

BEYOND Coaching



Quarterly Newsletter • Issue 13 / 2009

Beyond Coaching Bids Adieus!



Beyond Coaching was launched in April 2006, and has been a successful means of direct communication to our National Registry of Coaches (NROC).

We thank you for your ardent support and many valuable contributions throughout the lifetime of the publication.

Keeping pace with the flourishing new media industry, the Singapore Sports Council (SSC) is riding on new online communication channels to bring regular updates and exciting news items to our many stakeholders. The launch of The Play

Times – a new monthly e-newsletter that promises to deliver current, relevant and insightful news items and information to our entire sports community, will incorporate coaching content and much more.

Therefore with immediate effect from this issue, Beyond Coaching will cease publication and ride on The Play Times to continue providing coaching information and advice to our readers. This is all part of a concerted effort to consolidate all SSC-driven publications under a common faction, not forgetting the all important universal quest to “Save the Trees”.

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We hope that you will enjoy reading The Play Times as much as you enjoyed our newsletter. On behalf of the team that brought you Beyond Coaching, we thank you once again for your great support.

*Wayde Clews
Chief, High Performance Group
Singapore Sports Council*



New Kid on the Block

Jovin Tan Wei Qiang
22 years old, (Cerebral Palsy)
National Sailor



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Should you have any enquiries or
feedback about this newsletter, or
even experiences that you want to
share with regard to coaching,
please email,
jennie_chiong@ssc.gov.sg

All information is correct
at the time of printing

If you have called our Coaching Development Department recently, you would have been greeted by a young and cheerful voice answering queries. He is none other than Jovin Tan, our new Executive Assistant. For those of you who have met him, you will be equally impressed by his professionalism and pro-activeness approach. Nothing seems different until you realised he is on a wheelchair. He has been born with Cerebral Palsy but that has not stop him from achieving his goals. He is a National Paralympian sailor and has represented Singapore in many international sailing competitions.

On top of that since Jan 2009, he has been placed on attachment in his current role as part of SSC scheme to help athletes acquire work place skills in their preferred industry. Jovin once highlighted he aspires to work in the coaching industry in the future and be a coach himself one day. He is thus very grateful for this opportunity that has been offered to him.

In his role, he can assist you in your National Registry of Coaches (NROC) applications. Do drop him an email at jovin_tan@ssc.gov.sg or call him at 65005486 if you have any enquiries.

SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

- *Sailability Singapore Regatta (Access Dinghy 2.3) 2001 – 4th placing*
- *Pesta Sukan Regatta 2002 – 4th placing*
- *3rd Australian National & International Access Dinghy Championships 2002 – Div 3 2nd placing*
- *1st National Disability Games (Sailability Regatta) 2002 – 4th placing*
- *Australian National & International Access Dinghy 2003 – Div 1 2nd placing*
- *Pesta Sukan Regatta 2003 – 5th placing*
- *Changi Sailing Club Commodore Cup 2003 – 1st placing*
- *2nd National Disability Games (Sailability Regatta) 2003 – 3rd placing*
- *2004 Athens Paralympics Games – 14th placing (Sonar class)*
- *11th Singapore Straits Regatta (SONAR) 2005 – 1st placing*
- *4th National Disability Games (Sailability Regatta) 2005 – 1st placing*
- *Ambassador's Cup 2005 – 1st placing (among able-bodied keel boats)*
- *IFDS World Disabled Sailing Championships 2005 – 16th placing*
- *Singapore Sailability Open 2005 – 5th placing*
- *MPPP/PSC International Sailing Regatta – 1st placing*
- *Sailability Singapore Regatta 2005 – 2nd placing*
- *Far East and South Pacific Games for the Disabled 2006 – Gold medal in Men's Dinghy class*
- *IFDS Two-Person Keelboat World Championship 2008 – Gold Medal (winning qualification to Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games)*
- *2008 Beijing Paralympics Game – 8th placing (Skud 18 class)*

Ankle Sprains

What is an ankle sprain?

The ankle joint is made up of four bones and the shape of each bone helps to make the joint stable. Stability around the joint is increased by the ligaments, which are bands of string-like connective tissue that connect adjacent bones in a joint and prevent unwanted movement. There are many ligaments around the ankle and these can be damaged when the ankle is forced into a position that is not normally encountered.

