

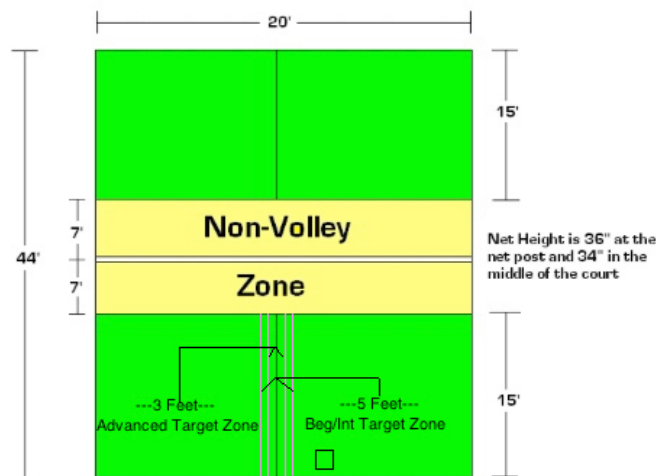
## Down the Middle

### “Down the Middle solves the Riddle”

Background on this drill: You may have heard the notion “Down the Middle solves the riddle. What does that mean and why is that important? There are two reasons to choose a shot down the middle. First, it is more likely to stay within the boundaries of the court than an attempt at a diagonal shot. This is especially true if you are in a defensive position, such as returning a shot that came diagonally to you. The other reason is that the return of the opponents will be weaker if they have to hesitate even for a hundredth of a second to decide who will return it.

In this drill, there will be two taped lines on each side of the court mid line. One set will be 1 1/2 feet from the court side line. This will be the target zone for the advanced players. Another set will be another foot out for the beginner/intermediate players. In essence, the advance players will have to return the ball outside the non-volley zone, but within the three foot target zone. Likewise, beginner and intermediate players will have to return the ball outside the non-volley zone within the 5 foot target zone. Like other drills, you will have one minute to return as many balls as you can into these target areas.

The Club Ball Machine will consistently send balls diagonally into the court from one location so you focus on your return and learn what works and what does not. Hitting with repetition will create “muscle memory” and “self confidence” for your game improvement and enjoyment. Practice, practice, practice.



Paddles Up!!