

NZC
ADVANCED
DEVELOPMENT
COACHING COURSE



INTRODUCTION

Cricket is New Zealand's main summer sport. It is a unique sport that blends individual performance into an exciting team game. It is played at competitive and social levels and is enjoyed by a significant number of New Zealanders of all ages, genders, cultures and abilities.

'Coaches are playing an increasingly important and diverse role in sport and the community globally. They are engaging with a broader range of participants who place significantly greater demands on them, whether working with novice children or elite players. They are not only expected to coach the sport technically and tactically but to coach and develop the person physically, emotionally, socially and cognitively' - International Council for Coaching Excellence.

Coaches are central to the sport, in many ways they are the sport. They are the people who kids listen to, learn from and respect'. A great coach can inspire the hearts and minds of kids to want to train and compete in sport. Coaches have the satisfying challenge of not only teaching players individual skills and the rules and strategies of the game, but also instilling in them appropriate values, attitudes and a sense of the game's etiquette and traditions.

The NZC Advanced Development Course E-Manual has been established to assist coaches of Major Association U15 and District Association U15, U17, U19 players in their quest to develop their coaching knowledge and ability which will aid their player's development. Development coaches have a very important role to play in the development of young cricketers in New Zealand and it is hoped that this manual will be a useful resource.

NZC acknowledges the critical role that all coaches play in player enjoyment and retention and values the positive contribution coaches bring to the game. Coaches make a real difference.

"Coaches are central to the sport, in many ways they are the sport. They are the people who kids listen to, learn from and respect."



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Section 1.0

COACHING

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NZC COACHING STRATEGY

Our purpose is to enhance the cricketing experience through appropriate and accessible coaching.

CORE PRINCIPLES

- Coaches exist for the players
- Player enjoyment
- Coaches are leaders
- Continuous learning
- Culture of improvement
- Collaboration amongst coaches
- Coaching capability and delivery is appropriate to the players level
- Coaching the New Zealand way

ALIGNMENT

COMMUNITY COACHING PLAN

Purpose:
To establish a coaching framework that consistently meets the needs of all participants. Offers personal development and further opportunities, and ultimately drives retention within the sport.

- Key objectives:**
- Ensuring nationally there are suitably qualified coaches available to meet the needs of all players
 - Increase player and coach retention
 - Increase player and coach diversity
 - Create and implement an aligned national coaching approach

HIGH PERFORMANCE COACHING PLAN

Purpose:
To grow New Zealand High Performance coaching capability to enable players to perform and win.

- Key objectives:**
- Grow the leadership and people management capability of HP coaches
 - Enhance Coaches planning processes
 - HP coaches understanding ‘coaching - learning’ and how to enhance learning and performance
 - An aligned HP coach identification and development process for succession
 - Ensure ongoing best practice in the technical and tactical elements of cricket

Alignment between Community and High Performance coaching plans that ensures there is a robust talent identification and development process for high potential coaches to progress from Performance to High Performance. This process is enabled by collaboration between NZC (HP and Community), MA's (HP and Community), SNZ and HPSNZ.

COACHING PROCESS

COACH COMMUNITY	PLAYER LEVEL	COACHING STAGE		
High Performance Community	BLACKCAPS, WHITE FERNS, NZ 'A', NZ U19, First Class, NZ Emerging players or overseas equivalent	Performance Coach Programme (Formerly level 3)	Performance Coach Programme	Performance Coach Programme
Performance Community	MA 'A', MA U19, MA U21, DA Senior, Premier Club	NZC Trained Performance Coach (Currently Level 2)	NZC Advanced Performance Coach	
Development Community	MA U14, U15 (Yr 9, 10), DA U15, U17, U19 (Yr 9, 10); Secondary School, Youth Club, DA Junior, Rep; Secondary School Boys & Girls, School 1st XI	NZC Trained Performance Coach (Currently Level 1)	NZC Advanced Development Coach	
Foundation Community	Primary School, Intermediate School, Junior Secondary, Junior Club, National Primary School Cup & Shield, Superstar Cricket Academy; Superstar Cricket; Superstar skills; Super skills; Super Cricket	NZC Trained Foundation Coach (Formerly HAG/Kiwi/Foundation)	NZC Advanced Foundation Coach	
		Trained Coach	Advanced Coach	

DEVELOPMENT COACHING COMMUNITY



Advanced Development Coaching Course

Requirements

Must have completed NZC Coaching Development Course

13-15 Hours

It focusses on the following:

Player Level

Participants who have completed the Development Course and coach:

- Major Association U14 and/or U15 teams
- District Association U15, U17, U19 teams
- Senior club teams

Online Coaching Modules (Approximately 120 minutes)

- Coaching Girls
- Coaching Spin Bowling
- Mental Skills
- Planning
- Coach's Training Diary (Match, Practice, Logbook, Season or Tournament plan) - Found online
- E-Coaching Manual (Interactive PDF) - Found online

Online Vulnerable Persons (Approximately 30 minutes)

- Introduction
- Identifying
- Policy

Practical (4 x modules - 12½ hours)

- Run by Major Associations and some District Associations
- Skills, Drills – Batting, Pace Bowling, Spin Bowling, Wicket Keeping, Fielding
- Coaching Practice (in course)

Coaching Practice

- Coaching Session Observation (in field)
- Session or Tournament Plan
- Planning one coaching session
- 75 hours of coaching

SPIRIT OF CRICKET

Cricket is a game that owes much of its unique appeal to the fact that it should be played not only within its Laws, but also within the Spirit of the Game. Any action, which is seen to abuse this spirit, causes injury to the game itself.

The major responsibility for ensuring the spirit of fair play rests with the captains. There are two Laws, which place the responsibility for the team's conduct firmly on the captain.



“The major responsibility for ensuring the spirit of fair play rests with the captains.”

The responsibility of captain

- The captains are responsible at all times for ensuring that play is conducted within the Spirit of the Game as well as within the Laws

Players' conduct

- In the event of any player failing to comply with the instructions of an umpire, criticising his decisions by word or action, showing dissent, or generally behaving in a manner which might bring the game into disrepute, the umpire concerned shall in the first place report the matter to the other umpire and to the player's captain, requesting the latter to take action

Fair and unfair play

- According to the Laws the umpires are the sole judges of Fair and Unfair play
- The umpires may intervene at any time, and it is the responsibility of the captain to take action where required

The responsibility of captain

- Time wasting
- Damaging the pitch
- Intimidatory bowling
- Tampering with the ball
- Any other action that they consider to be unfair

The Spirit of the Game involves RESPECT for:

- Your opponent
- Your own captain and team
- The role of the umpires
- The game's traditional values

It is against the Spirit of the Game:

- To dispute an umpires decision by word, action or gesture
- To direct abusive language towards an opponent or umpire
- Indulge in cheating or sharp practise, for instance:
- Appeal knowing that the batter is not out
- Advance towards the umpire in an aggressive manner when appealing
- Seek to distract an opponent either verbally or by harassment with persistent clapping or unnecessary noise under the guise of enthusiasm and motivation of one's own side

Violence

- There is no place for any act of violence on the field of play

Players

- Captains and umpires together set the tone for the conduct of a cricket match. Every player is expected to make an important contribution to this.

COACHES CODE OF ETHICS

01

Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every individual player as a human being

Treat everyone equally regardless of gender, disability, ethnic origin or religion.

Respect the player, development stage and goals of each athlete in order to reach their full potential.

02

Maintain high standards of integrity

Operate within the laws of cricket and in the spirit of cricket, while encouraging your players to do the same.

Advocate a sporting environment free of drugs and other performance-enhancing substances within the guidelines of the New Zealand Sports Drug Agency and the World Anti-Doping Code.

Do not disclose any confidential information relating to players without their written prior consent.

03

Be a positive role model for Cricket and players and act in a way that projects a positive image of coaching

All players are deserving of equal attention and opportunities.

Ensure the player's time spent with you is a positive experience.

Be fair, considerate and honest with players.

Encourage and promote a healthy lifestyle – refrain from smoking and drinking alcohol around players.

04

Professional responsibilities

Display high standards in your language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation.

Display control, courtesy, respect, honesty, dignity and professionalism to all involved with the game. This includes opponents, coaches, officials, administrators, the media, parents and spectators.

Encourage your players to demonstrate the same qualities.

Be professional and accept responsibility for your actions.

You should not only refrain from initiating a sexual relationship with a player, but should also discourage any attempt by a player to initiate a sexual relationship with you, explaining the ethical basis of your refusal.

Accurately represent personal coaching qualifications, experience, competence and affiliations.

Refrain from criticism of other coaches and players.

05

Make a commitment to providing a quality service to your players

Seek continual improvement through ongoing coach education, and other personal and professional development opportunities.

Provide players with planned and structured training programmes appropriate to their needs and goals.

Understand that the development of players at any level is a long term process and this should not be sacrificed for short term gains.

Seek advice and assistance from professionals when additional expertise is required.

Maintain appropriate records.

GROWTH AND MATURATION

People grow and develop through different stages in their lifetime. The physical and emotional changes that occur as people mature affect all aspects of life, including sport.

It is important for coaches to understand the different phases of development and how they can affect sports performance - particularly coaches of young athletes. Coaches need to consider not only the athletes’ physical needs but also their social, emotional and cognitive needs.

By adapting plans and activities to suit the needs of athletes in terms of growth and development, the coach can help the athletes to progress through sport in the way that best suits them.

Understand and identify the various stages of growth and maturation

We can identify the following phases and approximate ages of physical, psychosocial and cognitive development. It must be emphasised that there are few people who go through these phases exactly as suggested; as individuals we all grow and develop at our own rate.

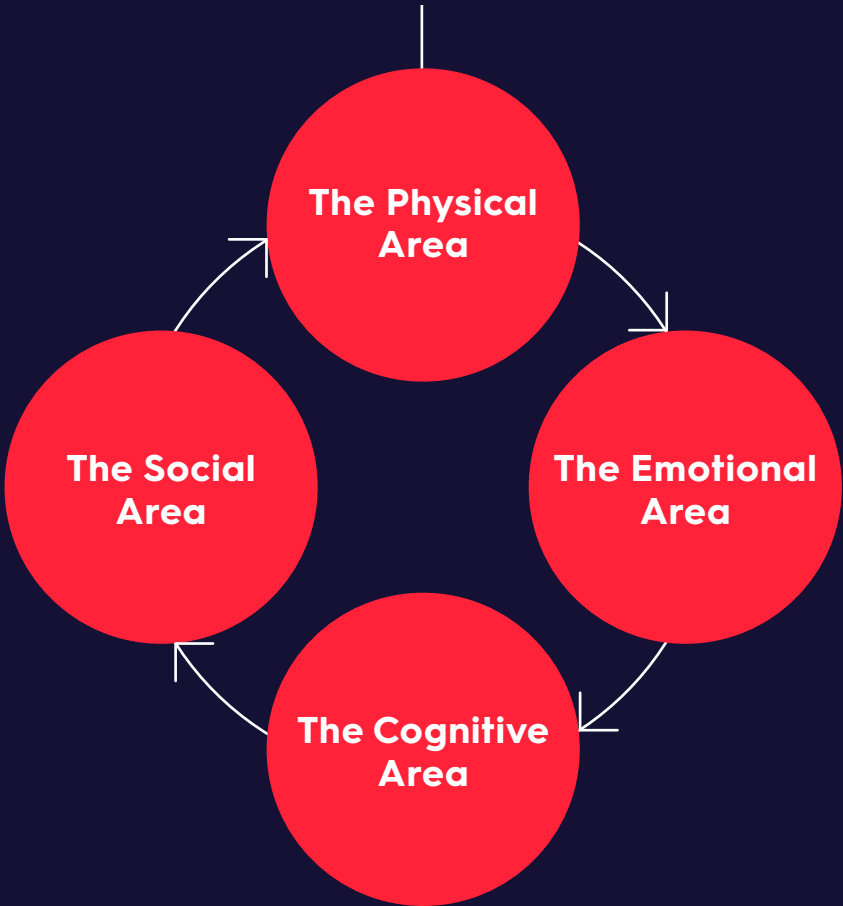
A young person’s developmental/biological age can differ by as much two years from their chronological age. For example, an athlete who is 12 calendar years old could be anywhere from 10 to 14 in developmental/biological age.



In terms of sport, there are different communities that a young person fits into. They are:



Within each of these communities there are four areas to consider:



GROWTH AND MATURATION

Examine the Skills, Strategies, Tactics and Games Appropriate for an Athlete’s Stage of Growth and Maturation from late childhood through to late teenage communities

By understanding and recognising the different stages of growth and maturation, the coach can adapt activities to suit the needs and abilities of the individual athlete. Failure to adapt plans and activities contributes to the drop-out rate in sport, while good planning adds to the athletes’ enjoyment and may keep them involved in the sport longer.

The following tables describe the characteristics from late childhood to the late teenage communities.

This information is intended to be used as a reference to assist you in planning your coaching programme.



“Failure to adapt plans and activities contributes to the drop-out rate in sport.”

LATE CHILDHOOD COMMUNITY (9 TO 12 YEARS OLD)		
ATHLETIC CHARACTERISTICS		ATHLETIC NEEDS
Physical <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Growth is slow until puberty• Many females and some males reach puberty and experience growth spurts.• In puberty, skeletal system grows faster than muscular system, thus increasing injury risk.• Lack coordination whilst going through puberty.• Have steady increases in motor skills, strength, balance and coordination - fine motor skills are developing• Hand-eye coordination is relatively mature.• Are maturing at differing rates (individual, gender and ethnicity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• minimised• Like challenge, but dislike public failure.• Find comparisons with the success of others difficult and this erodes self-confidence.• Need to feel accepted and worthwhile (self-worth).• Are easily motivated to be involved and prepared to take risks.• With puberty, changes in hormones and thinking patterns contribute to mood swings.• Early maturing can be stressful - rapid physical change can be embarrassing. Cognitive (thought processes) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are capable of developing leadership skills• Vary greatly in academic abilities, interests and reasoning skills .• Begin to think logically and symbolically; new ideas are best understood when related to previous experiences.• Have increased attention span, but have many interests which change rapidly.• Are learning to absorb new ideas, but tend to judge in terms of right/wrong or black/white.• Often reject solutions offered by adults in favour of finding their own solutions.• Like to share thoughts and reactions.• Are developing individual identity - intrinsic motivation is important (doing it for yourself).• Understand multiple levels of meaning and have a rapidly increasing vocabulary.• Use reasoning skills to solve problems, negotiate and compromise with peers.• Can differentiate between ability and effort (If I work hard, I will improve).• Have clearer understanding of the concept of competition (social comparison).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Variety of sports, events and positions.• Skill development that becomes more sport specific.• A continued degree of modified sports, but gradual introduction of adult structured games/ events.• A high level of activity, lots of time on task) with rotations of roles and equal involvement.• Consistent, organised sessions - transition from deliberate play to increasingly deliberate practice.• Decision making.• Implicit and constraints-led learning will provide increased motivation, skill adaptability and decision making.• Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU).• Introduction to the notion of competition, with emphasis on improvement to win.• Provision of a safe emotional, physical, cultural and social environment.• Proactive promotion of fair play and moral decision making.• Use of role models as a teaching tool.• Lots of positive reinforcement, variety, enjoyment.• Learning through mistakes and creation of challenges.• Encouragement to take risks in games.• Positive input from parents• Cooperative activities that reinforce the enjoyment of playing with friends.• An empathetic environment (understand and listen to individual athletes’ needs).• Leadership and responsibility opportunities (independence).• Identification with current childhood trends.• Understanding of hormonal mood swings (e.g. do not embarrass).
Social <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are becoming more independent.• Begin to identify with peers, although they still need and want guidance and support from parents and coaches.• Like an environment with consistent standards and fair consequences.• Enjoy organised group activities.• Like sense of belonging to group, team and club and enjoy working in cooperative activities.• Begin to sense differences.• Start to identify/prefer being with same sex groups.• Enjoy taking responsibility and assuming simple leadership roles.• Girls are more socially mature than boys.		
Emotion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accept parent/family beliefs but are beginning to question parental authority.• Admire and imitate older people (role models) - look for the similarities between self and friends.• Success should be emphasised and failures		

GROWTH AND MATURATION



EARLY TEENAGE COMMUNITY (13 TO 16 YEARS OLD)

ATHLETIC CHARACTERISTICS

Physical

- Growth spurts occur and are likely to cause clumsiness
- Complex motor skills become more refined.
- Hormones affect body composition.
- Are capable of handling appropriate physical training/ workload (otherwise susceptible to injury risk)
- Are capable of developing energy systems (e.g. anaerobic, aerobic).
- Have maturity differences within and between genders.

Social

- Are searching for personal (including athlete) identity - acceptance vs isolation
- Friendships (both same and opposite gender) formed are often sincere and long lasting
- Peer groups are very important.
- Move away from family reliance
- May begin sexual relationships
- Increased costs, with range of opportunities and time constraints can be barriers for sporting involvement.
- Emphasis is in balancing career goals and roles in life - are starting to forward plan.
- Role models are influential.
- Are learning to cooperate with each other
- Have increasing awareness, and possible use, of alcohol and drugs

Emotional

- Have increased awareness of body image (notice differences) - e.g. disability, weight changes
- Are seeking to understand and accept sexuality
- Seek emotional autonomy from parents

- Hormones cause mood swings
- Want responsibility and to be treated as an adult
- Internally desire success, but are influenced by external pressures to conform (cool to be average)
- Are vulnerable to negative criticism, but respond to constructive feedback
- Teens who develop differently physically from their peers may become uneasy about physical changes.