An ankle sprain occurs when one of the supporting ligaments is stretched too far or too quickly, causing the ligament's fibres to tear and bleed into the surrounding tissues. This bleeding causes pain and swelling. The most common type of sprain is when the foot "rolls in" (inversion). This occurs when weight is applied to the foot on an uneven surface. When this happens, the ligaments stabilizing the outer (lateral) part of the ankle are stressed. Some will report hearing a "snap" or "pop" at the time of the injury. This is usually followed by pain and swelling on the lateral aspect of the ankle.

What should I do after a sprain?

In the first 24 to 72 hours after the injury, use the R.I.C.E.R. method:

Rest: Take it easy and move within your limit of pain.

Ice: Apply ice packs using a towel over the painful area for 15 minutes every 2 hours. This helps control pain and bleeding. Be careful to avoid frostbite.

Compression: Use Tubigrip. This reduces swelling.

Elevation: Sit down and have your ankle and leg well-supported and positioned above the level of your heart. Gravity reduces edema, or swelling, in the ankle.

Referral: Seek professional opinion regarding diagnosis, treatment and instruction on proper rehabilitation of the injury.

Prompt treatment will reduce the swelling, making it easier to walk after two or three days. To help you return to normal activity quickly, your physiotherapist can show you how to tape your ankle to provide support and give you exercises to improve strength and control.

Your chances of a full recovery will also be greater if you avoid the H.A.R.M. factors in the first 48 hours.

Heat: It increases swelling and bleeding, for instance, hot showers, heat rubs and hotpacks.

Alcohol & Aspirin: Alcohol increases swelling and bleeding. Aspirin prolongs the clotting time of blood and may cause more bleeding into the ankle.

Running or exercise: These activities aggravate the injury.

Massage: It only increases swelling and bleeding.

Many of the problems that result from sprains are due to blood and edema in and around the ankle. Minimizing swelling helps the ankle heal faster and the RICE regimen facilitates this.

Degree of severity of ankle sprains:

Grade I - stretch and /or minor tear of the ligament without laxity (loosening)

Grade II - tear of ligament plus some laxity

Grade III - complete tear of the affected ligament (very loose)

Most sprains heal completely within a few weeks. The more severe the injury, the longer the time to heal. Often it is necessary to continue rehab exercises for a month or two following the injury. Grade III injuries are usually managed conservatively, but a small percentage may require surgery.

How soon can I return to sport?

This will depend on how badly you have damaged the ankle ligaments. Returning to sport too early can delay healing and prolong recovery.

Bracing and taping may allow early return to sport, but normal ligament strength and muscle control will take longer to return than the time it takes for pain and swelling to subside. Your physiotherapist can help you plan ways to maintain fitness while your ankle is healing.

Can ankle sprains be prevented?

You can reduce the chance of ankle injury if you:

- Warm up before you exercise and warm down when you finish.
- Wear well-fitting shoes that give good lateral ankle joint support.
- Avoid activities on slippery, wet or uneven surfaces, or in areas with poor lighting.
- Maintain good general fitness.

By Kwek Siew Huei
Sports Physiotherapist
Singapore Sports Council



Training Smarter (Part 2)



The aim of the article seeks to examine some of the common practice methods which coaches employ during their training sessions and their effect on learning sports skills. In the last edition, Part 1 of this article introduced the concept of blocked and random practice. Part 2 of this article will examine another two common practice methods used in coaching – constant and varied practice.

Constant practice refers to a practice sequence in which only one variation of a single class of skills is practiced. Varied practice on the other hand, refers to a practice sequence in which a number of variations of a single class of skills is practiced. At first glance, the concept of constant and varied practice may seem similar to that of blocked and random practice. There is however, one important difference – constant and varied practice refers to the practice of a single class of skills, whereas blocked and random practice refers to the practice of multiple classes of skills.

Using the same tennis example in Part 1, three tennis skills were taught using the blocked and random practice method – the serve, forehand and volley. The teaching of these three skills may be further broken down by using the constant or varied practice method. In teaching the forehand for example, constant practice would mean that players are directed to practice hitting their forehand to the same area of the court only. Varied practice on the other hand, would mean that players are directed to practice hitting their forehand to different areas of the court in a random sequence. In both cases, the players are practicing the same class

skill, the forehand, but employing the varied practice methods requires players to make subtle adjustments to their forehand technique to hit the ball to different areas of the court.

