponents tricks beforehand. Before a referee is on court, you can have lost many points and given away games.

Always remember these points when playing with a cheat.

- Smile.
- Do not cross onto your opponents side.
- Do not start discussions.
- Be careful of your body language.
- Make use of a team colleague.
- Do not give away points by losing your temper.
- May the power be with you!

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