Cognitive (thought processes)

- Like to find their own solutions. Value presenting their own ideas
- Have longer concentration span - are ready for more in-depth learning
- Are capable of complex problem solving
- Develop their own language. Use teen slang
- Have sense of invincibility
- Begin to value setting goals based on feelings of personal needs and priorities
- Tend to be self-focused
- May lack understanding of their abilities and talents.
- Begin to demonstrate moral thinking and appreciate values.
- Are capable of informed decision making and appreciate leadership roles

ATHLETIC NEEDS

- Opportunity for sport-specific skill development.
- Training programmes that recognise their physiological stage of development: physical fitness/ strength skill development injury prevention/ burnout
- Coaches who plan, with goal setting based on needs
- Simple tactics
- Mental and physical challenges
- Structure and firm but fair discipline.
- Empathy - understanding the player as a person as well as an athlete
- Setting of realistic expectations of success
- Learning to make decisions and learning from mistakes
- Inclusion in decision making
- Implicit and constraints-led learning will provide increased motivation, skill adaptability and decision making.
- Teaching Games for Understanding (TGfU)
- Two-way interactions/effective communications: Coach/family, Coach/Athlete
- Encouragement
- Ownership and responsibility, but consequences if they are irresponsible
- Understanding of why they are joining things
- A safe, secure, non-threatening environment
- Support for continued participation (costs, travel)
- Coaching that recognises their lifestyle
- Being caught to be self reflective and to self analyse
- Experiences within a variety of different sport-specific situations

GROWTH AND MATURATION



LATE TEENAGE COMMUNITY (17 TO 19 YEARS OLD)

ATHLETIC CHARACTERISTICS

Physical

- Most reach skeletal physical maturity
- Males continue to gain muscle strength and mass. Both sexes continue to develop bone mass
- Have better posture and coordination
- Can achieve advanced levels in complex skill and movements
- Are reaching physiological maturity

Social

- Have strong, independent social needs and desires
- Status in peer group is important
- Want to belong to groups, but be recognised as individuals within the team/groups
- Are likely to be sexually active
- Are in transition stage - change in home, locations, sport involvement
- Can assume major responsibilities and leadership roles
- Are engaged in making lifestyle and career decisions
- Are socially aware of their own and others' needs
- Likely to be involved in alcohol use and risk taking adventures

Emotional

- Self-identify becomes more stable
- Feel they have reached the stage of full maturity and expect to be treated as adults
- Have more stable emotional responses but feelings of inferiority and inadequacy are not uncommon
- Tend to assume more responsibilities, with the associated stress

- Feel the pressure of other priorities, e.g. work, study, church, flats.
- Are less preoccupied with body changes and body image (still an issue though)

Cognitive (thought processes)

- Are able to learn new skills/concepts, and can relate to past experience
- Have higher level of abstract thinking
- Personal philosophy begins to emerge
- Make choices/solve problems/accept responsibility
- Self-evaluation, self-correction and motivation become strong tools
- Can determine their own plans, schedules and goals
- Are capable of complex analysis and associated decision making

ATHLETIC NEEDS

- Sport/ event/ position-specific training
- Specific strength training as appropriate
- Increased precision in prescription of programmes and performance assessment.
- Practising strategic approaches within their sport: taking ownership and responsibility decision making Teaching Games for Understanding (TGFU)
- Opportunities for individual challenge and to be intuitive in their approach
- Being understood: lifestyle situation school/university/ work/ employment/ unemployment/family
- Having clear expectations
- Being stimulated, challenged and excited
- Implicit and constraints-led learning will provide increased motivation, skill adaptability and decision making
- Positive role models
- Leadership and the opportunity to be a leader.
- Encouragement and support to remain involved (especially if there is a shift in location)
- Consideration of both long and short-term development

GROWTH AND MATURATION

Conclusion

In conclusion, five coaching principles support all the growth and development considerations presented:

1. Keep the fun in sport
2. Design training and competition appropriate for young athletes
3. Develop a foundation of solid techniques
4. Keep competition in perspective
5. Guard against over specialisation



KEEP THE FUN

Section 2.0

BATTING

FUNDAMENTALS FOR BATTING
BATTING CURRICULUM

16
17

FUNDAMENTALS FOR BATTING

The main aim of every batter is to score runs consistently. To do this they must develop a good basic technique, learn to concentrate for long periods by switching on and off, focus on watching every single ball from the bowler's hand on to the bat, and develop a game plan that suits their style.

The art of batting hasn't changed much over the years, the battle between batter and bowler remains one of the most fascinating spectacles in sport. The skill of the bowler using pace, bounce, swing, seam, flight, dip, and spin to get the batter out versus the skill of the batter to negate the bowler's onslaught through sound defence and then pounce on any balls that come into their scoring area makes for a fascinating contest.

A coach has an important role in developing batters and making sure that they are equipped mentally, physically and tactically to enable them to be successful. But the art of coaching batters is the ability of the coach to enable the batter to understand their own game and become self-reliant, which is the key to a batter's success.

There is no one way to bat. Some batters have techniques which are aesthetically more pleasing to watch than others, but often these batters are not as effective as a batter with a slightly unorthodox technique. In the end it comes down to the individual players desire to succeed and the coach's ability to guide that young player to gaining a better understanding of their own game.



“The battle between batter and bowler remains one of the most fascinating spectacles in sport.”

01

Watch the ball

- An absolute non-negotiable for any batter wanting to achieve success
- A skill that is talked about but not practiced enough
- Watch the ball closely from the bowler's hand onto the bat
- Head still and eyes level at point of release and through shot making

02

Full Face

- Develop a technique that returns the full width of the bat to the ball
- Full face for front and back foot shots
- Grip, set-up and bat swing can have an influence on the path of the bat to the ball. Player to explore what works for them to **hit the ball hard or time it well.**
- Late contact with impact under the eyes. **Hit ball into the ground**
- The correct shoulder shape throughout the shot to allow hands to come through in line of intended direction of shot
- Head still and eyes level for balance and better decision making. **Hit ball into gaps**

BATTING CURRICULUM

The batting curriculum should be viewed as a guideline only. Dependent on the age and stage of the player the following technical points will need to be adapted based on how advanced the player is.

Coaches should create a learning culture and environment which allows players to progress at their own rate with appropriate challenges and expectations.

It is also important for coaches to remember that whilst this manual covers batting skills and technique in an explicit manner, you are encouraged to also let the players problem solve through implicit and constraints led learning. ‘Tell them what you want them to do, not how you want them to do it’.



“You are encouraged to also let the players problem solve through implicit and constraints led learning.”

TECHNICAL POINTS FOR BATTING

Front foot drive

- Lead with head and front shoulder
- Push off inside of back foot
- Positive step towards the ball
- Bent front knee, straight back leg
- Stable base
- Strike ball under eyes.
- Maintain ‘shape’ throughout shot
- Hit through the ball in intended direction of shot

Watch the video below of Michael Vaughan on the front foot drive.

Front foot defence

- Present full face of bat
- Bat and pad together
- Stable base
- Head in behind ball
- Soft hands at impact.
- Only defend deliveries that threaten the wickets or the batter

Watch the video below of Michael Vaughan on the forward defence.

Back foot drive

- Push off inside of front foot to get back - leaving front shoulder and head forward
- Back foot across to off stump with toes facing point
- Natural stride back with head in behind line of ball
- Front foot moves to back foot to assist balance
- Hands high to get above ball
- Hit ball with high front elbow and still head
- Maintain ‘cradle’ shape with upper body throughout shot

Watch the video below of Michael Vaughan on the back-foot drive.

Back foot defence

- Similar movements to back foot drive but played to tighter line – threatening body
- Arrival point is higher on batter than for back-foot drive
- Defend straight
- Practise leaving the ball as part of the learning progression of the shot

Watch the video below of Michael Vaughan on the back-foot defence.

Pull shot

- Push off inside of front foot to move back and across
- Back foot placement facing cover/mid-off to allow pivot
- Head still and forward
- Hands high to enable high to low swing path
- Arms fully extended at impact
- Rotate hips and shoulders through the ball
- Weight moves in direction of shot

Watch the video below of Alistair Cook on the pull shot.

Cut shot

- Push off inside of front foot to get back
- Toes ideally facing behind point to allow correct shape and get back hip out of the way
- Hands high to allow high-to-low swing path
- Strike ball with full extension of arms
- Transfer weight to intended direction of shot
- Consistency of bounce is crucial to playing this shot effectively

Watch the video below of Alistair Cook on the cut shot.

Running between the wickets

- Expect to run every ball
- 3 calls: YES, NO and WAIT
- Call loudly and clearly after every ball
- Run hard and straight down each side of pitch
- Low body position while turning – full extension of arm with hand at top of handle

Section 3.0

BOWLING

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PACE BOWLING – DEVELOPMENT COACHING COURSE

The main objective of every pace bowler is to become an effective and regular wicket taker for the team. Young pace bowlers should be encouraged to try to bowl fast and make the ball swing and seam, but the fundamentals of pace bowling need to be developed and closely monitored. Coaches must be aware that the development and monitoring of young pace bowlers, especially in those early years is crucial to their ability to have a pace bowling career that is as injury free as possible.

There has been a lot of research done examining the relationship between a bowler's technique, conditioning and load or amount of bowling performed. Their stage of maturation also has a significant effect on the risk of injury for young pace bowlers. Young pace bowlers going through Peak Height Velocity (PHV) or the adolescent growth spurt are at a far greater risk of injury and this risk continues through their PHV, during the lag they experience until completing their Peak Weight Velocity (PWV), or in other words when their muscular growth catches up with their bone growth. Over bowling during these periods can lead to injury and explains why many young pace bowlers today are experiencing stress fractures at around 15 years of age.

Research has also shown that pace bowlers with bowling actions that are mixed and have excessive loads placed on them are at greater risk of lower back injuries than those bowlers whose actions allow for correct alignment of the hips and shoulders at the back foot landing stage. It is not an easy task identifying mixed actions by the naked eye and the use of technology and specialist pace bowling coaches may need to be sourced by the coach if they feel a bowler needs to be examined.

As a coach it is essential that you assist your pace bowlers to develop in a safe environment and understand that they need to be monitored carefully to allow them to develop safely. Pace bowling is a skill that places a lot of stress on the body, but with the right programme in place and awareness the pace bowler will develop to reach his or her potential.

“With the right programs put in place and awareness the pace bowler will develop and become a hugely effective weapon to your team.”

01

Momentum

1. Commence with small steps for natural/ balanced stride patterns
2. Lean forward in the run-up (creating natural speed to crease and ensuring use of core)
3. Everything moving towards target.
4. Look at your target
5. Run-up towards target
6. Pathway of both arms up and down in line with target
7. Follow through towards target (1st step)

02

Tight gather

1. Keep arms in close to body during run-up (elbows in)
2. Ball in close to body in preparation phase (short lever)
3. Control pathway of bowling arm in gather to promote strong front shoulder position
4. Hips and shoulders in same plane at back foot landing

03

Seam presentation

1. Firm wrist with fingers behind the ball at release
2. Palm of hand tracking towards intended 'shape' of delivery
3. Players must experiment with varying degrees of seam angle (grip) and angle of bowling arm at release, to find levels of swing relative to their unique action

PACE BOWLING CURRICULUM

The pace bowling curriculum should be viewed as a guideline only. Despite the skills being listed linearly under player age ranges, it is important to remember that each individual player is different. This is especially the case in the 11 to 16 age group when they grow at vastly different rates. Player development is not linear but complex. Coaches should create a learning culture and environment which allows players to progress at their own rate with appropriate challenges and expectations.

It is also important for coaches to remember that whilst this manual covers pace bowling skills and technique in an explicit manner, you are encouraged to also let the players problem solve through implicit and constraints led learning. 'Tell them what you want them to do, not how you want them to do it'.



“Create a learning culture and environment which allows players to progress at their own rate.”

THE GRIP, RUN UP AND 4 TENT PEGS

To understand more about the 4-tent peg approach for pace bowling (view this pace bowling masterclass by Ian Pont) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJdLbtBiyew>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BJdLbtBiyew>

GRIP

- First two fingers apart on the top of the seam. The fingers can be either side of the seam or touching the seam, it all depends on personal preference.
- Thumb underneath the ball on the seam.
- There should be a gap between the ball and the palm of the hand.

RUN UP

- Accelerate gradually.
- Keep arm in close to the body when running in.
- All body movements to be in the direction of the target.
- Head steady
- Eyes fixed on the target.

4 TENT PEGS:

Tent Peg 1 – Back Foot Impact:

SIDE ON:

- Determined by where the back-foot lands. For a side-on bowler the back foot is parallel to the bowling crease.
- Chest and hips all facing sideways, in the same direction to where the back foot is pointing.

The principles for making the side-on position work are:

- ▶ The bowling hand is somewhere in the bowlers vision. ('Eat the apple')

▶ Front elbow and front knee line up together like there is a piece of string joining the two.

▶ Eyes looking over the crook of the front arm, down the pitch at the target. (E.G. top of off stump)

SEMI-SIDE ON (Sometimes known as semi-front on):

- Back foot laces and foot is pointing towards the square leg umpire.
- Chest and hips all facing towards the square leg umpire, in the same direction to where the back foot is pointing.

The principles for making the semi-side on position work are:

- ▶ The bowling hand is somewhere in the bowlers vision. ('Eat the apple')
- ▶ The front elbow and front knee line up together like there is a piece of string joining the two.
- ▶ Eyes looking just inside the front arm down the pitch at the target. (E.G. top of off stump)

FRONT ON:

- Back foot laces and foot pointing down the pitch.
- Chest and hips all facing down the pitch, in the same direction to where the back foot is pointing.

The principles for making the front on position work are:

- ▶ The bowling hand is somewhere in the bowler's vision. ('Eat the apple')
- ▶ Front elbow and front knee line up together like there is a piece of string joining the two.
- ▶ Eyes looking way inside the front arm down the pitch at the target. (E.G. top of off stump)

Tent Peg 2 – Front Foot Impact

Front foot impact is identical for all three types of bowlers (Side on, Semi-side on and Front on)

- Extend front foot and land with a braced front leg.
- This creates a little bend in the back leg which is called a drop step.
- The leg action is therefore a drop step with the back leg and block with the front leg.
- For the top half of the body, the front arm extends forward to 'grab the batter by the collar' and the bowling arm extends back to 'grab the sight screen behind the bowler'
- Important to note that the feet should be lined up as if on 'skis' not on a 'tight rope'. The feet should be lined up with each hip.

For semi-side on and side on bowlers:

- The back-foot pre-turns just before front foot impact so that the laces and foot is pointing down the pitch.
- The leg action is therefore a pre-turn then drop step with the back foot and leg followed by a block with the front leg.

The top half of the body including the arms is the same for all three. The front arm extends forward to 'grab the batter by the collar' and the bowling arm extends back to 'grab the sight screen behind the bowler'.

PACE BOWLING CURRICULUM



“The four tent pegs simplifies movement patterns for players and coaches

THE GRIP, RUN UP AND 4 TENT PEGS CONT...

Tent Peg 3 – Ball Release

Front arm ‘Pulls the batsman towards him’ to just outside the front hip’. As the bowler pulls the front arm in, the back hip moves forward. The front arm and back hip work together.

- The bowling arm comes over to release the ball. Like giving the batsman ‘a high five’.

Tent Peg 4 – Follow through

- With the bowling hand try to follow through below the shin of the front leg.
- Drive the back knee through.
- Non bowling arm ‘touches the sky’.
- Bowler finishes in his/her own ‘railway tracks’
- Everything to the target

The 4 tent pegs are linked together by the acronym R.S.S.S.A



RANGE

This is the distance the bowler moves the cricket ball



SPEED

Is how fast the bowler is moving through the 4 tent pegs



SEQUENCE

This is working from the ground upwards



SEPARATION

Shoulder and hip separation between tent peg 2 and tent peg 3. This is one of the biggest indicators of speed



ALIGNMENT

Feet, hip and shoulder alignment in tent peg 1. Alignment to the target in tent pegs 2, 3 and 4

SAFE BOWLING ACTIONS/PLAYER SAFETY

Pace bowlers going through their peak height velocity (growth spurt) should be monitored carefully with the view to reducing their workload in training and games by up to 50%.

They are prone to developing injuries such as Severs disease, Osgood Schlatters and stress fractures at this stage of their growth, so they need to be treated carefully. This is what player-centred coaching is all about. Doing what is best for the player.

“Keep the hips and shoulders in line and you’ll be fine, Twist the back, and it will crack.”

BOWLING ACTIONS:

There are two main types of bowling action

‘SIDE-ON’ and ‘FRONT-ON’

Some young cricketers may have a **‘SIDE-ON’** action. This means that the bowler in his/her run-up jumps or leaps into a Side-On position to deliver the ball so that his/her:

- Back foot lands parallel to the crease.
- Front foot, shoulders and hips point down the wicket towards the batter.
- Head looks over or through a raised front arm.

Some young cricketers may have a **‘FRONT-ON’** action and should not be discouraged. This means that the bowler in his/her runup stays in a front-on position to deliver the ball so that his/her:

- Back foot on landing and front foot both point down the wicket towards the batter.
- Shoulders and hips are parallel to the crease.
- Head looks inside a raised front arm.

Both actions are equally acceptable as long as they are ‘SAFE’ and therefore not ‘MIXED’.

AS A NOTE FOR COACHES:

As a coach you are well advised to check the bowling actions of your young bowlers to ensure they are safe. Actions are considered to be ‘safe’ when the back foot, hips and shoulders are in alignment when the ball is released. That is, the back foot, hips and shoulders are either all side-on or all front-on. Injuries occur, especially to backs, when bowlers have MIXED bowling actions. That is their actions combine aspects of both the side-on and front-on actions.

As a coach check the action of each of your bowlers by observing the position of:

- The back foot on landing
- The hips
- The shoulders and front arm

They all should be in alignment for the action to be safe.

As a rule of thumb the position of the bowler’s back foot will determine where the hips and shoulders should be. Take care in trying to correct a mixed bowling action. If you are unsure seek the advice, guidance and assistance of an experienced coach.

MIXED ACTIONS:



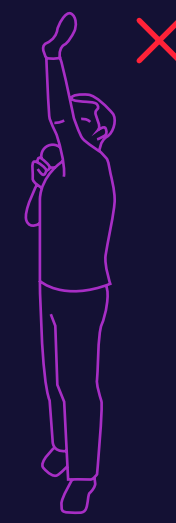
SIDE-ON



FRONT-ON



HIPS PAST FRONT-ON
SHOULDERS SIDE-ON



HIPS PAST SIDE-ON
SHOULDERS SIDE-ON



HIPS PAST SIDE-ON
SHOULDERS OPEN

PACE BOWLING CURRICULUM



14-18 YEARS OLD

BALL PERFORMANCE

Grip

Run up

Gather

Momentum

Follow through

Ball maintenance

Field settings

Stock ball

- Develop consistency through a safe and stable action.
- Emphasise importance of developing a ‘hard and heavy’ stock ball that is repeatable.
-

Use of crease

- Alter start point and deliver ball from same point on crease (subtle change of angle).
- Deliver from wider or back from the popping crease.

Field settings

- Awareness of what you are trying to do. eg in-swing bowler would need a fine leg. Away swing bowler would need a third man.
- Have different fields for different match situations, different batsmen, overhead conditions and pitch conditions.
- Ensure field-settings match bowler’s game plan.

