



DREW'S Diagnosis

England Squash
high performance
coach Lee Drew on
topical issues

EL TAYEB'S BOAST FROM THE BACK

One of the form players so far this season has been Nour El Tayeb, who won her first PSA World Series title at the U.S. Open.

El Tayeb loves to use angles on the court and one of her weapons is the boast played from behind the short line. She recently told me how she learned about the shot in detail from the Australian former world no.5, Anthony Hill, who used to be based in Egypt.

El Tayeb said: "The boast is a very effective shot when played right, as it can move the opponent diagonally on the court. The most important aspect of the shot for me is the set-up. It needs to be the same as the drive, as I need to be able to hit both shots with the same swing preparation."

She also talked about the tactical element of the boast: "I like to play the drive a few times before trying the boast. Once I have set this up, I can start to mix them up. As

Nour El Tayeb boasting from the back of the court against Raneem El Welily



the game develops, I can tell if my opponent is positioning themselves further forward or back on the court. This helps me decide on the best option."

Her preference is to play the two-wall boast, as this can make the opponent work harder. To achieve this, she adapts to the feel of the court and the feel of the ball on the strings. Another important part of the shot is the target she aims for on the side wall, which may change depending on the conditions.

The boast can be a great shot when played at the correct time and in the correct way, but it takes plenty of practice to play it well. I will leave you with something the great Jonah Barrington once told me: "Always look to play the boast on your terms.

When every muscle in your body says boast.... don't!"

So, like El Tayeb, choose the attacking boast and don't be forced into defensive boasts.

KEY TIPS

- Work on getting the same style for the boast and the drive
- Wait slightly longer for the boast. Let the opponent commit
- Find where you need to aim on the side wall
- Get the ball to bounce twice before the side wall
- Practise by driving and having the boast as an option