Much like random practice, research has shown that varied practice leads to a greater retention of skills over constant practice. Another advantage of varied practice is that it facilitates the adaptability and the generalization of skill performance, particularly if players are required to perform a specific variation they have not attempted previously, as is the case during competition. That is not to say that constant practice is without its uses. Like blocked practice, constant practice is useful when teaching beginners the basics of a skill, enabling them to have early success and enjoyment when learning the sport.

In summary, all coaches have a limited time with their athletes during training and it is therefore critical for coaches to structure their training sessions in such a way that enables their athletes to learn the various skills as quickly as possible. Utilizing the right mix of blocked, random, constant and varied practice methods during training will help to optimize skill learning and maximize training time.

*By Michael Loke
Former staff member of SSC's Coaching Development Dept.
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Deep Water Training



Deep water training is an exercise rehabilitation tool used for injured athletes, where non-impact or low-impact exercise is desired. It can also be used as another form of aerobic training for the otherwise healthy athlete. It adds variety to the athlete's land training, and the break from weight-bearing activity can also help prevent overuse injuries.

Requirements

The athlete must be able to swim at least 30m and tread water fairly well. If not, water running will be confined to the shallow end of the pool.

Equipment

- A swimming pool with a depth of at least 1.8 – 2.0m (a portion of the pool).
- Floatation belt (allows the runner to be buoyant and run in the deep end of the pool without sinking).
- Other useful items include styrofoam dumbbells, hollow medicine balls in various sizes for various weights, hand mitts, kicking board, resistive bands (theraband).

Technique

- Keep one's posture in a slightly forward leaning position.
- The shoulder and flexed (bent) arms are driven in running fashion.
- The lower limbs are initiated in the following cycle: hip flexion (bending), knee flexion, dorsiflexed foot (toes up) and then hip extension (straightening), followed by knee extension with foot in dorsi-flexion.
- One can still run in the water without any buoyancy belts but it takes more effort to stay afloat, which results in more calories expended.

A typical SMSS' water running program (reduced impact workout):

If the swimming pool has its deeper portion in the center, the athlete will swim 20m (front crawl style along shallow end). Run while alternating a 10-second fast pace and a 10-second slow pace (10m along the deep end). Swim the remaining 20m in front crawl.

In order to be creative, one can play with the swim and run/ rest cycles. The deep water running duration can be increased to 20/30/40 seconds etc. Resting time corresponds to workout times.

One can also wear a heart rate monitor to help define the workout intensity. A subjective rating scale of 1-10, with 10 as the maximum intensity of perceived exertion can also help to determine the workout intensity. By working out at different intensities and durations, it is possible to mimic land-based interval or endurance workouts, and obtain similar cardiovascular benefits without the risk of weight-bearing injury to the musculoskeletal system.

*By Andrew Yeo
Sports Trainer
Singapore Sports Council*

Managing the Stitch: Causes & Remedies

The “stitch”, scientifically known as exercise-related transient abdominal pain (ETAP) is a common dilemma among athletes¹. Considering ETAP’s widespread occurrence and its potential to compromise competitive performance, the following highlights some preventive strategies and alleviative methods to help manage this condition.

What is ETAP?

ETAP is defined as a “well localized pain that may occur in any region of the abdomen but is most prevalent in the lateral aspects of the mid-abdomen”². For some athletes, pain may be sensed in the shoulder area instead. This is termed as the shoulder tip pain (STP)^{2,3}. The STP and ETAP rarely occur simultaneously, with the latter being more common among athletes³. The pain is often described as sharp or stabbing when severe, and cramping, aching or pulling when less intense². Regardless, both STP and ETAP are considered a single condition with regards to its etiology, triggers and management³.

Who is prone to suffering from ETAP?

High incidences of ETAP among runners, swimmers and horse riders but not cyclists and rowers suggest that movements involving repetitive vertical translation or longitudinal rotation of the torso are particularly provocative of this condition^{3,4}. Additionally, certain physical and morphological characteristics may predispose one from being especially susceptible to ETAP. While gender and body composition appear unrelated to the development of ETAP, episodes of pain are more frequent among younger athletes compared to their older counterparts^{3,4}. Moreover, athletes are more prone to ETAP following off-season breaks and the frequency of the episodes decreases as the athlete becomes better conditioned³. Regardless, regular training does not appear to protect the athlete from the severity of the pain when an episode does arise³.