Variations

- Slow ball – over spinner (back of the hand)
- Slow ball – Off cutter
- Slow ball – bouncer (slow ball bouncer)
- The bouncer
- Use of the crease.

See this video on the off cutter by England cricketer Anya Shrubsole.

- Slower balls (wide fingered grip, thumb slip, reverse grip knuckle ball)

See the video below on slower balls by Yorkshire Pace Bowler, Oliver Hannon-Dalby.

- Slower balls (see L1 resource)

Work ethic (volume)

- Emphasise the importance of deliberate practice.
- Be cognisant of bowling workloads

Deliberate practise

- **Planned:** The session should be planned, but requires flexibility to adjust, change and progress depending on how the session unfolds.
- **Purposeful:** What do you want to achieve, how are you going to create an environment to achieve it?
- **Measurable:** 60-80% success in a task or skill is ideal for optimal learning. As soon as you see consistency, change the environment. I.e. Increase the difficulty of the task, include/change constraints.
- **Feedback:** Immediate, informative feedback so player has knowledge of performance. Raise awareness, create responsibility – use players words, create self – belief. Awareness is not the same as analysis. Awareness is questioning before the event

Watch the video below of Craig McDermott: Pace bowling Masterclass

KEY FACTORS FOR PACE BOWLERS

Ability to bowl a consistent stock ball

Pace bowlers like spin bowlers need to possess an effective stock ball that they can bowl consistently on a good line and length and put the batter under pressure. Some pace bowlers want or feel they have to bowl a different delivery just about every ball, which is certainly not the case. The key of being a quality pace bowler is the ability to put the ball in the right areas consistently, which means having a good stock ball. Pace bowlers must master their stock ball and have that well developed before attempting to develop any major variations.

Learning to swing and seam the ball

The ability to swing and seam the ball is a vital component of pace bowling. Pace alone is not enough, pace bowlers need to work hard on their ball presentation and practise swinging the ball and presenting the ball at different angles to understand how the ball reacts in different conditions.

Ability to bowl with good bounce

New Zealand conditions do not promote this important aspect of pace bowling, but to be a successful pace bowler especially at international level, pace bowlers must be able to bowl with good bounce and hit the bat hard and high near the splice. Often you will hear of bowlers who bowl a 'heavy ball' which is an important aspect of being a quality pace bowler, bowling a 'heavy ball' means the bowler, no matter what the conditions are bowls the ball into the pitch which 'thuds' onto the bat.

What line to bowl

The channel of uncertainty just outside off-stump is the line most pace bowlers need to attack with their stock ball and their ability to take wickets will depend on their consistency to bowl their stock ball in this area.

For younger pace bowlers a straighter line is more beneficial, so a line of middle stump to middle and off stump. This is because most young batter haven't developed a strong defensive game and are more likely to be susceptible to be dismissed either LBW or bowled. As pace bowlers get older, the line of attack gets slightly for their stock ball delivery.

Knowing when to bowl fast and when to bowl within themselves

Pace bowlers are not going to be able bowl at top pace throughout a whole innings, especially young pace bowlers and coaches must understand that young pace bowlers as they develop and grow need to be monitored carefully and their workloads clearly mapped out (refer to the NZC 'Game On' document for specifics). The important aspect is that coaches need to work with their pace bowlers and constantly monitor their progress so the bowler understands how far to exert themselves within their development stage.

Pace bowlers need to understand how to bowl at different times of an innings and sometimes they may need to bowl within themselves and focus more on line and length and tying up an end rather than bowling with real pace. Coaches need discuss this aspect with their pace bowlers so when the pace bowler is in a game situation they can manage themselves and understand what the tactics are in certain periods of an innings.

Pace bowlers need to learn how to dictate and where possible dominate the batter and the match

Pace bowlers need to dictate terms especially in the opening overs with the new ball, the pace bowlers needs to assert their presence on the batter and let the batter know that they mean business and want to get them out. Shane Bond is a great pace bowler to learn from, he lets the batter know he is there and that that he is looking to dominate the batter through his body language and energy, he never says much to the batter, he just lets the ball do the talking.

Knowing how many overs they can bowl in a spell

Being in good physical shape is vitally important to enable pace bowlers to bowl consistently well with good pace over a long period of time. Pace bowlers need to condition themselves and understand their body so that they know when they have had enough and their performance is dropping and then have the ability to come back and bowl multiple spells when required throughout the innings. Abdominal or core strength is vital for pace bowlers which supports the back.

Compliment the bowler at the other end and bowl in partnerships

Pace bowlers need to understand that they must bowl in partnerships so as to build pressure on both batsmen. When bowlers don't bowl in partnership it becomes too easy for the batsmen to score off one bowler which undoes all the good work being done by the other bowler.

Good game sense

Coaches need to work hard on developing the pace bowlers game sense. There is no point in the bowler just running in and bowling fast if they have no idea what they are trying to do and where they want their fielders. Pace bowlers also need to develop the ability to analyse batter and work out a plan to get them out. Coaches can develop a pace bowlers game sense by working through different scenarios on the whiteboard with the pace bowler and captain, setting fields in training for different game situations is important and debriefing after trainings and matches is a vital tool for developing game sense.



It is important to develop pace bowlers tactical understanding so they can have maximum impact on a game

OBSERVATION POINTS

Standing behind the Bowler

Standing behind the bowler is a very good position to be able to observe the bowlers:

- Angle of approach
- Direction of momentum at the crease
- Alignment of the feet, hips and shoulders
- Head position at the point of release
- Line of delivery

On the side or perpendicular to the line of which the ball is delivered

Standing to the side is a very good position to be able to observe the bowlers:

- Delivery stride length
- Movement of arms
- Back and front leg brace
- Weight distribution through the crease
- Drive through the crease
- Follow through

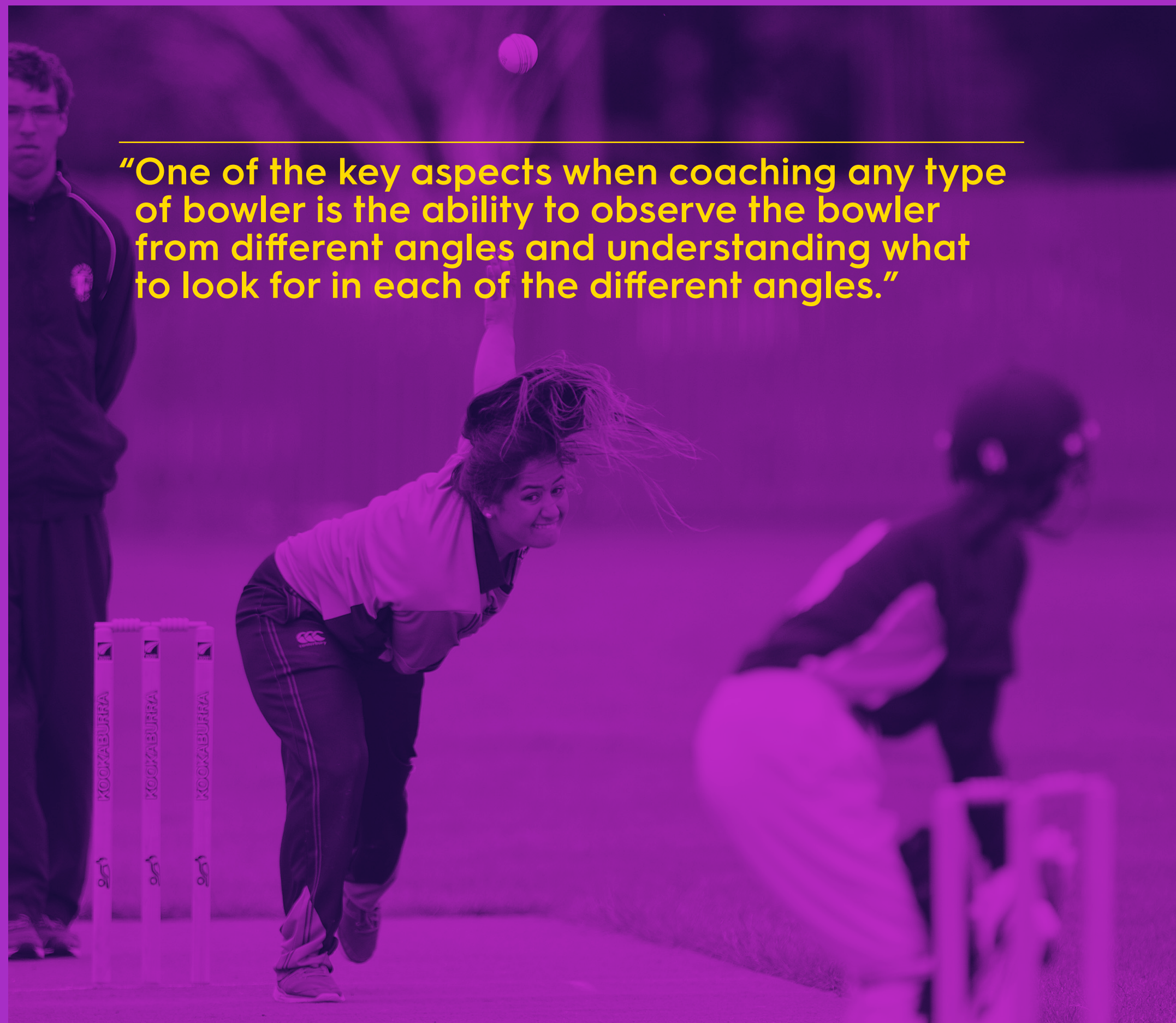
Ensure you stand on the open side as this enables you to view a lot more of what's going on in the action.

In front of the Bowler

Standing in front is a very good position to be able to observe the bowlers:

- Angle of approach
- Direction of momentum at the crease
- Backfoot landing position
- Alignment of the feet, hips and shoulders
- Head position at the point of release
- Line of delivery

“One of the key aspects when coaching any type of bowler is the ability to observe the bowler from different angles and understanding what to look for in each of the different angles.”



THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RUN UP

The run up is used to create momentum and that momentum is vital to bowling with good pace. The run up must be rhythmical; pace bowlers need good rhythm to enable them to impart all that forward momentum from the run up through the crease and behind the ball. So it is vital that the speed that the bowler runs in is not too fast that they lose their timing when they hit the crease and also not too slow so that they don't create enough momentum to generate pace.

Often fast bowlers will have a good day and come off the field saying their rhythm felt great and everything felt easy and smooth, the key to getting to this stage as a pace bowler is ensuring that the run up is perfect. Young pace bowlers often neglect their run up at practice and find in a game situation they start bowling no balls and then everything starts to go wrong. So time spent developing a run up that enables the pace bowler to create enough momentum and feels rhythmical is vital.

HOW TO DEVELOP A RUN UP

1. Find an open space
2. Place a cone on the ground; this is going to be the bowlers start point.
3. If the bowler is unsure which foot to start from, the coach should stand behind the bowler and gently push the bowler in the middle of the back so the bowler becomes off balance, the foot that the bowler uses to balance themselves is the foot they should start their run up.
4. The bowler closes their eyes and ensuring they start on the exact same mark with the same foot each time they run out and pretend to bowl a ball going through the full action.
5. The coach or one of the players will position themselves 10 to 15 metres out in front of the bowler and place a cone where the bowlers back foot lands.
6. A third person will stand just in front of the coach or player and their job is to place a cone where the front foot lands.
7. The bowler must repeat this exercise a minimum of 6 times and from there the coach and bowler will discover a certain trend in where the cones have been placed due to the landing positions of the back and front feet.
8. The key thing to do now is measure the distance between the most common front foot landing position and the most common back foot landing position.
9. The next task is to measure from the most common back foot landing position back to the start cone.
10. The best way to measure these distances is by using a tape measure or a piece of rope, stepping the measurements out is not accurate enough, especially when no balls come down to very small amounts.
11. Move to an open wicket with a crease marked out. Measure the run up out as if it was a game and ask the bowler to bowl a couple of overs. Closely monitor the bowlers momentum and rhythm and also where their front foot is landing.
12. The next step is to place stumps in the correct area and ask the bowler to bowl ensuring to monitor their progress and question them on how it all feels.
13. Then place an umpire in position. Work out with the bowler where they would like the umpire to stand. Ask the bowler to bowl ensuring to monitor their progress and question them on how it all feels.
14. If everything is ok the next step is to measure the run up every time the bowler practices and practice it religiously. The run up is all about feel, which is why it is important that this exercise is done with the bowlers eyes closed, the bowler must feel when the right time is to bowl.

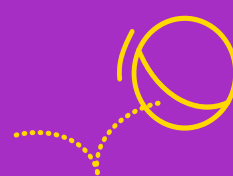
PACE BOWLER DELIVERIES



Slow Ball – Off Cutter

[Watch this masterclass by AJ Tye on the off cutter.](#)

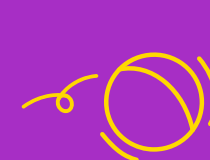
- This is a slower ball commonly used by pace bowlers.
- The ball is held slightly deeper in the palm of the hand.
- The first finger is placed down the side of the seam and the second finger is positioned slightly further down the side of the ball than the regulation off cutter grip.
- As the ball is released the wrist rotates down the outside of the ball creating rotations on the ball.
- The ball arrives slower and also can deviate when it pitches.



Slow Ball Bouncer

[Watch this masterclass by Morne Morkel on how to bowl the slower ball bouncer.](#)

- This is a slower ball commonly used by pace bowlers, especially on slower pitches.
- The ball is held deeper in the palm of the hand.
- The fingers are positioned as for a regulation delivery, either side of the seam.
- As the ball is released the wrist rotates down the outside of the ball creating rotations on the ball.
- Bowl into the pitch at a normal bouncer length and complete the follow through.



Slow Ball – Over Spinner (back of the hand)

[Watch this video on how to bowl the over spinner or back of the hand slower ball delivery.](#)

- The grip for this delivery is the normal pace bowlers' grip.
- As the bowlers bowling hand comes over the top the back of the hand faces the batter and as the ball is released the ball comes out of the top of the first two fingers.
- This technique not only decreases the velocity of the ball but also the ball is released with over spin which causes the ball to dip as it arrives to the batter.
- The over-spin can also cause the ball to bounce and sometimes deviate like a leg spin delivery.
- This is an extremely effective delivery but takes a lot of time to perfect.

THE BOUNCER



[Watch this masterclass by Surrey Cricket and Morne Morkel on how to bowl the bouncer.](#)

The bouncer is a fast, short pitched, straight delivery that arrives at the batter at around shoulder height. The bouncer can be a wicket taking delivery if not played correctly by the batter by hitting the splice of the bat or the gloves and ballooning up to the fielders catching in close. The bouncer can also be used to intimidate the batsmen and make them feel anxious and unsure about what delivery to expect next.

Grips for the Bouncer

Down the seam

The down the seam grip is the same as the regulation pace bowlers grip but the ball may be held a little deeper in the fingers to enable a bit more force to be put behind the ball.

Across the seam

The across the seam grip requires the ball to be turned and the seam placed on the first joint of the first two fingers. The benefit of gripping the ball in this way is that when the ball pitches the reaction of the ball is a little less predictable, it may hit the seam on an angle and bounce steeply or cause the ball to stay low. It may pitch on one side of the leather and skid through quicker than expected.

IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE BOUNCER

The Wrist

The ability of the pace bowlers wrist to be flexible and have the ability to ‘snap’ at the point of release is vitally important when bowling the bouncer. An effective bouncer is one that surprises the batter and rises quickly and steeply which is usually due to the fact the bowler used their wrist effectively at the last moment which enables the ball to ‘kiss’ the surface of the pitch.

The point of Release

The point of release for an effective bouncer is slightly later than the normal point of release to hit a good length. Reason being the ball has to pitch shorter to enable the ball to climb up around shoulder height when it reaches the batter.

There are many variables that dictate the point of release for a bowler to enable them to bowl an effective bouncer. The height and pace of the bowler, angle of release, pitch conditions, height of the batter, state of the ball and physical state of the bowler. There isn’t one point of release, it depends on these variables and how they impact on the bowler.

Height and Pace of the Bowler

Tall, fast bowlers generally release the ball earlier than short bowlers do for the bouncer because the bowler’s point of release is higher than a short, fast bowlers. The height of the bowler also dictates the kind of bouncer bowled. Tall bowlers generally get steep lifting bounce whereas short bowlers get skidding bounce that can really surprise the batter.

Angle of Release

The angle of release for a bouncer can vary depending on where the bowler lets the ball go. Smart bowlers use the crease to create different angles and this can change the point of release and the angle at which the ball arrives at the batter markedly.

A right arm over the wicket bowler bowling to a right-handed batter may decide to come wide of the crease and angle the ball back into the batter so it follows the batter and cramps them for room. Then the bowler may decide to come around the wicket to the same batter, now the angle is changed markedly, the point of release is aimed at the body of the batter. So depending on the tactics employed by the bowler with regards to the bouncer will depend on the angle of attack.

Pace and Bounce of the Wicket

On a hard and fast wicket the point of release is earlier than on slow low wickets because of the performance of the ball when it pitches on the wicket. Slow wickets mean the bowler really needs to bowl the ball in short to enable the ball to get the bounce required to intimidate the batter.

Height of the Batter and Bowler

The height of the batter and height of the bowler will dictate the point of release for the bouncer. For tall batsmen the bowler needs to pitch the ball shorter than it would be to bowl a bouncer to a shorter batter. For short pace bowlers the ball needs to be pitched a lot shorter for the ball to get up around the batter’s back shoulder than as the case for tall pace bowlers.

Condition of the Ball, Bowler and Wicket

For pace bowlers bowling bouncers on a new hard, fresh wicket with the new ball at the start of the game is great fun. But when the wicket starts to get worn and the ball starts to get older and softer and the bowler is getting tired the amount of effort it takes to bowl an effective bouncer is doubled and this has a major impact on the point of release.

PACE BOWLERS TACTICS - USE OF THE CREASE

Pace bowlers have the ability to vary the position of delivery by using the crease. By using the area of the crease the bowler can deliver the ball from slightly different angles which can deceive the batter and force them to making a mistake, which could bring about their downfall. The key aspect of using the crease to change the angle of the delivery is to not make a major change so it becomes obvious to the batter before the ball has been delivered, the change needs to be slight and subtle so much so that the batter doesn't realise a change has been made until they are about to play the ball.

The other key aspect of using the crease is to ensure that whatever changes the bowler makes regarding their position of delivery, the bowler needs to be sure that the change of angle does not disrupt the bowler's rhythm or balance.

