

CONCENTRATION IN CRICKET : A KEY OF SUCCESS

Jai Shankar Yadav* & Sunil Kumar Pandey**

ABSTRACT

Concentration plays a vital role to execute the fundamental skills during the play the game of Cricket. Concentration is arguably the most important psychological factor involved in cricket. Without good concentration, no amount of technical skill or physical fitness is going to help you to consistently score runs, take wickets and hold catches. Concentration is a term which is commonly used in cricket. When a batsman is dismissed or a fielder drops a catch, how often do they admit "I lost concentration"?

* Ph.D Scholar, Dr. C. V. Raman University, Kota Road, Bilaspur (CG)

** Physical Education Teacher Meharishi Vidhya Mandir, Bilaspur (CG)

INTRODUCTION

Every cricket activity (bowling, batting, wicket-keeping and fielding) requires a different type of focus. Before looking at ways to improve concentration or focusing skills it is important to explain some of the important factors of concentration.

DURATION OF CONCENTRATION

Cricket is generally played over an extended period of time, with many short breaks (between deliveries) and long breaks (lunch, tea, overnight). You can expect to spend a little more than half of the game actually on the field. At anytime during the game there will be a wicket-keeper, two batsmen, a bowler and nine fielders. How each of these players needs to concentrate, mentioned below:

Batsman : Batsman needs to focus when they are receiving one delivery bowled by the bowler. It means focusing from about the time that the bowler starts his run up, until the ball is dead. This means a batsman can relax while at the bowler's end, between overs, between deliveries, when a wicket falls, and when the ball is dead.

Wicket-keeper : Wicket-keepers should be ready to receive each and every delivery bowled by the bowler. He must concentrate fully on every ball, not relaxing until the ball is dead. Wicket-keepers can relax between deliveries and between overs, so that he can make a level of good concentration throughout the innings.

Bowlers : Bowlers need to plan their deliveries and then focus on delivering their ball. After delivering the ball they have to field the ball rolling or catch in the air. Bowlers can relax their focus between the overs, between deliveries while fielding and when not bowling.

Fielders : Fielders have more time to relax their concentration. Their role is to back up and support the bowler. They can relax between deliveries and between overs. The intensity of their concentration depends on their fielding position. Fielders close to the striker batsman require most intense concentration.

INTENSITY OF CONCENTRATION

Cricket, like archery, baseball and golf, requires players to focus intensely and then to relax. There is no need to concentrate all the time. No player can concentrate for whole day. This is just not true because the limit of focused human concentration is somewhere between forty five to sixty minutes. This means that you must learn and practice the art of 'switching off attention during short breaks. Intense concentration required for cricket needs to be based on the mental calmness.

DIRECTION OF CONCENTRATION

In cricket there are many things to concentrate on and each activity requires a different type of concentration. When you are concentrating well you will not actually be aware that you are concentrating. For example- Batsmen in good form effortlessly shift their concentration from their game plan to the bowler, the ball, the fielders, their partners and so on. Bowlers shift their concentration from their own strategies, to the ball, to the batsman, to the target, to their body position or to the feeling of delivering the ball. So, In each activity you can actually shift concentration backward and forward from external cues such as ball to internal cues such as strategies and body position.

Some of the questions that follow may help you to evaluate your own concentration skills in the key areas of the game, are given in Table 1

TABLE 1
QUESTIONS TO BE EVALUATED BY BATEMAN, BOWLER AND
WICKET-KEEPER

S.NO.	Team Member	Questions to be evaluated
1.	Batsman	1. How good are you at focusing all your attention on to the ball? 2. How good are you at focusing all your attention on to the ball? 3. What things around you sometimes distract you from the ball? 4. Do fielder's comments distract you? 5. Do your own thoughts sometimes distract you? 6. Do you know where the fielders are when you are batting? 7. Can you quickly and accurately judge whether a run is possible
2.	Bowler	1. How good are you at focusing on a target? 2. Are you aware of your body position while bowling? 3. Do you prefer to concentrate on the target spot or on the rhythm? 4. Do you think about plans while going back to your run up? 5. Can you put these plans into action immediately? 6. What things around you distract you from bowling? 7. Do negative thoughts ever distract you?
3.	Wicket-Keeper	1. Can you concentrate on motivating the fielders and then switch back to the ball? 2. Are you usually aware of your positioning? 3. Are there any times during an innings when you seem to lose intensity of focusing? 4. How good are you at reacting quickly to the chance of a sharp single or a quick run out?