What triggers ETAP?

Besides the above, the timing and content of fluid intake and pre-event meals seem to be an important determinant of the onset and severity of ETAP^{1,4,5}. Acute ingestion of large amounts of water or even low intake of beverages/foods high in carbohydrate content and osmolality (eg: fruit juices & cordials)

near or during event appears to be potent evokers of ETAP^{4,6}. On the other hand, missing meals or being dehydrated from inadequate fluid intake in the previous 24 hours or acutely from fluid losses during a prolonged race may also trigger onset of ETAP⁵.

What measures alleviate ETAP?

The following focuses on some physical maneuvers that may reduce the severity of ETAP should an episode materialize.

The severity of ETAP is dependent on the intensity of the exercise⁴. Therefore, slowing down or holding back ones’ pace may reduce the built up of pain, allowing the athlete to sustain the event in the best possible time given the circumstances.

Tightening the abdominal muscles and leaning slightly forward (if possible) has shown alleviate pain substantially^{3,5}.

The use of exercise waist belts to aid in tightening abdominal musculature should be considered among stitch-prone athletes. These belts should be wide, light-weight and attached with velcro fasteners to enable easy tightening when necessary⁵.

Resistive expiration during breathing, leaving more air in the lungs at the end of exhalation has also shown to be an effective strategy. This can be done by breathing through pursed lips⁵.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that inhaling over three steps and exhaling on the fourth step relieves pain effectively⁶.

By Mohd Ihsan Izzat Bin Abdullah
NROC Athletics Coach

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Coach Development Grant (CDG) Netball WA Coaching Conference



There are many definitions of coaching. In my perspective, it is never an easy task! Coaching is more than just developing the athletes to their full potential. A coach needs to be responsible for training the athlete, analyzing their performances, assist the athlete to develop new skills, motivating them and also providing guidance in the athlete's life. In fact, there are many different roles that a coach needs to play. In short, the role of a coach is more than just coaching.

As coaches, it is important for us, to keep learning and giving. To ensure that Singapore has an ever-expanding supply of professional coaches, the Singapore Sports Council (SSC)'s Coaching Development Department has introduced several training programmes and courses for existing coaches and athletes interested in becoming coaches. The SSC also offers funding initiatives through the National Sports Associations (NSAs) and to the coaches directly to encourage professional upgrading.

With the support of Netball Singapore (NS) and SSC, my friend, Huang Po Chin and I had the opportunity to attend a two days coaching conference in Australia. This is only possible because of the Coach Development Grant (CDG), an initiative by SSC which provides financial assistance to coaches who wish to upgrade their coaching knowledge and skills in the form of coaching attachments, attending conferences; short-term courses; workshops and seminars, both locally and overseas. The CDG subsidized our expenditure in accommodation, conference fee and airfare. This is definitely encouraging for coaches who wish to enhance their expertise.

The Netball WA Coaching Conference was held from 18-19 October 2008 in Perth at Arena Joondalup. The 2008 Coaching Conference involved an array of high profile coaches presenting subjects ranging from "Coaching for a 2% improvement" to "Attackers playing hard defence". Two coaching streams- elite and development were operated throughout the weekend. Coaches can select which sessions they would like to attend and can move between the two streams. The course was suitable for all levels of coaching experience from school team to club team and state team. Both on court and off court education session took place throughout the conference giving us a wealth of knowledge from not only a netball background but gymnastics and athletics.

Over the duration of the weekend, we saw a range of internationally experienced coaches, athletes and icons from both netball and other sports. Apart from practical valuable knowledge, we had the opportunity to meet many foreign coaches and Australia state team development officials. It was a great sharing experience knowing the different in our cultures and how netball was being promoted in various areas. Many of them are excited to visit Singapore for the World Netball Championship in 2011.

The learning experience was overwhelming despite the short duration. I am looking forward to share it with my fellow coaches in Singapore.

*By Ong Chin Chin
NROC Netball Coach*

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