HOW TO USE THE CREASE

Bowling closer to the stumps

Bowling close to the stumps gives the bowler a much better chance of getting an LBW. Delivering the ball closer to the stumps enables the bowler to bowl more wicket to wicket and opens up the opportunity for the bowler to get the batter out LBW. Another benefit of bowling closer to the stumps is that the bowler doesn't have to swing the ball as much to beat the batter's bat either on the inside or on the outside because of the straighter delivery angle. The wider the ball is delivered the greater the angle and the more the ball has to swing to beat the bat.

Bowling wider of the crease

Bowling wide of the crease creates a completely different angle of attack for the bowler. Delivering the ball wider of the crease enables the bowler to angle the ball towards the batter and often cramps the batter for room. Bowling a bouncer wide of the crease is a good option for a pace bowler and can be very uncomfortable for the batter. Also if the ball is swinging away from the batter a lot it can be a good tactical move to deliver the ball wide of the crease, which firstly creates an angle of the ball moving into the batter and then with the swing the ball moves in the air away from the batter which can be very difficult to play.

Bowling from behind the crease

Pace bowlers can utilise the area from behind the crease to deliver the ball, the greater distance that the ball has to travel can disrupt the batter's ability to pick up the length and pace of the ball which could lead them to making a mistake.

Bowling round the wicket

Delivering the ball from around the wicket is another good tactic for pace bowlers as most batsmen are not used to facing bowlers delivering the ball from that angle. The angle of attack is totally changed by coming around the wicket especially when a right arm bowler bowls around the wicket to a right hand batter and vice versa for a left arm bowler and a left hand batter.

Often pace bowlers will come around the wicket to a batter to intimidate the batter with short pitched bowling. Either the ball is angling back into the batter towards their back shoulder (right arm bowler to a left hand batter) or angling up into their rib cage (right arm bowler to a right hand batter). This type of bowling can really unsettle a batter and is a useful tactic if the pitch conditions are hard and bouncy.

INJURY PREVENTION



Many of our up and coming pace bowlers are injured long before they have a chance to reach their potential. There is a lot of anecdotal evidence that many young pace bowlers between 14-17 years old are suffering from stress fractures in the lower back. Many have not been able to recover and have either been forced out of cricket, played only as a batter or switched to slow bowling. For those that continue with pace bowling, new data shows that players who sustain a lumbar stress injury through adolescence are 2.5 times more likely to have lumbar bone stress injury (typically a stress fracture) when they progress to higher levels of cricket.

Research has consistently shown that the lower back is by far the most vulnerable region for injury for the pace bowler. Since pace bowling is an impact sport, each collision with the ground during delivery transmits forces which must be absorbed by the lower back. As well as absorbing these forces the lower back is stretching sideways, bending, and twisting in an endeavour to achieve maximum delivery speed.

The risk of injury is exacerbated when a young pace bowler is going through Peak Height Velocity (PHV), during which their long bones grow. Their skeletal system lacks support because their muscles have not yet developed sufficiently, or ‘caught up’ with the growth of their long bones. They are then less able to deal with the forces being transmitted through their spine and lower back. Once their muscles have caught up with the growth of their skeletal system their extra weight also becomes a risk factor as the forces generated through their front foot impact with the ground during the delivery is far greater than prior to PHV.

Coaches have a responsibility to ensure the safety of their pace bowlers, therefore being knowledgeable about maturation, technique, movement skills and monitoring bowling workloads essential.

Technical defects such as mixed actions, counter rotation, and **excessive lateral flexion (side bending)** must be addressed as early as possible in our young pace bowlers.

01

Rotate pace bowlers to relieve workload

02

Bowlers need to be looked after and monitored for:

- Technique
- Maturation - measure their height and weight consistently
- Workload - **including their training workloads and other sports**
- Rest periods
- Specific training programs

03

Don't over bowl pace bowlers in the nets or at practice

They should:

- Bowlers need to build up to the season.
- Practice technique at less than full pace
- Bowl at full pace for no more than 2-4 overs
- Bowl at a reduced pace in the final overs
- Not bowl at full pace the day before a game
- Not overexert themselves on hard landing surfaces

04

Try to utilise extra practice bowlers to alleviate the workload on front line bowlers

INJURY PREVENTION



SPOT ANALYSIS OF PACE BOWLERS



SCREENING

Pace bowlers should be screened from a young age to assess possible risk factors in an effort to reduce the player's susceptibility to injury. Correcting major risk factors will enable proper functioning of the body and efficiency of movement.

Screening should look for factors such as:

- Height
- Body weight
- Body Development
- Everyday lifestyle
- History of injury

With a view to determining Pre-PHV, PHV and Post-PHV and the lag between PHV and PWV (typically 18 months after PHV) when players are most susceptible to injury.

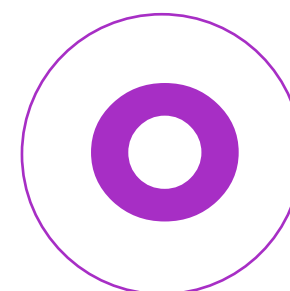


PHYSICAL

(also known as conditioning)
Fast bowlers of all ages should undertake a well-balanced and appropriate training programme with consideration given to their stage of maturity. When a player is going through PHV it is recommended that consideration be given to reducing their workload by 50% with a focus during this stage on fundamental movement skills, technique and tactics (discussions and whiteboard sessions).

A fitness programme could include:

- Strength
- Endurance
- Flexibility
- Warm up and warm down
- Regular fitness testing



OVER BOWLING

(can be called load) Pace bowlers, especially those in the development age groups, should not be over bowled. Repetitive fast bowling increases the amount of stress placed on the muscular and skeletal system, in particular the lower lumbar region of the spine. A number of factors, other than physical preparation and technique, will determine the appropriate amount of bowling for each individual bowler in training and competition.

These include:

- Bowling workload
- Physical maturity
- Bowling speed and effort
- Playing and training conditions



TECHNIQUE

The key techniques to consider for pace bowlers are:

- Grip
- Run up
- 4 Tent Pegs

See pages 19-21 for key technique points

YOUTH PACE BOWLING

LOAD RECOMMENDATIONS

Consider the following acronym **F.I.R.S.T**

F

FREQUENCY

The number of bowling sessions in the week

I

INTENSITY

How hard the player should work in those sessions

R

REST

How much should the player rest and recover in order to be at the best they can be

S

SURFACE

Be mindful of the impact of moving from indoor training to outdoor training venues

T

TYPE OF TRAINING

Skill development, technical work, target bowling, competitive nets, tactical

YOUTH PACE BOWLING

LOAD RECOMMENDATIONS

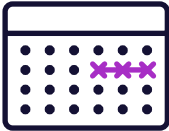
Coaches who assist players in gradually increasing workloads from week to week during pre-season will help prepare their bowlers body for the demands of match bowling.

Start with a target in mind and work back i.e. How many overs do you want the player to be able to bowl by the start of the season or in a tournament week and then plan back from that point.

Pace bowlers going through their peak height velocity (growth spurt) should be monitored carefully with the view to reducing their workload in training and games by up to 50%.

They are prone to developing injuries such as Severs disease, Osgood Schlatters and stress fractures at this stage of their growth, so they need to be treated carefully. This is what player-centred coaching is all about. Doing what is best for the player.

NZC would like to stress the importance that the above guidelines need to be progressively introduced to a bowler’s workload and not included rapidly prior to a tournament. Coaches should introduce progressive bowling schedules that will allow players to increase their workloads in a controlled manner leading into a tournament.



PRE SEASON TRAINING GUIDES	
U13 & U14 / Yr 8 & 9	Start 2 weeks prior to season commencing
U15 & U16 / Yr 10 & 11	Start 4 weeks prior to season commencing
U17 & U18 / Yr 12 & 13	Start 6 weeks prior to season commencing
U19 / Yr 13 & School leaver	Start 8 weeks prior to season commencing



INTENSITY LEVEL	INTENSITY DESCRIPTION	FOCUS
Level 0	Seam release bowling off 1 – 2 steps	Warm up, seam release, technical work – No restrictions on overs
Level 1	2 or 3 steps to half run up at 40% – 60% intensity at the crease	Warm up for higher levels, seam release drills, technical work, target bowling
Level 2	½ to ¾ run up 60% – 85% intensity at the crease	Warm up for level 3, technical work, target bowling, skill development – batter can be involved but only if intensity remains at level 2 range
Level 3	Full run up at 85% – 100% intensity at the crease	Competitive net, match intensity, tactical focus

*If you want more information and an example plan for a pre-season gradual loading plan, contact your Major Association’s Coach Development lead

“Intensity has equal to more importance than load – Ensure you monitor intensity. The longer you can load leading into the season the better. Long and slow is ideal.”

Youth Pace Bowling

Load Recommendations During the Season

Every bowler needs to be managed on an individual basis. Some will cope with more or less load as there are other important variables other than age (e.g. physical maturity, technique, bowling speed, fitness, previous injury) that are also important factors.

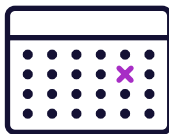
A common-sense approach is suggested. Consider the following guidelines

NOTE:
The age groups and year groups listed are generalised for the majority of the population, and there may be the odd example where these don't align. In these situations, align to the loads that best fit the athlete in question.

“Coaches need to be aware of the playing conditions associated with individual tournaments and fixtures, and communicate with umpires around these to ensure understanding.”



Bowling Volume Guides	
U15 & U16 / Yr 10 - Yr 12	Between 15 to 17 overs per week across trainings and matches
U17 & U18 / Yr 12 & Yr 13	Between 18 to 20 overs per week across trainings and matches
U19 / Yr 13 & School leaver	Between 20 to 23 overs per week across trainings and matches



Once a Week Games	Bowling Restriction
U13 & U14 / Yr 8 - Yr 10	A maximum of 4 overs in a spell A maximum of 8 overs in a day
U15 / Yr 10 & Yr 11	A maximum of 5 overs in a spell A maximum of 12 overs in a day
U16 & U17 / Yr 11 & Yr 12	A maximum of 6 overs in a spell A maximum of 14 overs in a day
U 18 & U19 / Yr 13 & School leaver	A maximum of 6 overs in a spell A maximum of 20 overs in a day

BOWLING RECOMMENDATION

A SIMPLE MESSAGE

A common sense approach needs to be taken. The guidelines are general in nature and every bowler needs to be managed on an individual basis. Some will cope with more or less load as there are other important variables other than age - e.g. physical maturity, technique, bowling speed, fitness, previous injury etc that are also important factors.

*There are times when tournaments aren't structured to allow for the recommended maximum days bowling in a row. Where this occurs, adjust bowling loads so bowlers are bowling less overs each day. You can also contact your MA's Coach Development Lead to discuss how to approach this.

"A common sense approach needs to be taken. The guidelines are general in nature and every bowler needs to be managed on an individual basis."

U15 - U17 / YR 10 - 12

- **1** day off between sessions
- **3** bowling days per week
- **5** over spells



U19 / YR 13 - SCHOOL LEAVER

- **2** days bowling in a row (maximum)
- **4** bowling days per week
- **6** over spells



YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE PACE BOWLING LOAD RECOMMENDATIONS



The emphasis of the guidelines are based on preparation and recovery as the key pillars.

PREPARATION

A gradual build up in bowling volume leading into a season or tournament so the player is physically ready to cope with the loads.

This takes time (usually > 10 weeks) and some planning

In the 3-4 weeks leading into a season/tournament, bowlers should be close to expected match/weekly volumes and intensity.

We have changed the recommendation to a minimum bowling preparation period of 8-10 weeks (previously 6-8 weeks for U17 bowlers) for U17 and U19 bowlers to reflect the gradual build up required.

For U15 bowlers, the minimum preparation has not changed (4 weeks) but longer lead in periods are recommended where possible.

RECOVERY

Recovery is essential to allow the body (particularly bones, muscles and tendons) to recover, adapt and be ready for the next session (training or match).

Recovery between spells (to alleviate short-term fatigue), training and matches to (allow bone to adapt) and after prolonged high load periods e.g. mid-season (to allow the physical and mental fatigue to resolve) are important injury prevention strategies and help maximise performance.

We recommend a week off bowling every 10-12 weeks, and a lighter bowling week every 4 weeks.

RECOVERY FROM TOURNAMENTS

Where possible coaches should consider planning a 2 week de-load post a big tournament week

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

01

Can a U17 bowler play 2-days in a row?

As an occasional occurrence, yes, particularly when matches are scheduled on consecutive days. If this occurs bowlers should stictly adhere to other aspects of the guidelines, particularly on the number of bowling sessions per week and the number of overs in a spell (and break between them). But ideally, this age group should avoid back-to-back days to allow their body to adapt.

02

If someone bowls a small number or overs, such as 2-3 overs at a training/match, does this qualify as a bowling session?

Common sense would suggest that there are very low loads that can be considered as low volume and managed appropriately.

if the bowler feels okay, are well prepared and recovered well, they can bowl again soon afterwards (e.g. next day)

03

On the non-bowling days, can the bowler do other training?

Yes, fitness and strength training, technical bowling or low intensity bowling (bowling 3-4 steps etc.), batting, fielding are all examples of what is possible on non-bowling days.

04

Is bowling intensity important?

Yes, bowling at or near maximum (match) intensity, generally results in high stress on the body so appropriate recovery periods are required.

More lower intensity bowling can be factored into training plans and requires shorter recovery periods.

05

How can bowling intensity be measured?

A fairly simple way to measure bowling intensity for the player to rate the intensity out of 100%, with 100% being match intensity. Anything above 80% is considered high intensity bowling. Anything below 50% is low intensity bowling.

06

How can a bowler increase their bowling volumes safely through training?

Like matches, if bowling at training is planned in multiple spells, then this will allow for some higher volume days. E.g. bowl 5 overs, have a break or do some other training and have another bowling spell.

The break between spells allows your body to recover for the next spell.

SPIN BOWLING

Spin bowling, whether it is leg spin or off spin is not an easy skill to learn, it takes a lot of time and perseverance. It is said that to learn the art of spin bowling is a 10 year apprenticeship. So spin bowling takes a lot of patience and coaches need to be aware of this fact. Coaches play a huge part in the development of young spin bowlers and it's imperative that they have a good understanding, firstly of what spin bowling is about and the intricacies of the art, and secondly, how to work with and nurture their young spin bowlers.

The environment for spin bowlers has changed immensely. Their role in the team and the way they are used has changed since we play a lot of limited overs cricket and now more T20 cricket. Spinners these days need to be adaptable and they need to have a clear understanding of their role in the team depending on the format of the game they are playing. Whether they are being used as an attacking option or whether they are being used to defend, the coach needs to clearly define each role.

So what do you look for in a spin bowler? What are the key elements that a coach should be looking to develop in their spin bowlers? The spin bowler should be attempting to spin the ball hard and generate as many revolutions on the ball as possible. That is the key ingredient, if a bowler has that ability then you have something exciting to work with and nurture.

In terms of the spin bowler's actions, there is no one way to do it. Think of the current international spin bowlers around the world, they all have their own unique style. This uniqueness often comes with unique ball performance.

As long as the action is safe, legal and repeatable, other than the odd refinement, the action can be left alone to develop naturally. Coaches should embrace uniqueness and pay more attention to what the bowler can achieve in terms of ball performance.

**IT IS SAID THAT
TO LEARN THE ART
OF SPIN BOWLING
IS A 10 YEAR
APPRENTICESHIP.**

SPIN BOWLING FUNDAMENTALS

01

Stock Delivery

- The developing spin bowler should spend most of their time working on their stock delivery.
- Understand the optimum seam angle for your stock ball to maximise its effectiveness.
- Variations should come after they have developed a hard-spinning stock delivery that is accurate and holds up under pressure. Coaches should remember that a grass pitch will naturally provide the spin bowlers with variation, some balls will spin and/or bounce more than others.

02

Spin the ball

- Players need to understand how to get maximum revolutions on the ball and have a good feel regarding wrist/finger position at release.
- Experiment with action/release to explore how varying proportions of side spin and top spin effect the outcome (BALL PERFORMANCE)
- Increase dip and drift with bigger revolutions on the ball aligned to seam angle on release.
- Angle of approach and feet alignment at delivery, can compromise the release position.

03

Field Setting

- The spin bowler must be supported by good field placements to develop confidence and maximise success.
- The field must match the game plan, with emphasis on the angle and depth of the field placements.
- Spin bowlers must take ownership and not leave it to the captain.
- Have a strong relationship with wicketkeeper to assist with setting the field correctly.

SPIN BOWLING

The relationship formed between the bowler, coach and captain is crucial to the development of a spin bowler. Too often young spin bowlers are left to fend for themselves without any sort of guidance from the coach and like any player in a team, players need to have clear roles and understand how they are going to contribute to achieve the team's objective.

The relationship between the coach and the bowler also needs to include the captain; the spin bowler needs to have a good relationship with the captain. As well as the coach the captain plays a big part in the spin bowler's development. The captain needs to have a good understanding of spin bowling and how to utilise the spin bowler effectively whether as an attacking weapon or in a defensive mode.

The captain, coach and spin bowler must work collectively and devise plans which then need to be communicated to the team so that collectively everyone is aware of the team's objective when it comes to the spin bowler. This way the spin bowler feels that they are part of the plan, they understand their role and this enables the bowler to feel comfortable and bowl with confidence.

Aspects that the coach, captain and spin bowler need to work on are:

- The bowling plan for different formats of the game, then this will dictate the training plan for the bowler.
- Knowing when the right time for the spinner(s) to come on.
- Setting the correct fields for different situations (wicket keeper is also very important in this aspect)
- Angles of fielders (wicket keeper is also very important in this aspect)
- Specialist fielders to field in specialist areas e.g. mid wicket, cover, point, slip, boundary riders
- Bowlers variations

If the coach, captain and bowler(s) are able to work together on these particular aspects then the development of the spin bowler will be greatly improved and also the value of the spin bowler to the team will also be enhanced. The important thing to remember is that the coach is the key person, they must lead and nurture this relationship.



The relationship formed between the bowler, coach and captain is crucial to the development of a spin bowler.

SPIN BOWLING

FINGER SPIN VARIATIONS



FINGER SPIN VARIATIONS

STOCK BALL

What is a Stock Ball?

- A stock ball is a ball the bowler bowls the majority of the time and is usually a regulation off spin delivery.
- It's a ball that the bowler has a lot of confidence in and after a lot of practice should be able to land 8 to 9 times out of 10 in a good area.
- Its important that a spin bowlers stock delivery arrives aggressively and puts the batter under pressure each time its bowled.