Concentration can be focused outwards to general things like ground and field placing, or onto specific things like the ball or the target point on the pitch. It can also be

directed inwards of things like strategies and body position. 9'M-ne players are easily disturbed by comments or sledging from other players or by the movements of the people near the sight screen. Such players are probably better at knowing what is going on around them, rather than being able to narrow your focus or concentration. This is often called field focus. Cricket, however requires less field focus and a greater ability for narrowing your concentration.

LOSING CONCENTRATION

Analysis of your game reveals that you can generally focus your concentration when it is really needed but sometimes unusual, tight or even uninteresting situations can cause you to lose your focus. In cricket there are many things that are under your control, and the most important is your reaction to the events that occur during a game. Players should not lose their concentration when they drop a catch or on a bad delivery. Good players remain in control after any bad performance. They can refocus their concentration after setbacks such as ducking into a short ball or being hit for a six: There are so many situations which are not under your control. Some of these are mentioned Table 2.

TABLE 2

CRITICAL SITUATIONS DURING BATTING, BOWLING AND WICKET-KEEPING

S.NO.	Fundamental Skills	Situations which can not be controlled
1.	Batting	1. Crowd noise, 2. The pitch, 3. The ball that was just bowled, 4. Partner's way of batting, and 5. Partner's running between the wickets
2.	Bowling	1. Batsman playing and missing outer edge, 2. Batsman playing unorthodox shots, 3. Batsman slogging, 4. Umpire's decision, 5. Condition of the ball The ball you have just bowled, 6. Fielders dropping catches, and 7. Pitch is not favourable
3.	Wicket-Keeping	1. Ground conditions, 2. Bowling standard, 3. Stumping chance you just missed, and 4. Hard throws from fielders

IMPROVING CONCENTRATION ON SKILLS BY SETTING GOALS AND TARGETS

Setting of goals and targets for each match is very important. A useful approach to goal setting in matches is to select result and action goals each time that you play.

Result goals, as the name suggests, are the goals based on the end results such as taking three wickets, taking all possible catches or scoring at least 50.

Action goals are strategies or actions which will help you to achieve your result goals.

They include playing straight, bowling to the predetermined plan and staying relaxed. An example of result and action goals for an opening batsman : Result goal- To score 100 runs
Action goals-

1. Give first one hour to the bowlers
2. Stay loose, calm and relaxed
3. Play according to the merit of the ball
4. Choose the deliveries for hitting boundaries
5. Plan your innings session-wise

This type of goal setting approach helps in two ways; first, it creates the motivation (to score 100) and secondly it directs the focus of concentration onto things which are going to help achieve the goal.

DRILLS TO IMPROVE YOUR CONCENTRATION ON SKILLS

One of the best ways to improve your focusing skills is through a range of practice drills. There can be many practice drills to improve you focusing skills but some of them are given in Table 3

TABLE 3

PRACTICE DRILLS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF CONCENTRATION FOR SKILLS

1. One on one catching	2. Bowling machine	3. Target practice
4. Leave it alone	5. Fielding-Run-Back	6. Pressure catching to the fielders and the wicket- keepers
7. Pressure fielding drills	8. Stump catching to the wicket-keepers	9. Wall catching to the wicket- keepers

REFERENCES

Brain Blansby , Daryl Foster “The psychology of cricket- Graham Winter Send the stumps flying- Bruce Elliot.

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHOR

The Indian Journal of Physical Education, Sports and Applied Sciences is a quarterly journal publishes scientific research and review articles on sports and sports science disciplines and other such subjects having inter-disciplinary perspective with specific application to sports.

Manuscripts are accepted for publication with the understanding that they have not been published, simultaneously submitted, or already accepted for publication, elsewhere.

Manuscripts deemed suitable are acknowledged and critically reviewed by a qualified, independent, expert evaluator, through a secret evaluation system. The evaluator's comments may be communicated to the principal author along with the comments of the Editor.

