

# Performance Matters Newsletter

*Developing Players through the Performance Pathway in Derbyshire*

Issue 4

Date 13th April 2007

Editor: Chris Porter

## The Importance of Match Preparation

Being a top performer means performing consistently and one of the most important components in achieving this level of performance is preparation prior to the match.

The high performance cricketer should place a strong emphasis on planning their performances so that they don't have to rely so much on being 'right on the day'. As a cricketer it is important to take a professional approach and try to control the things which are controllable, thereby increasing the chances of success.

### Pre-match Routines

Most players have routines which they follow prior to a game. These

pre match routines can include such aspects as diet, warm-up, travel arrangements, team meetings, planning tactics, and mental practice / visualisation. In some cases players seem to neglect this aspect of the game due to the fact that it can be mundane (boring!). However, it is vital in determining how consistently you perform. Without a well-developed pre-match routine you will find it very difficult to perform consistently during the match.

### Batting Checklist

Preparing to bat, is like preparing to go to war, requires some thought about strategies, equipment and the opposition, here is a simple 'Batting Checklist'.

1. Get all of your necessary

gear together. 2. Hit a few balls in the nets or at the side of the boundary. 3. Plan how to handle the opposition bowlers. 4. Observe the opposition bowlers and the game situation before going out to bat. 5. Walk out with positive body language.

### Preparing to Bowl

Most good bowlers recognise that they tend to be more consistent when they have a well-planned routine to follow. Here is a simple 'Bowling Checklist'

1. Practice in the days before the game. 2. Choose the right clothing. 3. Warm up thoroughly by warming up and bowling. 4. Decide on a plan. 5. Have a wicket taking mind set. 6. Be prepared to change the plan where necessary.

**Hot Topic:** Having the 'right mind set' when batting.

Having the right mindset is all about your approach to the game. For example when you are batting do you look at the fielders or do you look at the gaps between the fielders? When batting do you think about 'not getting out' as opposed to scoring runs? It is essential to have a positive attitude, and have an inner self belief that you are a good cricketer. In the end it all comes down to one word - Confidence! As the 2007 season is about to get underway its time to use all the hard work that you have done during the winter and get out there, play some cricket and score loads of runs. Seize the moment, have no regrets and enjoy the summer.

On behalf of the D.C.B. coaching team all the best for 2007.

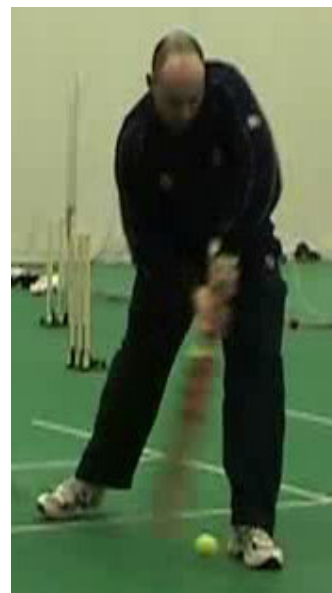
## Hitting the Ball (Contact)

The previous issues of 'Performance Matters' looked at the stages prior to contact. In this Issue we will look at making good contact with the ball. It is important to highlight that all the stages prior to contact such as the 'Backswing and Step' need to be correct if you want to hit the ball successfully.

**Base Position:** The base itself should act as solid platform which is lined up with the ball. When playing on the front foot, the back leg is straight to allow the batter to hit over the ball and drive into the ground. The front leg should be flexed so that the batter's weight is over the front foot and leaning into the shot. When playing off the back foot, the base still has to be stable. In both cases the base created should be kept in a 'balance forward' position.

**Point of Contact:** Contact between the ball and the face of the bat should be made under the eyes. It is important that the head, feet and hands are inline with the ball so that everything is working together. Look to hit the ball with the full face of the bat, when driving, pulling and also cutting. It is important to hit through the line of the ball this will create maximum power in the shot. Again it is important to highlight that the stages prior to contact are just as important, the grip needs to be correct to allow the full face of the bat to hit the ball. Also the backswing is also essential if you want to hit an attacking shot with maximum power.

**Drill Work:** There are several ways you can practice. From a County perspective we emphasise the importance of drill work like 'drop' and 'bobble' feeds, you can make them as simple or as challenging as you wish. Just remember drill work is not about hitting the ball as hard as you can, its about grooving specific shots. So make sure you have a clear idea what you are practicing.



'Solid Base'