Objective of the stock ball

- The stock ball is a hugely important delivery as the bowler needs to have a ball that he/she feels comfortable with and can revert back to when they need to.
- The stock ball builds pressure by keeping the batter's run scoring options down to a minimum.

Outcome of the stock ball

- The stock ball builds pressure on the batter through the accumulation of dot balls and the increase in pressure which can ultimately lead to the batter making a mistake and getting out.

Technical Execution

- The grip is the regulation grip for finger spinners whereby the first and middle fingers run down either side of the seam and the thumb rests on the back of the ball
- The run-up, gather, back foot landing and delivery stride remain the same.
- When releasing the ball the bowler must have their wrist facing in a 45 degree angle, this is the correct wrist angle for a regulation finger spin

delivery.

- From this position the wrist and fingers rotate around the ball to impart energy or spin on the ball, which enables it to drift, dip and spin.
- A good strong follow through is required to enable more energy to be imparted on the ball through the use of big muscles.

TOP SPINNER

What is the Top Spinner?

- The top spinner is a delivery that tends to bounce a lot more than the stock ball and goes straight on towards the wickets.

Objective of the Top Spinner

- The top spinner is a delivery that is bowled to try to deceive the batter with a ball that does not turn and continues straight on and has considerably more bounce than the stock ball delivery as there is a lot of over spin imparted on the ball.

Outcome of the Top Spinner

- The top spinner is a delivery that could produce a wicket or could create an element of uncertainty for the batter as they become unsure of the amount of spin and bounce that the next delivery might have if of course the batter hasn't already got out.
- The top spinner often produces dip (or drop) due to the overspin and together with the added bounce can be challenging for the batter.

Technical Execution

- The grip is the same as the stock ball grip, the difference is in the wrist position on release.
- The run-up, gather, back foot landing and delivery stride remain the same.
- When releasing the ball the bowler must have their wrist position with the side of the bowling hand facing the batter and the seam of the ball pointing in the direction of the batter.
- From this position the wrist and fingers rotate over the top of the ball to impart energy which creates good rotations on the ball which dips and when it bounces causes the ball to bounce considerably more than the stock ball.
- A good strong follow through is required to enable more energy to be imparted on the ball through the use of the big muscles.

Section 4.0

FIELDING

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FUNDAMENTALS FOR FIELDING

It's up to the coach to make fielding fun and emphasise that fielding should involve every member of the team attempting to have either a direct or indirect impact on the game every ball. Fielding is the only area of the game where the team performs as a unit. Batting and bowling is performed in partnerships, so players should look forward to taking the field as a team.

Coaches must understand the importance of fielding and how being a quality fielding team can be the difference between a team having an average season and a team performing well. Coaches need to place a lot of emphasis on fielding at training. Once techniques have been learned activities should be short and sharp at high intensity and, if possible, include an element of competition.

Players also need to understand that they need to work hard on their fielding. When coaches or selectors are trying to make their mind up between 2 players who are relatively similar skill wise, but one player is a better fielder than the other, the better fielder will often be selected. So it's in the player's best interest to work hard on their fielding.



“Fielding is a hugely important part of cricket. In a cricketer’s playing career they are likely to spend three quarters of that time fielding, so it makes sense to be good at it and enjoy it.”

PERFORM AS A UNIT

BASIC THROWING TECHNIQUE

01

Grip

- Where possible the ball should be held across the seam with two fingers
- The less friction i.e. skin we have touching the ball the better

02

Keep it natural

- Thumbs down as arms separate
- Fingers on throwing hand point down for as long as possible
- Back hip rotates forward

03

Throwing starts from the ground

- Feet, hips shoulders in line with target
- Step towards the target

04

Follow Through

- Point your fingers towards your target



Watch this video: [‘Develop the perfect throwing motion: Baseball throwing tips by Ultimate Baseball Training’](#)

BASIC THROWING PROGRAMME

It is imperative that coaches implement throwing programmes into their teams training schedule. Players have suffered over the years because of poor technique and also a lack of specific throwing training in the off season and maintenance work during the season.

This basic throwing programme clearly outlines what coaches should be doing with their players and when they should be implementing the programme.

OVERALL THROWING PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES	Improve throwing technique
	Strengthen throwing arm/shoulder
	Decrease the likelihood of gaining arm/shoulder injuries
	Improve accuracy
STRATEGY FOR THROWING	At club/school training
	Prior to games
	Whenever you warm up for cricket
	Players by themselves during the week as often as possible
	Be prepared to modify distance, intensity and repetitions for different ground (beginners, intermediate, advanced)
IN ALL CASES THE FOLLOWING GROUND RULES APPLY	You must stick to set repetitions
	You must be aware of intensity levels
	For a longer distances you must throw with as little arc as possible in the throw and use a CROW HOP (FOOTWORK)
	You should go straight into the programme. Don't warm up to start the programme
	Use the basic throwing mechanics throughout.

BASIC THROWING PROGRAMME

Basic throwing mechanics

- Work in straight lines towards target with all body parts: eg. Feet, legs. hips, shoulders, arms.
- Full and proper arm swing
- Proper follow through
- Throws should be projected flat to partner, bouncing the ball (one hopping) on the way, producing HIGH 'OVER THE TOP' MOVEMENT
- Technique is critical for this program to be successful

THROWING TECHNIQUE PROGRAM: BEGINNERS

THROWS	DISTANCE	INTENSITY	REPITITIONS
Wrist Only	10 Metres	50%	10
Side on shoulder & arm	20 Metres	50%	10
Side on hips, side on shoulders	30 Metres	60%	10
One leg, knee up, hips and shoulders side on	40 Metres	60%	10
Crow hop & throw	60 Metres	75	10
Crow hop & throw	60 Metres	90	5
TOTAL THROWS			55 Throws

SESSIONS PER WEEK: 2 TIMES A WEEK

THROWING TECHNIQUE PROGRAM: MAINTENANCE WORK/ALL PLAYERS

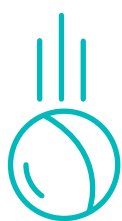
THROWS	DISTANCE	INTENSITY	REPITITIONS
Over Arm	20 Metres	60%	10
Over Arm	20 Metres	75%	10
Over Arm	60 Metres	90%	5
TOTAL THROWS			25 Throws

SESSIONS PER WEEK: 3 TIMES A WEEK

FIELDING CURRICULUM

The fielding curriculum should be viewed as a guideline only. Despite the skills being listed linearly under player age ranges, it is important to remember that each individual player is different. This is especially the case in the 11 to 16 age group when they grow at vastly different rates. Player development is not linear but complex. Coaches should create a learning culture and environment which allows players to progress at their own rate with appropriate challenges and expectations.

It is also important for coaches to remember that whilst this manual covers fielding skills and technique in an explicit manner, you are encouraged to also let the players problem solve through implicit and constraints led learning. 'Tell them what you want them to do, not how you want them to do it'.



"Develop confidence through technique and practice under pressure."

11-13 YEARS OLD

Throwing technique

- Important to coach correct throwing technique from an early age
- Build strength through repetition of a safe throwing action
- Grip: Have a good grip on the ball, nice and loose across the seam if possible, with a gap between the thumb and two fingers
- Feet: The position of the feet is the most important aspect of throwing. Align your feet to the target, get balanced (feet should be wider than shoulder width apart), create momentum by moving towards the target. Eyes fixed on the target
- Throwing arm: As soon as the fielder catches the ball, align the feet towards the target and turn the thumbs down. Fingers are then on top of the ball when the throwing arm is drawn back
- Release: the ball and reach out towards the target with the throwing arm

[Watch the Cricket Victoria video on throwing with Glenn Maxwell.](#)

[Watch Mike Young in this Cricket Australia video on throwing technique.](#)

Catching technique

- Strong hands
- Soft elbows
- Take ball under eyes if possible
- Watch the ball all the way into hands

Close catches

- Close catches usually taken at or below waist level by fielders close to the pitch in positions such as slips, gully, silly mid-off and silly mid-on
- Stay down with hands low and ready until ball is sighted
- Watch the ball all the way into the hands
- Fingers pointing down, or sideways depending on the line of the ball

[Watch this Cricket Victoria video on flat catching and the basics of catching with Glenn Maxwell.](#)

High catches

- Move swiftly to get into position under the ball
- Keep head still and hands high
- Watch the ball all the way into hands
- Practice conventional and reverse cup and go with personal preference
- Conventional cup tends to be easier if on the move while attempting catch

[Watch the Cricket Victoria video on high catching with Glenn Maxwell.](#)

Long barrier (Defensive Ground Fielding)

- Right-arm throwers go down on left knee and left-arm throwers go down on right knee if possible
- Create 'long barrier' with foot and horizontal shin of opposite leg
- Aim to take ball under your eyes
- Elbows out in front of knees
- Align barrier perpendicular to line of the approaching ball

Moving to and attacking the ball – Attacking ground fielding

- Fielders must be alert and ready when the ball comes to them

- Attack the ball hit along the ground
- Speed to the ball is essential
- Move to the line of the ball, take short quick steps with bent knees and hands low and ready
- Take ball out in front of the eyes and bend elbows as you take the ball

[Watch this Cricket Victoria video on ground fielding with Glenn Maxwell.](#)

Diving

- Anticipate type of shot being played
- Stay low
- Push off outside leg to dive laterally
- Watch the ball right into the hand
- Try not to land on elbow which may jolt the ball out

Aggressive attitude

- Adopt the mindset that you want the ball to come to you
- Develop confidence through technique and practice under pressure

Throwing with opposite arm

- Introduce at an early age
- Develop strength in opposite side of the body
- Can be fun to practice

[Watch the video of George Bailey on fielding](#)

Specific Fielding Areas
(Understanding positioning and angles)

FIELDERS IN STATIONARY CATCHING POSITIONS

Stationary catching positions refer to any fielding position whereby the fielder is in a stationary position in close vicinity to the batter. Stationary catching positions include:

- 1. SILLY POINT**
- 2. SHORT LEG**
- 3. SLIPS**
- 4. GULLY**
- 5. SHORT MIDWICKET**
- 6. SHORT COVER**
- 7. LEGGULLY**

KEY ASPECTS FOR FIELDERS IN THE STATIONARY CATCHING POSITIONS



Staying Down

Fielders in these close catching positions must ensure that they stay down with their hands positioned just below their knees and their weight is on the balls of their feet. From this position it is a lot easier to move laterally and catch or stop balls which are low to the ground and also it is easier jump for higher balls as fielders are in a good vertical jump power position.

Anticipation

Anticipation is the act of predicting. Fielders in these close catching positions must ensure that they anticipate what shot the batter is going to play by watching the position they get themselves into just before hitting the ball. In some close catching positions the fielder may prefer to watch the ball and not the batter like first slip and sometimes second slip but still the fielder must try to anticipate where the ball may travel so as to give themselves more of a chance to get into good position.

Agility

Agility is the ability to move and change direction and position of the body quickly and effectively while under control. Fielders who are in close catching positions require good agility because the majority of catches that are caught in these positions are reaction catches. Body positioning is vital to enable quick movements either laterally, forwards or backwards.

Balance

Balance is the ability to control the body's position, either stationary (e.g. standing) or while moving (e.g. throwing on the run). Balance is an important component of fielding in close. Because the ball is usually traveling quickly and the time the fielder has to react is so small it's vital that the player is in a good balanced position to enable them to catch the ball successfully.

Protective Equipment

Fielders in some close catching positions must ensure that they wear the correct protective clothing before assuming the position. Fielders positioned at short leg and silly point must ensure that they wear a helmet, abdomen protector or box, and shin pads.

Positioning and Angles

Coaches must ensure that they teach their players the correct field positions and angles for the different stationary fielding positions.

1. Silly Point, 2. Short Leg and Silly Mid-off

Fielders in these positions must stay as low as possible and as relaxed as possible using the orthodox close catching technique to ensure they grab any slight opportunity to catch a bat pad chance. If they come up to early they may miss that half chance and it's harder to go down than it is to come up. These particular fielders must ensure that they don't get too close nor too far back from the batter, they need to work out what is a safe and effective distance to stand from the batter. Fielders who specialize in these positions need to practice and get an understanding of the optimal distance they need to be to successfully take any chances that present themselves.

The pace of the wicket can also dictate the distance and angle these fielders position themselves from the batter. On hard wickets fielders can afford to stand further back and slightly squarer of the batter as the ball should travel further and quicker off the wicket and vice versa on slow, low bouncing wickets the fielders may need to stand closer and straighter as the ball will tend to travel less distance and forward of the batter.

Fielders in these positions need to make sure that they are positioned in an area where the batter will be when they make contact with the ball, not where the batter stands in their stance. The fieldsman should watch the type of shot the batter plays to gauge the likely direction of the ball off the bat. It is important to remain on the balls of the feet so as to be in a strong position to move forward to take a catch. Fielders who are very good in

close will often follow the batter down the wicket if they advance in order to retain their position relative to the batter.

3. Slips

Fielders who are positioned in the slips need to specialize in this area as it is not a position that anyone can field in. The positioning of the slip fielders is basically determined by the wicket keeper. The wicket keeper should manage the slip fielders distances from the batter and make sure they are in a position where the ball will carry to them at a comfortable height. The first slip is usually positioned 1 metre behind and approximately 1 and half meters to the side of the wicket keeper, it's vital that these 2 players have a good understanding in terms of their angles, depth and distance apart.

The second and third slip fielders are usually in line with the wicket keeper depending on the pace of the wicket, if it's a slow wicket the third slip maybe positioned slightly in front of the wicket keeper. The spacing and depth allows lateral movement by each catcher where they shouldn't impede upon other catchers.

Slip catchers must ensure that they are positioned far enough back that they have time to react but not too far back that a chance lands in front of them, there is nothing more frustrating for the bowler to see chances lands just short of the slips fieldsmen. It's better to create a chance and have the opportunity to catch it than to create a chance and have it land short. The positioning of each slip catcher comes from experience in trainings and developing an understanding of what ground each catcher can cover laterally.

Slips - Standing Up to Spin Bowlers

The slip fielders positioning for a spin bowler is critical. Two major factors are important for determining where the slip fielder should position themselves, firstly the condition of the pitch and secondly, the type of bowler. On a fast pitch with little turn the slip should remain closer to the wicketkeeper and perhaps slightly deeper. This is particularly the case for a right arm off spinner bowling to a right hand batter whose edges tend to

fly fine. On a slower wicket or to a leg spinner, the slip fieldsman should position themselves wider and closer than normal. Positioning comes from experience but the spin bowler should pay extra attention to the positioning of his slip catcher.

4. Gully

Like the slip fielders, the gully position is a specialist fielding position. The positioning of the gully fieldsman is determined by the pace of the wicket, if the wicket is hard and fast the gully fieldsman can be deeper and slightly finer and vice versa on a slower wicket the gully fieldsman needs to be positioned closer and slightly straighter.

5. Short mid wicket and 6. short cover

These two positions require fielders who have good hands, good anticipation and fast reflexes. The fielders should position themselves around 15 metres from the bat on the mid wicket, cover angles. The distance from the bat is important because the ball usually travels low and fast through these areas so the fielder needs to judge the correct distance away from the batter carefully. Often these positions are utilized when the wicket is slightly slower and the ball is holding up and there is a chance the batter might hit the ball in the air.

7. Leg Gully

This is a fielding position not often utilized. Occasions when it maybe adopted is if a fast bowler is attacking a batter with short pitched bowling and there is the chance of a ball being deflected in that area or in a one day game the captain may opt to have a leg gully as one of the 2 required catches. The fielder is positioned slightly finer than where a normal gully fieldsman would be positioned because the ball will either travel to this position due to a deflection off the bat or the gloves so will travel finer.

CATCHING TECHNIQUES

Catching Technique for Stationary Fielders behind the Wicket Stationary Catch to the Side

Catches don’t always come straight into the ‘bread basket’ to stationary fielders positioned behind the wickets. Often catches will have to be taken where the fielder needs to move to the side to complete the catch. The most important aspect for the fielder is to get their head as close to the ball as possible, so this means the fielder must open up their outside foot and move their upper body towards the line the ball is travelling.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Option 1

Equipment

- Tennis ball, hard tennis ball and cricket ball

Drill

- Coach to demonstrate and explain the skill to the player
- Coach to stand 5 to 10 metres in front of the fielder
- Coach to deliver the ball underarm to the side a nominated side of the fielder
- Fielder is to complete the skill
- Repeat the skill 5 to 10 times on both sides until the coach and player are satisfied the skill is being completed competently
- Coach can progress to the cricket ball as the player gets more competent with the skill

Option 2

Equipment

- Tennis ball, hard tennis ball or incredi-ball and Cricket ball

Drill

- Coach to stand 5 to 10 metres in front of the fielder, but slightly to the side imitating a batter and the angle an edge would come from
- Coach to deliver the ball underarm either straight to the fielder or slightly to the outside of the outside
- hand so the fielder must complete the technique
- Repeat the skill 5 to 10 times on both sides until the coach and player are satisfied the skill is beingcompleted competently
- Coach can progress to the cricket ball as the player gets more competent with the skill

Option 3

Equipment

- Cricket ball
- Katchet resource or cricket bat

Drill - Using the Katchet

- Player to stand 5 to 10 metres in front of the Katchet
- Coach to place the Katchet slightly on an angle so as to imitate the angle an edge would come from
- Coach to underarm the ball with pace onto the Katchet and the player must react and take the catch
- Repeat the skill 10 to 20 times on both sides until the coach and player are satisfied the skill is being completed competently

Drill - using a cricket bat

- Fielder to stand 5 to 10 metres in front of the coach
- Coach to stand with the bat and a ball on a slight angle so as to imitate the angle an edge would come from
- Coach throws the ball on to the bat which is held out in front and the ball skims off the face of the bat creating a catch from the player
- Coach can slightly change the angle of the bat face to make the ball go wider of the fielder
- Repeat the skill 10 to 20 times on both sides until the coach and player are satisfied the skill is beingcompleted competently

CATCHING TECHNIQUES

Catching Shoulder Height or Above

Catches that come at shoulder height can be quite difficult for slip and gully fieldsmen. The decision on whether to catch the ball using the reverse cup (covered in level one) or the orthodox grip is entirely up to the individual.