All the manuscripts are to be submitted by the principal author to the Editor-in-Chief/Editor, Indian Journal of Physical Education, Sports and Applied Sciences by e-mail as well as on mailing address along with a letter of intent for publication. This covering letter should also contain the following certificate:

"It is certified that this article is my/ our own original research work which has not been published, simultaneously submitted, or already accepted for publication, elsewhere.

"I have the consent of the co-authors for this submission and I/we transfer the ownership of the copyright to the publisher, in the event of publication of this article."

The covering letter should contain a complete mailing address of the principal author. The Editor-in-Chief/Editor may acknowledge the receipt of the same, as well as, handle all future correspondence.

Manuscript Preparation

All parts of the manuscript should be typewritten, double-spaced, with margins of at least 3 cm on all sides. Number manuscript pages consecutively throughout the paper. Each manuscript should include title page, the second title page and text, and may contain up to 20 pages. Authors should also supply a shortened version of the title suitable for the running head, not exceeding 50 characters with spaces. Each article should be summarized in an abstract. Abstracts should be accompanied by three to five keywords that will facilitate indexing and data retrieval purposes.

The title page should contain the title of the study and the names, qualifications, employment status, the employing institution and the place and state, of all the authors. The title being brief, should not contain the words like 'A Study Of' or 'A Probe into' etc.

The second title, the page following the title page should contain the title of the study, abstract and key words. The numbering of pages should begin here. The third page should contain the text including introduction, methodology, results, discussion, conclusion, and references. All these heads are to be typed on the left hand in upper lower type, in case there

are no subheads like purpose of the study, review of literature, hypotheses, and limitations of the study and its implications. When there are sub-heads, the heads are to be typed in all capitals and the sub-heads in upper-lower type letters. Abbreviations must be spelt.

Abstract

The abstract should be self-explanatory, of about 150 words; suitable for use by the abstracting journals, without rewording and should state what was aimed, what was done, what was found and what was concluded. For the review article, the abstract should be a concise summary.

Keywords

Following the abstract, the author should list not more than six key words that do not appear in the title, that represent the content of the manuscript.

Introduction.

This describes the present state of knowledge of the subject or the review of the literature, the concise statement of the problem, the aim of the research, and the development of the research hypotheses. It should include the practical and applied questions around which the study was developed.

Methodology

This section should include a complete description of subjects, materials, equipments, procedures and experimental techniques. It should also include the description of the statistical methods used to analyze the data. The methods and the statistical procedures published in detail before hand should be cited. Units of measurement, symbols and abbreviations must conform to the international standards. Metrics system is preferred.

Results

This section should include a concise presentation of the data. Figures, tables and photographs may be used to show the results of the study. Tables and figures should not be used for the presentation of the same

data. The subjects must not be identified by name or any other recognizable label.

Discussion

The discussion part should contain the interpretation of the results with possible comparisons with other relevant studies. The discussion must be rigorous and correspond to the data and the hypothesis. New-hypothesis, if any, may be stated. Recommendations, if any, question of practical application, consistent with the limitations of the study, may be included.

Conclusion

This should briefly state the conclusions drawn from the study. Conclusions should not be drawn without any supporting data.

References

All sources, cited in the text, must be also cited in the reference list. The reference list includes circulated material, i.e., books, journal, proceedings, films, etc.

Tables

Each table should be typed on separate sheets, numbered consecutively in Roman numerals at the top centre, and given collectively after the references. Each table should have a brief but meaningful title which should start next to the Table Number after colon. Explanatory matter and non-standard abbreviations should be given in the footnote, and not below the title. Tables should be referred in the text.

Illustrations

All figures and illustrations should be either artwork in black ink on Art Card or 5" x 7" glossy prints. The photographs should be glossy black and white having good contrast. The letters used in the illustrations and photographs should be of sufficient size to withstand reduction to single column size. Figures should be numbered in Arabic numerals. Captions of photos and illustrations and the legends should be typed on a separate sheet. All illustrations must be identified on the back by gently writing in ink or pencil, indicating illustration number and the author.

Art work should be done professionally, Art work carried out by the publishers, out of necessity, would be charged to the authors.

Floppy Disk

The authors must send a floppy disk containing the material meant for publication, to facilitate printing.