

## To Wii, Or Not To Wii

By Hans Romer

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Playing a tennis match in front of a sold-out stadium with thousands of fans cheering and booing has always been my dream. Experiencing the pressure, profusely sweating and absorbing being in the moment, I finally lived my 15 minutes of fame.

The outside air temperature was 3 degrees Fahrenheit and the stadium was in Western Maine. My opponent on the other side of the net was a 74-year old woman from the Netherlands, running me up and down and from left to right! This 74-year old woman was actually my mom, Ineke, and after a close and competitive match, despite her jet lag, she actually beat me!

I have always thought of myself as the tennis expert in the family, but after playing Wii-tennis against all my family members during this past Christmas, I came to realize that my expertise is limited to only a real tennis court. Here, in this virtual arena, I was reduced to a 2.0 player! What a humiliating experience for a certified tennis pro. Thanks Santa!

We have come a long way from playing Pong back in the seventies to this amazing Wii game. Being a conservative fan of video games, I was trying to discover the advantages of this game and how it could possibly help me teach tennis more effectively. Here I was, swinging away in front of the television with loopy forehands, wicked slice backhands and penetrating serves. What a rude awaking to realize that this impressive display of modern tennis didn't really help me, since my mom on the other side (she was actually standing right next to me) was just hacking and chopping her way to victory.

The fact that the majority of the family was rooting for my mom, didn't really help me either! It didn't take me long to realize that stroke development was not the reason to purchase a Wii-system. What did impress me was the way my nieces and nephews (who actually don't play tennis), ranging in ages from 2 ½ to 19, quickly mastered the scoring system! There was no need for me to explain to them that 45-15 does not exist. From experience we all know that when we ask our students on the court what comes after 30, the usual and logic answer is 45!

In addition to learning the tennis scoring system, swinging away at virtual tennis balls and having a blast with your friends and family, you will actually break a light sweat! Needless to say that no video game will ever replace the real game we love, play and teach. However, if you do purchase a video game for your kids you might as well indulge the family with a very interactive one, like the Wii.

Playing virtual tennis, in my opinion, is far better than assassinating villains, killing dragons, destroying villages, conquering Kingdoms or stealing cars! Meanwhile, I look forward to playing my family members on a real tennis court again, allowing me to restore my damaged reputation. Or perhaps I should try beating them in Wii-bowling!

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