Players may choose to use the orthodox grip when the ball is slightly wider as they don't have time to get the head behind or close to the ball to utilise the reverse cup technique.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Option 1

Coaches Equipment

Tennis ball, hard tennis ball, cricket ball
2 cones

Drill

- Coach to stand 8 to 10 metres in front of the player
- Coach to underarm the tennis ball quite firmly aiming at the players shoulders or slightly higher
- The player can use either the reverse cup or the orthodox grip to catch the ball (encourage the fielder to try both techniques)
- To lift the intensity of the drill throw the balls slightly wider so the player needs to position themselves and take the catch
- Start with the tennis ball and progress to the cricket ball

Option 2

Coaches Equipment

- Tennis ball, hard tennis ball
- Tennis racquet
- 2 cones

Drill

- Coach to stand 10 to 15 metres in front of the player
- Coach to hit the tennis ball quite firmly with the tennis racquet aiming at the players shoulders or slightly higher
- The player can use either the reverse cup or the orthodox grip to catch the ball (encourage the fielder to try both techniques)
- To lift the intensity of the drill hit the balls slightly wider so the player needs to position themselves and take the catch
- Start with the tennis ball and progress to the hard tennis ball

Option 3

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket bat
- Cricket ball
- Catching mitt

Drill

- Coach to stand 10 to 15 metres in front of the player
- Coach to hit the cricket ball quite firmly with the cricket bat aiming at the players shoulders or slightly higher
- The player can use either the reverse cup or the orthodox grip to catch the ball (encourage the fielder to try both techniques)
- To lift the intensity of the drill hit the balls slightly wider so the player needs move laterally, position themselves and take the catch
- Use the catching mitt so the player can throw the ball back and practice their throwing accuracy

FIELDING TECHNIQUES

Walking In Technique

WALKING IN TECHNIQUE FOR INNER CIRCLE FIELDERS

Walking in Technique for Inner Circle Fielders

Walking in as the bowler runs into bowl is one of the oldest fielding skills in cricket but the manner and technique used when walking in or attacking the batter is very important.

Modern day fielders positioned inside the inner ring must attack the batter as they move in with the bowler not just walk in. Looking from above the image created by the fielders would like a wave moving in unison crowding the batter. The batter should feel the intensity of the fielders inside the inner ring so it's vital that all fielders work together to create that collective pressure.

The key for the fielders in the inner circle is to ensure that their distance from the batter is close enough to stop the quick singles yet far enough back to give themselves the opportunity to stop the powerful shots.

The distance from the batter will vary depending on the length of the grass in the outfield, type of batter batting, situation of the game, but generally fielders will use the same distance to start walking in from, which is approximately 3 to 4 metres inside the inner circle. Moving in with the bowler gives the fielder momentum in a forward direction which is good, but too much forward momentum i.e. running, commits you to moving forward but reduces effective sideways movement. The fielder should gradually gather forward momentum and start to get into a lower position as the bowler gets closer to deliver the ball in readiness to pounce on any balls that come their way. As the bowler releases the ball the fielder needs to get into the ready position by using the split step.

The split step is a technique used by inner circle fielders to get them ready for action; it's actually a stationary, power position with the weight on the balls of the feet that enables fielders to react quickly to either a catch or to field the ball.

The basic fielding position for the ball hit toward the player is with the legs approximately shoulder width apart, knees bent, head up and arms fully extended in front of the body. The body remains at 90 degrees to the direction of the on-coming ball (the opposite foot to the throwing arm may be slightly advanced) until it is fielded and then the throwing sequence begins.

Summary of Walking in Technique

- Fielders must ensure they are close enough to be able to prevent quick singles being taken and far enough back to be able to stop powerful shots getting through
- Fielder needs to move in with the bowler, but not too quickly i.e running
- As bowler approaches the crease the fielders need to lower their centre of gravity in readiness to pounce
- As the ball is released the fielders need to use the split step to enable them to react quickly in any direction



The Split Step

FEILDING TECHNIQUES

Diving

Diving is an important component of stationary fieldsmen. Not every catch is going to come straight to the fielder at waist height. Catches where the fielder has to dive are usually difficult half chances, but they are chances all the same and by using good technique and practicing hard the player may be able to pull off a great catch that could change the game.

KEY ASPECTS OF DIVING

KEY ASPECTS OF DIVING LATERALLY - TWO HANDS

- Good solid base
- Anticipate the type of shot to be played
- Stay low
- Press off the outside leg
- Watch the ball right into the hands
- Dip outside shoulder and use momentum to roll underneath the ball (must not land on elbows as this causes the ball to bounce out) or Slide full length along the ground (avoid landing on the elbow as this could cause the ball to bounce out)

KEY ASPECTS OF DIVING LATERALLY - ONE HANDS

- Good solid base
- Anticipate the type of shot to be played
- Stay low
- Press off the outside leg
- Watch the ball right into the hand
- Slide full length along the ground (avoid landing on the elbow as this will cause the ball to bounce out)

KEY ASPECTS OF DIVING FORWARD - TWO HANDS

- Good solid base
- Anticipate the type of shot to be played
- Stay low
- Press off both legs
- Watch the ball right into the hands
- Slide full length along the ground (avoid landing on the elbow as this could cause the ball to bounce out)



FEILDING TECHNIQUES BEHIND THE WICKET

Diving

Diving is an important component of stationary fieldsmen. Not every catch is going to come straight to the fielder at waist height. Catches where the fielder has to dive are usually difficult half chances, but they are chances all the same and by using good technique and practicing hard the player may be able to pull off a great catch that could change the game.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Option 1

Coaches Equipment

- Gym mat (if indoors)

Drill

- Coach to demonstrate and explain the movement
- Player to be positioned on a mat or grass starting on their knees rehearsing the movement diving to the right and left using either of the 3 skills without a ball
- Player to rehearse the same movement positioned on the mat or grass in a standing position
- Repeat 5 to 10 times each side or until the coach is happy that the player in demonstrating the correct movement in both positions

Option 2

Coaches Equipment

Gym mat

Tennis ball, Coach can start with a tennis ball and progress to a cricket ball

Drill

- Coach to position themselves 5 to 8 metres in front of the player
- Coach can start with a tennis ball and progress to a cricket ball
- Player to be positioned on the mat or grass in the standing position
- The coach underarms the ball to either side or straight to the fielder who needs to react and use the correct technique depending on the line the ball is travelling
- Increase the intensity by delivering the ball with more pace

Option 3

Coaches Equipment

- Gym mat (if indoors)
- Tennis ball, hard tennis ball, or incredi-ball and cricket ball

Drill

- Coach to position themselves 5 to 8 metres in front of the player
- Coach can start with a tennis ball and progress to a cricket ball
- Player to be positioned on the mat or grass starting on their knees
- The coach underarms the ball to a nominated side and the player must dive to complete the catchusing the technique rehearsed in option 1
- Repeat the skill 5 to 10 times on both sides in the kneeling position until the coach and player are satisfied the skill is being completed competently
- Player now moves into a standing position and completes the skill with the coach again delivering the ball from an underarm position
- Repeat the skill 5 to 10 times on both sides in the standing position until the coach and player are satisfied the skill is being completed competently

Option 4

Coaches Equipment

- Gym mat
- Tennis ball, Coach can start with a tennis ball and progress to a cricket ball

Drill - decision making

- Coach to position themselves 5 to 8 metres in front of the player
- Coach to hold two different coloured balls concealed from the player behind their back
- Coach will nominate a coloured ball and deliver both balls underarm at the same time
- The player must make a quick decision and react to the side the nominated ball has been thrown and complete the skill being practiced
- Drill can also be done with 2 throwers standing either side of the player

FEILDING TECHNIQUES BEHIND THE WICKET

Silly Point, Short Leg & Silly Mid-Off

Fielders positioned at silly point, short leg and silly mid-off need to adopt a slightly wider stance to those fielders catching behind the wicket so as to maintain a low body position. The key aspects of fielding in these positions are that the fielder keeps their hands close together and they stay in a low catching position for as long as possible and that the fielders are relaxed, the more the fielder tenses up, the more likely they will be to have their weight going backwards and miss the chance that presents itself.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Option 1

Coaches Equipment

- Tennis racquet
- Tennis ball

Drill

- Coach to demonstrate the catching position to the player
- Fielder stands 3 to 4 metres in front of the coach
- Coach has a tennis racquet and the player holds a tennis ball
- The fielder bounces the ball in front of the coach and the coach hits the ball back to the fielder who takes the catch
- Repeat this 20 to 30 times with the coach changing the angle of the catch

Option 2

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket bat
- Cricket ball

Drill

- Fielder stands 3 to 4 metres in front of the coach
- Coach has a cricket bat and the player holds a cricket ball
- The fielder bounces the ball in front of the coach and the coach hits the ball back to the fielder who takes the catch
- Repeat this 20 to 30 times with the coach changing the angle of the catch
- Coach must work on hitting the ball so as the fielder needs to move side-ways, come forward and come up to take the catch

Option 3

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket bat
- Cricket ball

Drill

- This drill requires 3 people
- One player delivers the ball, the second player is catching and the coach is hitting
- The player delivering the ball stands approximately 5 metres away from the coach
- The player catching is positioned approximately 3 metres away from the coach
- The deliverer underarms the ball just in front of the coach and the coach moves forward and softly hits the ball in the vicinity of the catcher
- The catcher must react and take the catch on offer
- Repeat the skill 10 to 15 times on both sides of the wicket until the coach and player are satisfied the skill is being completed competently

Option 4

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- Cricket bat

Drill

- This drill requires 3 people
- One player delivers the ball, the second player is catching the ball and the coach is standing in 1 to 2 metres front of the catcher holding the bat
- The deliverer underarms the ball to the catcher, the coach places the bat in front of the catcher as a distraction
- As the ball passes the coach, the bat is moved out of the way and the ball passes underneath the bat
- The catcher needs to maintain relaxed and take the catch using soft hands
- This drill helps to keep the fielder relaxed and not flinch which often happens if a batter takes a big backswing at the ball Inner ring fielding refers to any fielding position whereby the fielder is positioned inside the 30 metre circle. Inner circle positions include
 - Mid-off
 - Mid-on
 - Extra cover
 - Cover
 - Point
 - 45 Degrees
 - Square leg
 - Mid-wicket

Specific Fielding Areas (Understanding positioning and angles)

INNER CIRCLE FIELDING

Inner ring fielding refers to any fielding position whereby the fielder is positioned inside the 30 metre circle. Inner circle positions include:

5. POINT



6. 45 DEGREES

7. SQUARE LEG

3. EXTRA COVER

8. MID-WICKET

4. COVER

1. MID-OFF

2. MID-ON

ADVANCED CATCHING TECHNIQUES FOR INNER CIRCLE FIELDERS

Fielders positioned in the inner circle need to be proficient at using a number of different catching techniques as the ball can come at varying heights and speeds. Inner circle fielders must do a lot of catching practice to ensure when a chance presents itself they have the skills and confidence to be able to react and take the opportunity.

Shoulder Height Stationary Catches

Catches that arrive at shoulder height can be quite difficult to take as it can be awkward in terms of hand and body positioning. The decision on whether to catch the ball using the reverse cup (covered in level one) or the orthodox grip with the fingers pointing sideways is entirely up to the individual. Players may choose to use the orthodox grip when the ball is slightly wider and travelling quickly as they don't have time to get their head behind the ball and use the reverse cup technique.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Option 1

Coaches Equipment

- Tennis ball, hard tennis ball, cricket ball
- 2 cones

Drill

- Coach to stand 8 to 10 metres in front of the player
- Coach to underarm the tennis ball quite firmly aiming at the players shoulders or slightly higher
- The player can use either the reverse cup or the orthodox grip to catch the ball (encourage the fielder to try both techniques)
- To lift the intensity of the drill throw the balls slightly wider so the player needs to position themselves and take the catch
- Start with the tennis ball and progress to the cricket ball

Option 2

Coaches Equipment

- Tennis ball, hard tennis ball
- Tennis racquet
- 2 cones

Drill

- Coach to stand 10 to 15 metres in front of the player
- Coach to hit the tennis ball quite firmly with the tennis racquet aiming at the players shoulders or slightly higher
- The player can use either the reverse cup or the orthodox grip to catch the ball (encourage the fielder to try both techniques)
- To lift the intensity of the drill hit the balls slightly wider so the player needs to position themselves and take the catch
- Start with the tennis ball and progress to the hard tennis ball

Option 3

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket bat
- Cricket ball
- Catching mitt

Drill

- Coach to stand 10 to 15 metres in front of the player
- Coach to hit the cricket ball quite firmly with the cricket bat aiming at the players shoulders or slightly higher
- The player can use either the reverse cup or the orthodox grip to catch the ball (encourage the fielder to try both techniques)
- To lift the intensity of the drill hit the balls slightly wider so the player needs move laterally, position themselves and take the catch
- Use the catching mitt so the player can throw the ball back and practice their throwing accuracy

ADVANCED CATCHING TECHNIQUES FOR INNER CIRCLE FIELDERS

Shoulder Height Lateral Running Catches

These catches are difficult because the fielder is unable to get their head under or behind the ball. With this catch the fielder must move quickly as the ball is usually hit with power. The fielder needs to turn and run laterally to cut the ball off and take a flat catch at shoulder height which requires the fielder to use the orthodox grip but with the fingers positioning to pointing sideways. The technique enables the fielder to watch the ball the whole way into their hands and gives them the ability to adjust the level of their hands if the balls trajectory changes.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Option 1

Coaches Equipment

- 2 cones
- Tennis balls, hard tennis balls, cricket balls
- Tennis racquet
- Cricket bat
- Catching mitt

Drill

- Coach to demonstrate and explain the technique to the player
- Coach to place 2 cones 5 metres apart
- Coach to stand 15 to 20 metres back in the middle of the cones
- Player to stand 5 metres behind one of the cones
- Player walks into the cone as though walking in during game and as the player makes a split step the coach hits the ball at shoulder height to the nominated side
- The player moves quickly to the nominated side and takes the catch
- Repeat the same drill from the other cone
- Coach to start with the tennis racquet and tennis ball and as the player develops the skill the coach can incorporate the hard tennis ball and cricket ball
- Coach to use the catching mitt so that the player can develop their throwing skills

Option 2

Coaches Equipment

- 3 cones
- Cricket balls
- Cricket bat
- Catching mitt

Drill

- Place 3 cones in a line at a spacing of 5 metres between them
- The player is to stand 3 metres behind the middle cone
- The coach will stand 15 to 20 metres in front of the player
- Player walks into the cone as though walking in during game and as the player approaches the cone and makes a split step the coach hits the ball at shoulder height to either side of the player making sure the ball stays within the outside cone line
- The player needs to react quickly get into position and take the catch
- Repeat the drill ensuring the player has an equal number of catches on both sides

ADVANCED CATCHING TECHNIQUES FOR INNER CIRCLE FIELDERS

Full Length Landing

The full length landing requires the fielder to dive take the catch and stretch out full length and land preventing to elbows from touching the ground. This technique can be used for catches using 2 hands or 1hand. Usually this technique is used when fielders take low diving catches.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Option 1

Coaches Equipment

- Gym mat (if indoors)

Drill

- Coach to demonstrate and explain the movement
- Player to be positioned on a mat or grass starting on their knees rehearsing the movement diving to the right and left using either of the 3 skills without aball
- Player to rehearse the same movement positioned on the mat or grass in a standing position
- Repeat 5 to 10 times each side or until the coach is happy that the player in demonstrating the correct movement in both positions

Option 2

Coaches Equipment

- Gym mat
- Tennis ball, hard tennis ball, or incredi-ball and cricket ball

Drill

- Coach to position themselves 5 to 8 metres in front of the player
- Player to be positioned on the mat or grass starting on their knees
- The coach underarms the ball to a nominated side and the player must dive to complete the catch using the technique rehearsed in option 1
- Repeat the skill 5 to 10 times on both sides in the kneeling position until the coach and player are satisfied the skill is being completed competently
- Player now moves into a standing position and completes the skill with the coach again delivering the ball from an underarm position
- Repeat the skill 5 to 10 times on both sides in the standing position until the coach and player are satisfied the skill is being completed competently

Option 3

Coaches Equipment

- Gym mat
- Tennis ball, Coach can start with a tennis ball and progress to a cricket ball

Drill

- Coach to position themselves 5 to 8 metres in front of the player
- Coach can start with a tennis ball and progress to a cricket ball
- Player to be positioned on a gym mat or grass in the standing position
- The coach underarms the ball to either side or straight to the fielder who needs to react and use the correct technique depending on the line the ball is travelling
- Increase the intensity by delivering the ball with more pace

Option 4

Coaches Equipment

- Gym mat
- Tennis ball, Coach can start with a tennis ball and progress to a cricket ball
- Cricket bat

Drill

- Coach to position themselves 10 to 15 metres in front of the player
- Coach can start with a tennis ball and progress to a cricket ball
- Player to be positioned on a gym mat or grass in the standing position
- Player walks in towards the coach as though walking in during game and as the player approaches the coach hits the ball to either side or straight to the fielder who needs to react and use the correct technique depending on the line the ball

is travelling

- Increase the intensity by delivering the ball with more pace

Option 5

Coaches Equipment

- Gym mat
- Tennis ball, Coach can start with a tennis ball and progress to a cricket ball

Drill- decision making

- Coach to position themselves 5 to 8 metres in front of the player
- Coach to hold two different coloured balls concealed from the player behind their back
- Coach will nominate a coloured ball and deliver both balls underarm at the same time
- Player walks towards the coach as though walking in during game and as the player approaches the coach underarms the balls either side of the player
- The player must make a quick decision and react to the side the nominated ball has been thrown and complete the skill being practiced
- Drill can also be done with 2 throwers standing either side of the player

ADVANCED CATCHING TECHNIQUES FOR INNER CIRCLE FIELDERS

Throwing for Inner Circle Fielders

In NZC Level 1 coaches learnt the fundamentals of the under arm flick which is a hugely important throwing technique for short distance throws. There are couple of different techniques associated with the under arm flick that enable the fielder to return the ball at speed over a short distance, these two techniques are the back flick and the under hand throw.

Back Flick

The back flick is used when the fielder attacks the ball and needs to return the ball a short distance over or at the stumps from a 90 degree angle. The fielder will usually use this technique when attacking the ball on the same side of their strong hand. The ball is delivered out the back of the hand with the hand below the elbow and fingers pointing down.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Option 1

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- 1 Cricket stump
- 1 cone

Drill

- Coach to place the stump and cone 5 meters apart
- The player is to stand in the throwing position with the ball beside the cone
- The coach is to stand behind the stump
- The player is to complete the back flick standing still with a stationary ball
- Repeat drill on both sides

Option 2

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- 1 Cricket stump
- 1 cone

Drill

- Coach to place the stump in the ground and the cone 5 meters away from the stump
- Coach to stand behind the stump
- The player is to stand 2 metres away from the ball
- The player is then required to move in towards the ball and complete the back flick with a stationary ball
- Repeat drill on both sides

Option 3

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- 1 Cricket stump
- 1 cone

Drill

- Coach to place the stump and cone 5 meters apart
- Coach to stand behind the stump
- The player is to stand 2 metres away from the ball
- The coach rolls the ball out slowly towards the cone
- The player walks in to cut off the ball and complete the back flick with a moving ball
- Repeat drill on both sides

Option 4

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- 1 Cricket stump
- 1 cone

Drill

- Coach to place the stump and cone 5 meters apart
- Coach to stand behind the stump
- The player is to stand 2 to 3 metres away from the ball, to the side
- The coach rolls the ball out slowly towards the cone
- The player walks across to cut off the ball and complete the back flick with a moving ball
- Repeat on both sides

Option 5

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- 1 Cricket stump
- 1 cone

Drill

- Coach to place the stump and cone 5 meters apart
- Coach to stand behind the stump
- The player is to stand 2 to 3 metres away from the ball, to the side
- The player starts walking in as though in a game, the coach then rolls the ball out with pace towards the cone, the fielder must react, cut off the ball and complete the back flick
- Repeat on both sides

ADVANCED CATCHING TECHNIQUES FOR INNER CIRCLE FIELDERS

Under Hand Flick

The under hand flick is used when the fielder attacks the ball on their weaker side and needs to throw the ball a short distance at a 90 degree angle. The fielder picks the ball up in their throwing hand (outside hand) with the opposite foot forward (left foot for right hander’s). The arm goes back a short distance and the flick is made as the right foot comes through.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

OPTION 1

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- 1 Cricket stump
- 1 cone

Drill

- Coach to place the stump and cone 5 meters apart
- The player is to stand in the throwing position with the ball beside the cone
- The coach is to stand behind the stump
- The player is to complete the under hand flick standing still with a stationary ball

OPTION 3

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- 1 Cricket stump
- 1 cone

Drill

- Coach to place the stump and cone 5 meters apart
- Coach to stand behind the stump
- The player is to stand 2 metres away from the ball
- The coach rolls the ball out slowly towards the cone
- The player walks in to cut off the ball and complete
- the under hand flick with a moving ball

OPTION 5

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- 1 Cricket stump
- 1 cone

Drill

- Coach to place the stump and cone 5 meters apart
- Coach to stand behind the stump
- The player is to stand 2 to 3 metres away from the ball, to the side
- The player starts walking in as though in a game, the coach then rolls the ball out with pace towards the cone, the fielder must react, cut off the ball and complete the under hand flick

OPTION 2

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- 1 Cricket stump
- 1 cone

Drill

- Coach to place the stump and cone 5 meters apart
- Coach to stand behind the stump
- The player is to stand 2 metres away from the ball
- The player is then required to move in towards the ball and complete the under hand flick with a stationary ball

OPTION 4

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- 1 Cricket stump
- 1 cone

Drill

- Coach to place the stump and cone 5 meters apart
- Coach to stand behind the stump
- The player is to stand 2 to 3 metres away from the ball, to the side
- The coach rolls the ball out slowly towards the cone
- The player walks across to cut off the ball and complete the under hand flick with a moving ball

ADVANCED CATCHING TECHNIQUES FOR INNER CIRCLE FIELDERS

Underarm Dive Throw

The underarm dive throw is used when the fielder has attacked the ball at high speed and the when they have successfully picked up the ball they dive forwards using their momentum and under armed the ball while in mid-air. The same technique is used as per the underarm throw, but the ball is delivered with the fielders body is in mid-air. This technique is often used in tight run out situations where the ball is close to the stumps.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

OPTION 1

Coaches Equipment

- No equipment required

Drill

- Player to be on the their knees
- Their throwing arm is taken back past their body
- They arch their back and then release their upper body forwards using their hands and out stretched arms to brace their fall
- Repeat an equal number of times on both sides
- Use this drill with young players, if the players are more advanced then they may only need 2 or 3 rehearsals

OPTION 3

Coaches Equipment

- 1 cricket ball for each pair

Drill

- Place the players into pairs
- The thrower now jogs into the ball which is stationary on the ground
- The thrower completes the technique and aims to throw the ball at their partners waist
- Repeat the drill with both hands
- Repeat the drill until the coach and player are satisfied with the skill developmet.

OPTION 2

Coaches Equipment

- 1 cricket ball for each pair

Drill

- Place the players into pairs
- Thrower to be balancing in a crouched position on the balls of their feet
- The thrower repeats the skills from Option 1, but this time completes the skill by throwing the ball to their partner
- Repeat an equal number of times with both hands
- Repeat the drill until the coach and player are satisfied with the skill development

OPTION 4

Coaches Equipment

- 1 cricket ball for each pair

Drill

- Place the players into pairs
- The thrower jogs into a moving ball which is delivered by their partner
- The thrower completes the technique and aims to throw the ball at their partners waist
- Repeat the drill with both hands
- Repeat the drill until the coach and player are satisfied with the skill development

ADVANCED CATCHING TECHNIQUES FOR INNER CIRCLE FIELDERS

Cross-over Throw

The cross-over throw is used when the fielder runs across the ball, cuts it off and needs to throw on an angle back towards the stumps.

The ball is picked up in the throwing hand with the opposite foot forward (left foot for right handers). The arm goes back as the back foot lands. The foot opposite to the throwing arm swings across the body as the throwing arm comes through. The leg acts as a counter balance to keep the fielder stable. The fielder should be encouraged to keep running and not to stand upright while throwing. Because the fielder is moving to the side at speed and imparts sidespin with the throw, the ball will actually travel in that direction after release. To counter this, the fielder should aim behind their target.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

OPTION 1

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- Catching mitt
- 1 Stump

Drill

- Coach to stand beside the stump
- Ball to be placed on the ground in a stationary position
- The player is to jog in towards the ball, pick it up and complete the technique
- Repeat the drill until the coach and player are happy that the skill is being completed competently

OPTION 2

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- Catching mitt

Drill

- Coach to stand beside the stump
- Coach rolls the ball out and the player runs diagonally across, cuts the ball off, and completes the technique of the skill
- Repeat the drill until the coach and player are happy that the skill is being completed competently

ADVANCED CATCHING TECHNIQUES FOR INNER CIRCLE FIELDERS

Fielding to the non-throwing hand side Hip Turn

If the ball can be received in front of the body, (this should always be encouraged) the crow hop or stationary hip turn is used to realign the hips to ensure they point in the direction of the throw.

In order to assist with the hip turn, players are encouraged where possible to use a shallow semi-circle movement behind the ball prior to field it. This is called “rounding” on the ball.

The harder the fielder runs early in the chase, the greater the opportunity to round on the ball, and therefore delivering a flatter, faster throw.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

OPTION 1

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- Cricket bat (optional, the ball can be rolled out)
- Stump
- Catching mitt

Drill

- Coach to position themselves beside the stump with the catching mitt
- Ball is placed in a stationary position 10 to 15 metres from the stump
- Player to position themselves 5 metres away from the ball on the side of their throwing arm so that they have to run around the ball in a semi-circle, pick the ball up, turn their hip and throw the ball to the coach standing beside the stump
- Repeat the drill until the coach and player are happy that the skill is being completed competently

OPTION 2

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- Cricket bat (optional, the ball can be rolled out)
- Stump
- Catching mitt

Drill

- Coach to position themselves beside the stump with the catching mitt
- Coach is to roll the ball out so that the player has to run around the ball in a semi-circle, pick the ball up, turn their hip and throw the ball to the coach standing beside the stump
- To lift the intensity increase the speed that the ball is rolled out
- Repeat the drill until the coach and player are happy that the skill is being completed competently

ADVANCED CATCHING TECHNIQUES FOR INNER CIRCLE FIELDERS

Short distance slide turn and throw

This is a short quick throw and is effective for short leg chasing back to affect a run out at the ‘keepers’ end. As soon as the balance is gained, the short throw is fired off. The throw is completed from the knees. This is the quickest method of return but also develops the least throwing power due to the throw being delivered from the knees.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

OPTION 1

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- Cricket bat (optional, ball can be rolled out)
- Stump
- Gym mat (if drill performed indoors)
- Catching mitt

Drill

- Coach to place the stationary ball approximately 3 to 5 metres out in front of the player either on the gym mat or the grass
- Player runs out performs the technique and from The figure 4 positioning throws the ball back to the coach standing with the catching mitt beside the stump
- Repeat the drill until the coach and player are happy that the skill is being completed competently

OPTION 2

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- Cricket bat (optional, ball can be rolled out)
- Stump
- Gym mat (if drill performed indoors)
- Catching mitt

Drill

- Coach to roll the ball out approximately 5 to 10 metres
- Player is to chase the ball, perform the correct slide technique and from the figure 4 positioning throw the ball back to the coach standing with the catching mitt beside the stump
- Repeat the drill until the coach and player are happy that the skill is being completed competently.

Specific Fielding Areas
(Understanding positioning and angles)

OUT FIELDING

Out fielding refers to any fielding position whereby the fielder is positioned outside the 30 metre circle. Out fielding positions include:

1. LONG OFF
2. LONG ON
3. DEEP EXTRA COVER
4. DEEP POINT
5. THIRD MAN
6. FINE LEG
7. DEEP MID WICKET
8. DEEP SQUARE LEG

KEY ASPECTS FOR OUT FIELDING POSITIONS



"Fielders in the out field must be able to predict what shot the batter is intending to play and where the ball may be heading. "

Speed

Speed is the act or state of moving rapidly; swiftness; quick motion. Speed is an important component for fielders in the out field as they need to have the ability to move to the ball quickly to either stop the batsmen from running two runs or to cut off any balls that have been hit hard into gaps and are heading to the boundary. Speed also refers to the fieldsman's ability to dive, stop the ball and then get back to their feet and throw the ball back to the wicket keeper or to the bowler end.

Anticipation

Anticipation is the act of predicting. Fielders in the out field must be able to predict what shot the batter is intending to play and where the ball may be heading. Out fielders need to develop the ability to pick up cues from the batter as to the type of shot they are about to play by the position the batter is getting into to play the ball. A fielders ability to anticipate the ball coming to them may be the difference between the batsmen running 2 or just 1 run.

Eye/Hand Coordination

Eye/hand coordination is the ability of the vision system to coordinate the information received through the eyes to control, guide, and direct the hands in the accomplishment of a given task, such as catching a ball. This is important for out fielders as they need to be proficient in taking high catches.

Strong, Accurate Throwing Arm/s

The ability to throw the ball with velocity and accuracy is a hugely important component of fielding in the out field.

Understand Positioning and Angles

Coaches must ensure that they teach their players the correct field positions and angles for the different out fielding positions.

KEY ASPECTS REGARDING THE SPECIFIC FIELDING POSITIONS

1. Long off & 2. Long On

The positioning of long off and long on is relatively easy, they basically drop straight back for their regulation positions from inside the inner circle. Both fielders need to be aware where they stand in terms of their distance from the boundary, most fielders walk in from the edge of the boundary but on big grounds fielders may have to come up 5 to 10 metres to make sure they stop the batter from running two.

At the end of the innings in one day and T20 cricket it has become important to place two very good fielders at long off and long on because the bowlers are looking to bowl full and straight and the majority of the balls go straight down the ground so its imperative to have fielders positioned there who are fast, have good hands, possess good throwing arms and if at all possible are tall so they can grab those catches that pass over the boundary at a catchable height.

3. Deep Extra Cover

The positioning of deep extra cover is important and this player needs to communicate with the cover fielder to make sure they are positioned correctly. What fielding captains don't want to happen is to have the deep extra cover and cover to be lined up behind one another. The wicket keeper is in good position to monitor this. The fielder needs to make certain that they are not too deep and are able to cut off two runs.

4. Deep Point

When fielding at deep point the fielder needs to stand backward of point because of the angle of the bat when it connects with the ball tends to make the ball naturally spin away.

5. Third Man

Third man needs to be positioned approximately between 3rd slip and gully. The third man and gully should communicate so as to make sure the positioning is right. It is important that when playing one day cricket

that this fielder is placed on the boundary and doesn't creep in too far as often when batter go hard at wide balls they fly down to third man.

6. Fine Leg

Fine leg needs to be positioned at about a 45 degree angle; the key for this player is not to get too fine and stand virtually directly behind the wicket keeper, it's better to be slightly wider than too fine. The player must judge how far back they position themselves, on big grounds the fielder may want to come in 10 metres to prevent the batsmen from running two.

7. Deep mid wicket

Deep mid wicket is generally used when a spinner is on and the batsmen are looking to attack. The actual positioning of this fielder is not exactly mid wicket; it is in fact nearer to the line with the stumps at the bowlers end.

8. Deep square leg

Deep square leg requires a fielder who understands this position and the correct angles of where to stand and the performance of the ball when it comes off the bat. Generally the fielder needs to be positioned behind the line of square leg because when the batter pulls or especially sweeps the ball over spin imparted on the ball when it leaves the bat means that the ball will travel in an arc. Quite often fielders who are not aware of this effect on the ball will run quickly directly at the ball and not taking into account the spin on the ball and get beaten once the ball bounces a few times and the spin takes effect.

The square leg positioning also depends on whether there is a fielder on the 45 degree angle. When there is a fielder in this position square leg can position themselves slightly behind square, if there isn't then the square leg fielder needs to move further behind square. The wicket keeper plays an important role in the positioning of the square leg fielder because they have the best view of the fielders angle.

CATCHING TECHNIQUES FOR OUT FIELDERS

Stationary Catching in the Deep

Fielders positioned in the deep need to practice catching high balls in a stationary position. These are the key aspects to catching in the deep-

1. Anticipate what kind of shot the batter is going to play by the way they set themselves to hit the ball
2. Quickly assess the trajectory and line of the ball
3. Get in a balanced positioned to take the catch
4. Watch the ball the whole way
5. Get hands high in the reverse cup position and watch the ball into the hands

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

OPTION 1

Coaches Equipment

- Tennis balls, hard tennis balls or cricket balls

Drill

- Coach to place the players into pairs
- Each pair is to have one ball between them
- Pairs to stand 10 to 15 metres apart and throw over arm catches to each other
- Repeat the drill until the coach and player are happy that the skill is being completed competently

OPTION 2

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- Cricket bat
- Catching mitt

Drill

- Players to stand 20 to 30 metres away from the coach
- Coach is to hit catches out to the players who need to complete the catch using the correct technique and return the ball to the coach
- Increase the distance and height of the catches as the players skills develop

CATCHING TECHNIQUES FOR OUT FIELDERS

Catching in the Deep on the Run

The same principles of catching in the deep on the run apply when catching in the deep on the run apart from the fact that there is one more key element and that is speed to the ball.

Everything at the beginning must be processed a lot quicker when the fielder needs to move from one area of the field to another to take the catch.

Once the trajectory of the ball has been picked up the fielder must move at speed to give themselves enough time to get into the best balanced position obtainable to successfully take the catch. So speed is the key ingredient to catching on the run and all the while watching the ball at the same time.

In some instances the fielder will not have the speed to enable themselves to get under the ball, balance themselves and take the catch. They will have to take the catch while still moving at high speed.

This is a very difficult skill to do and requires great balance at the point of catching the ball. The key to being balanced is to actually catch the ball when both feet are off the ground, so between steps. If the catch is made as either foot hits the ground it causes the eyes to move which obviously affects the ability to watch the ball.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

OPTION 1

Coaches Equipment

- Tennis balls, hard tennis balls or cricket balls

Drill

- Coach to place the players into pairs
- Each pair is to have one ball between them
- Pairs to stand 15 to 20 metres apart and throw over arm catches to each other ensuring that the catcher has to run to get into position to complete the catch
- Repeat the drill until the coach and player are happy that the skill is being completed competently

OPTION 2

Coaches Equipment

- Cricket ball
- Cricket bat
- Catching mitt

Drill

- Players to stand 20 to 30 metres away from the coach
- Coach is to hit catches out to the players whereby the players need run to get under the ball, position themselves to complete the catch using the correct technique and then return the ball to the coach
- Increase the distance and height of the catches as the players skills develop

Section 5.0

WICKET-KEEPING

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WICKET KEEPING FUNDAMENTALS

The wicket keeper has a vital role to play within the team so it is essential that the coach has a good understanding of the wicket keeper's role and their ability to have a major influence within the team. If you look at any successful cricket team often they have a very good wicket keeper. This player not only takes most of the catches that present themselves but also plays many other important roles.

Wicket keepers should want to be in the game, they are positioned in the middle of all the action and potentially could be involved in some way with every ball bowled during the fielding innings. Most wicket keepers are very good batsmen so their involvement in the game is even greater. Because of their extensive involvement in the game it's vital that wicket keepers are in good physical condition so they can maintain quality performance both mentally and physically throughout a match.

The location of the wicket keeper being directly behind the stumps gives them the prime view of the field. From their position they are able to see everything that's going on in the field including the fielder's depths and angles, the bowlers lines, lengths, pace, flight and spin, and also how the batter is playing and moving at the crease. The wicket keeper should develop good game sense because as they mature they need to be aware of everything that is going on around them and be able to convey vital information back to the captain and other key members of the team.

Wicket keepers have an important role to play but can often be neglected by the coach and underutilized. This is often due to the coach not having the time to work with the wicket keeper and because coaches tend to shy away from working with wicket keepers because they feel they lack the knowledge and understanding of wicket keeping. The fact is the wicket keeper is one of the most pivotal players in the team and can assist in so many areas of the game so it is beneficial to the team as a whole if the coach spends time working with the wicket keeper developing their all-round game.



"Wicket keepers should want to be in the game, they are positioned in the middle of all the action."



COACHES RELATIONSHIP WITH THE WICKET KEEPER



The relationship that the coach has with the wicket keeper is an important one and important in terms of the players development and the teams functionality as a whole. Coaches must understand the important role the wicket keeper plays within the team.

As mentioned in the introduction coaches can sometimes neglect the wicket keeper due to the fact that they don't have time to work with the keeper and/or the coach feels they are not equipped with the necessary skills to develop the wicket keeper.

Form a Relationship

Devoting time to understanding the role of the wicket keeper and learning about their skills could be one of the most worthwhile and rewarding things a coach can do.

Communicating with the wicket keeper and discussing aspects of their game and trying to get an understanding of what the wicket keeper thinks about their role within the team will be hugely beneficial.

One on One Sessions

Most coaches feel they don't have time to spend working with the wicket keeper, they have 11 other players to worry about and they think that having the wicket keeper stand in the spinners net for 40 minutes is sufficient.

Planning one on one session's with the wicket keeper are important, being able to spend time without the distractions of a team training enable quality training and dialogue to take place. No matter how long the sessions go for the work that coaches do with the wicket keeper will really pay off in the end.

The sessions can vary from developing a particular skill or game sense aspect of wicket keeping, to having a session with the captain talking about field placements and angles. What ever the coach decides to work on that contact and communication with the wicket keeper will have a marked effect not only on the wicket keepers all-round game but also on their motivation.

Outside Assistance

Because wicket keeping is such a specialized position, many coaches don't feel they have the skills or knowledge to work effectively with the wicket keeper. If this is the case then coaches should look to source outside assistance, there are coaches available in the local Districts or Major Associations who will be more than willing to assist in the development.

It is also important that if the coach seeks outside assistance that they attend the session as well so that they can learn and develop their knowledge.

Performance Debrief

Coaches need to monitor the performance of their wicket keeper during both trainings and matches and then conduct a debrief at the end.

Debriefing can be an informal chat or they can involve a more formalized meeting whereby the coach and wicket keeper view video footage and/or discuss the results taken from the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's will be covered later in the module).

ROLE OF THE WICKET KEEPER

01

To catch the ball

First and foremost the wicket keepers primary role is to catch the cricket ball.

The key to young players being successful is their ability to keep things simple and not over complicate their role.

02

Clean and Tidy Performance

Wicket keepers need to lead by example by focusing on catching every ball and being clean and tidy with their own performance.

If wicket keepers can maintain a consistently high performance level then this will build their confidence and rub off on their team mates, which leads onto the third role of the wicket keeper, Team Motivator.

03

Team Motivator

Wicket keepers generally have bubbly personalities and are very positive sort of people who continually motivate their fellow team mates. This is one of the key roles for the wicket keeper to motivate the other players and make sure everyone is working hard towards the team goals and objectives. The wicket keeper must set the standard in the field and make sure that it is upheld throughout the innings.

The wicket keeper must always move quickly between the overs and make sure the rest of the players follow suit. Sometimes fielders can get lazy especially after a long fielding effort in hot weather and it's the wicket keepers job to keep on top of the fielders either praising the fielders for good work or having a quiet word when the standards drop.

04

Field Marshall

The wicket keepers role as the Field Marshall is an important aspect of wicket keeping but one that a coach must be careful not to over burden on a young wicket keeper. The coach must understand where their wicket keeper is in terms of their development and make a judgment call regarding whether or not the wicket keeper has the ability to take on this extra responsibility.

Because of the wicket keepers location in the field they need to assist the captain with field settings and make sure fielders are in the right position. Fielders who are positioned square of the wicket can sometimes drift and get out of position, the wicket keeper is in a great position to check those angles and make slight corrections if necessary.

One area of field setting that is crucial and the responsibility of the wicket keeper is the placement of the slip fielders. The wicket keeper must make sure that the slip fielders are positioned at the right depth and spacing so that no chances fall short or fly through the gaps. Coaches must make sure that they discuss this with the wicket keeper and the slip fielders so they are all aware of where to stand in different pitch conditions.

05

How can bowling intensity be measured?

For experienced wicket keepers this can be an important role. Again, coaches need to understand the stage of their wicket keepers development before introducing this role. It is a good idea for young wicket keepers to be involved in bowlers meetings so they understand the bowling plans.

Creating a rapport between each the bowler and wicket keeper is important; wicket keepers need to develop an understanding of their bowler's plans, variations and suitable intricacies. Experienced wicket keepers are in the best position to give vital feedback to the bowler regarding their performance which can assist them greatly.

One area where you see the wicket keeper and the bowler working together is when the wicket keeper stands up to the medium pace bowlers which puts pressure on the batsmen. This tactic takes a lot of courage from the wicket keeper but is something the bowler and wicket keeper must work on a lot to enable it to be effective.

IDENTIFYING A WICKET KEEPER

Identifying a talented wicket keeper is not an easy task, especially if the coach or selector has never been a wicket keeper before. So what are the key aspects to look out for?

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Good Hands

The main objective of the wicket keeper is to catch the ball, so wicket keepers need to have good hands or good hand/eye coordination, this is vital for any successful wicket keeper.

Agility

Wicket keepers need to be agile and have good balance so they can get themselves into good position to catch the ball.

Positive Attitude

Wicket keepers have such an important role to play within the team so its vital that they have a good positive attitude. Watching a wicket keeper run between the overs, giving encouragement to the bowlers and fielders, not getting down on themselves if they make a mistake and looking like they are having fun no matter what the situation is a very important attribute for wicket keepers.

Pride in Performance

Quality wicket keepers always take a lot of pride in their performance and in the appearance. The wicket keeper is the centre of attention and they like that, they like to perform well and take pride in making sure that they set the standard for the rest of the team.

Courage

Wicket keepers need to be courageous people especially when standing up, this is not as easy as it looks and can be quite scary for young wicket keepers. Trying to focus on catching the ball while the batter is swinging a bat around close to the wicket keepers head takes courage and belief in their ability.

Hard Worker

Wicket keeping is probably one of the most physically and mentally demanding positions in the game of cricket, so to become a quality wicket keeper the player needs to be a hard worker both on and off the field.

Wicket keepers must train hard not only on their wicket keeping skills, they need to work hard on the fitness and psychological aspects of their game to enable them stand long periods behind the wickets.

Batting is also another aspect of the wicket keepers game that they must work hard on, modern wicket keepers these days are all accomplished batsmen so vital that they work hard on this area.

Willingness to Learn

Young wicket keepers must have a willingness to learn not only about wicket keeping but the game of cricket. They have such an important role to play because of their location in the field that they must want to develop their games sense through understanding the team's tactics, the bowlers variations, the right angles of the fielders etc. If the wicket keeper is willing to develop their game sense to become a more effective attribute to the team then this is a huge attribute to posses.

Considerations When Selecting a Wicket Keeper

Selecting the right wicket keeper can sometimes be a very difficult task. Wheter to choose a quality wicket keeper who can bat a bit or a quality batter who can wicket keep sufficiently is always a conundrum that faces both coaches and selectors.

When selecting a team it really comes down to the balance the coach or selector(s) want for the team and also which format of the game the team is being selected for.

If a team is playing a 2 or 3 day match the coach or selector(s) may select a different type of wicket keeper to what would be selected for a 1 day or T20 match. In a 2 or 3 day match the coaches and selectors usually go with a player who posses quality wicket keeping skills and may bat at 7 or 8. Then for a T20 or one day match the coach may select a player who can wicket keep sufficiently enough but is a powerful, hard hitting batter.

As mentioned earlier a lot depends on the balance of the team and the format of cricket being played, but an important aspect to take in to account when selecting the wicket keeper is that the winning or losing of the game can often come down to the wicket keepers ability to take that match winning catch or stumping.

Remember wicket keeping is a highly specialized position and not everyone has the skills necessary to perform under pressure when it matters.

WICKET KEEPING

APPLYING PRESSURE



The wicket keeper has an important role to play in terms of applying pressure on the batter and there are a number of ways they are able to apply pressure.

ADVANCING BATTER TO PACE BOWLER

The wicket keeper has the ability to apply pressure on the batsmen by standing up to the pace bowlers; this is often done when the batter is looking to advance down the wicket.

When the wicket keeper stands up to the seam bowlers it creates doubt in the batter's mind hence affects their game plan and potential momentum. To be successful at standing up to the seam bowlers the wicket keeper must practice, it is not an easy task and takes courage and confidence.

The aspect which is important is the communication between the wicket keeper and bowler, some bowlers get distracted by the wicket keeper standing up, so it is vital that both players talk about this tactic and practice it during practice.

CHAT

Wicket keepers are the heart of the field and their ability to create pressure through increased talk or encouragement with the fielders and bowlers is a very important aspect.

Just through a bit of talk maybe some light hearted comments or applauding a great piece of fielding can lift the fielders and bowlers up when they are going through a low patch in the game.

This talk and encouragement can lift the fielding team and have a positive effect on their performance which creates pressure on the batsmen.

GETTING THROUGH THE OVERS QUICKLY

By the wicket keeper setting the example and running between the overs and encouraging the other fielders to move quickly into position can create pressure on the batsmen.

In one instance it shows positivity in the fielders and the fact that they are enjoying their fielding and also it gives the batsmen less time to break and chat between overs, the fielding team starts to dictate the pace of the game and gets through their overs faster.

WICKET KEEPING SKILLS GLOVE WORK (CATCHING) SKILLS

Watch the ball into the gloves

- Cupped gloves rise underneath the ball off the pitch
- Let your gloves ride or 'give' with the ball
- Length of take refers to the distance the wicket keeper has their hands out in front to absorb the force of the balls impact
- Fingers should never be pointed towards the ball

Head alignment

- Always take the ball in line with your head where possible, this gives the wicket keeper the best possible view of the ball

Large target

- Use both hands to create a large target to catch the ball
- When standing back aim to catch the ball at stomach height

Soft hands / elbows

- Hands must remain soft when taking the ball
- Elbows must move to absorb the ball impact

ADVANCED CATCHING SKILLS - HIGH CATCHES

High catches are not often taken by wicket keepers, but if the ball flies straight up off the top edge of the bat the wicket keeper must take these catches.

These types of catches are not often part of a wicket keepers training and need to be because when the opportunity arises the wicket keeper must have confidence to be able to take the opportunity.

These are the important aspects of wicket keepers taking high catches-

- The wicket keeper must call loudly for the ball "MINE"
- Quick footwork is necessary to get underneath the ball
- It is essential that the wicket keeper has a solid base to take the ball
- Watch the ball the whole way into the gloves
- Hands must be positioned high preferably in the reverse cup position which allows the ball to be taken closer to eye level
- Try to get into a position whereby the sun is not directly in line with the ball

ADVANCED CATCHING SKILLS - DIVING

Wicket keepers are well known for their acrobatic dives behind the stumps whether it be to stop a wayward delivery bowled by the bowler or a snick that has come from the batter's bat. The important aspect with diving is learning the correct technique and being able to move, take the catch and land without having the ball spill out.

Diving can involve the wicketkeeper taking the ball outstretched with one hand or two, preferably the best method is to use two hands, but sometimes the area that the wicket keeper needs to cover is so great that they can only use the one hand.

There are a number of techniques that can be used to

dive and successfully catch the ball, the three techniques that will be covered are the dive and stretch with two hands, dive and stretch with one hand, and the dive and roll.

DIVE AND STRETCH Laterally - TWO HANDS

- Pick up the line of the ball
- Move powerfully out of the crouch laterally using the legs
- Dive across watching the ball carefully into the hands
- When catch has been taken stretch arms out full length so that when the body hits the ground the elbows are straight and don't hit first and dislodge the ball

DIVE AND STRETCH FORWARD - TWO HANDS

- Pick up the line of the ball
- Move powerfully out of the crouch going forward using the legs
- Dive forward watching the ball carefully into the hands
- When catch has been taken stretch arms out full length so that when the body hits the ground the elbows are straight and don't hit first and dislodge the ball

WICKET KEEPING

APPLYING PRESSURE

DIVE AND STRETCH LATERALLY - ONE HAND

- Pick up the line of the ball
- Move powerfully out of the crouch laterally using the legs
- Dive across watching the ball carefully into the one hand
- When catch has been taken stretch the arm with the ball out full length so that when the body hits the ground the elbows are straight and don't hit first and dislodge the ball
- Brace the landing with the other hand

DIVE AND ROLL

- Pick up the line of the ball
- Move powerfully out of the crouch going forward using the legs
- Dive laterally watching the ball carefully into the hands
- When catch has been taken use the bodies momentum to roll the catching hand and shoulder under the body which cushions the landing

TAKING THE BALL ON THE HALF VOLLEY

Not all throws that come in from the fielders arrive at the perfect height, sometimes the wicket keeper is required to take the ball on the half volley. This is not an easy method and needs to be practiced to ensure that the throw is tidied up.

The key aspects are

- Pick up the trajectory of the throw as quickly as possible
- Once the trajectory has been identified the wicket keeper must move into position to take the ball

- When taking the ball on the half volley its vital to get alongside the ball
- As the ball bounces the wicket keeper gets into a low side on position alongside the ball
- If the wicket keeper is on the left side of the ball the left leg goes forward and vice versa
- In this low position the wicket keeper scoops the ball up on the half volley and then rides with the ball as it bounces



WICKET KEEPING POSITIONING

WICKET KEEPERS POSITIONING

- The gloves should not be in front of the stumps when standing up
- Feet approximately shoulder width apart - allows for optimal lateral movement
- Weight balanced on the balls of the feet
- Knees should not be straight - bent knees utilise the powerful quadriceps muscles in the legs which will enable the wicket keeper to move powerfully in all directions
- When standing back the keeper must be positioned so they catch the ball at stomach height. Their positioning has a major impact on the positioning of the slips, so coaches must work hard on this aspect and educate the wicket keeper on the different positions in relation to the type of wicket and speed of the bowler

Full crouch

As above but with the addition of:

- Gloves should be fully open as though holding a soccer ball
- Arms should be comfortably extended to crease and touching the ground (do not lean on the gloves)
- Gloves are the last components to leave the ground as the wicketkeeper rises. In order to perform this skill, the buttocks must be the first part of the body to rise, which forces the gloves to stay on the ground longer

Semi-crouch (used when standing back)

- Wicket keeper stays in power position with knees bent and weight on the balls of the feet
- Gloves are positioned just slightly lower than knee height

Touch

The touch technique is similar to the semi-crouch. When ball is about to be released by bowler, wicketkeeper touches ground with the backs of the fingers of the gloves.

DEPTH AND ALIGNMENT

Standing Up

- Position the inside foot (left foot when keeping to right hand batsmen) in the line of the off stump and mark a line running directly back from the stump using your foot
- Then mark another line running parallel to the crease line approximately two feet lengths back from the stumps
- Place the ball of your inside foot where the two lines intersect, then move into the crouch position

Direction of Feet

- Feet pointing towards bowler- this positioning allows for the best view of the bowler and the ball
- Outside foot and hips pointing towards mid off - this allows the wicket keeper to access the off side with a little more ease

Clear View of the Ball

The wicketkeeper's alignment may vary slightly when standing up if the batter obstructs their view in their stance, with their back lift or if the bowler changes to around the wicket.

When the bowler changes to around the wicket it can make it difficult for the wicket keeper, especially if a right arm bowler comes around the wicket to a right hand batter and vice versa left arm bowler comes around the wicket to a left hand batter because the ball is completely out of sight for the wicket keeper. In this instance the wicket keeper needs to adjust their alignment so as to get the best possible view of the ball.

Standing Back

- Wicket keeper needs to position themselves where they get the best view of the bowler
- The ideal depth will vary and depends on the pace of the bowler and wicket. The important aspect is that the wicket keeper catches the ball around stomach height or where the ball just starts to dip after going past the batter
- Wicket keepers must ensure that they are constantly assessing their depth because factors such as wearing of the ball, wearing of the wicket, and tiredness of the bowler will have an effect on where the wicket keepers depth

Direction of Feet

- Feet pointing towards bowler- this positioning allows for the best view of the bowler and the ball
- Feet pointing towards mid off - this allows the wicket keeper to access the off side with a little more ease

WICKET KEEPING POSITIONING

MOVEMENT SKILLS

TYPES OF MOVEMENT - OFF SIDESHUFFLE

- Wicketkeeper moves head to the line of the ball
- Powerful lateral movement to the off side by inside foot to get head in line with the ball
- Outside foot then steps laterally to off side
- Inside foot then follows the outside foot so it is alongside
- Powerful lateral movement repeated if ball is very wide
- Inside foot moves towards the outside foot to give the wicketkeeper a stable base to take the ball

Cross over

- Wicketkeeper moves head to the line of the ball
- Outside foot takes a small step to the off side
- Inside foot follows outside foot and moves across and behind the outside foot
- Outside foot then takes another step to the leg side
- Inside foot moves towards the outside foot to give the wicketkeeper a stable base to take the ball

TYPES OF MOVEMENT - LEG SIDE SHUFFLE

- Wicketkeeper moves head to the line of the ball
- Powerful movement made by the outside foot
- Inside foot steps laterally to the leg side
- Outside foot then follows the inside foot so it is alongside
- Powerful movement repeated by the outside foot

TYPES OF MOVEMENT - LEG SIDE SHUFFLE

- Wicketkeeper moves head to the line of the ball
- Powerful movement made by the outside foot
- Inside foot steps laterally to the leg side
- Outside foot then follows the inside foot so it is alongside
- Powerful movement repeated by the outside foot
- Inside foot takes another step to the leg side
- Outside foot moves towards the inside foot to give the wicketkeeper a stable base

Cross over

- Wicketkeeper moves head to the line of the ball
- Inside foot takes a small step to the leg side
- Outside foot follows inside foot and moves across and behind the inside foot
- Inside foot then takes another step to the leg side
- Outside foot moves towards the inside foot to give the wicketkeeper a stable base

TYPES OF MOVEMENT - STANDING UP OFF SIDE

- Once in the power position, wicketkeeper moves the head to the line of the ball
- By moving head first, the feet will then automatically follow
- Keep inside foot grounded unless ball is very wide
- The wicketkeeper should always aim to get the body and head behind the line of the ball with the eyes over the gloves
- When the ball has been taken and is in the gloves, the wicketkeeper should always bring the ball back to the stumps

OFF SIDE - STANDING UP TAKING A WIDE BOUNCING DELIVERY

- Once in the power position, wicketkeeper moves the head to the line of the ball
- By moving head first, the outside foot will then automatically follow
- Keep inside foot grounded
- Rotate upper body with the bounce of the ball
- Watch the ball into the hands
- When the ball has been taken and is in the gloves, the wicketkeeper should always bring the ball back to the stumps

LEG SIDE - STANDING UP

- Once in the power position, wicketkeeper moves the head to the line of the ball
- Inside foot takes a small step towards the leg side
- Make sure wicketkeeper keeps the gloves low to the ground
- Outside foot then follows inside foot so it is alongside it
- The inside foot again takes a step to the leg side
- Outside foot moves towards inside foot to give the wicketkeeper a stable base
- The movement should be in a line that is parallel to the crease

The NZC Advanced Development Course E-Manual has been established to assist coaches of youth and secondary school players in their quest to develop their coaching knowledge and ability which will aid their player's development.

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