



Coaching Cricketers with an Intellectual Disability

Question and Answers

Why should I coach cricketers with an intellectual disability?

Coaching cricketers with an intellectual disability can be a rewarding and challenging experience. It will make you challenge your thoughts on people with a disability and let you see that they can do a lot more than you may have thought. As a result you will become a better coach and person for doing so.

What is intellectual disability?

Intellectual disability is a disability characterised by significant limitations in intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviour. The disability originates before the age of 18. Intellectual functioning refers to the general mental capacity of the cricketer, such as learning, reasoning and problem solving. Adaptive behaviour refers to conceptual skills such as language and literacy, money, time and number concepts), social skills (interpersonal skills, social responsibility, self-esteem) and practical skills daily living). People with an intellectual disability have an IQ below 75.

What are some of the difficulties an cricketer with an Intellectual disability may face?

There are a wide variety of types of intellectual disability making it extremely difficult to list all difficulties experienced when coaching cricketers with an intellectual disability. Some of the main difficulties that may be experienced are:

- Cricketers with an intellectual disability may have a number of associated impairments
- You may not know the cricketer you are coaching has an intellectual disability.
- Decreased hand eye coordination
- Impaired verbal communication
- Decreased physical stamina and endurance
- Lack of understanding of instructions
- Vision impairment
- Hearing impairment

What should I consider when coaching an cricketer with an intellectual disability?

- Be open to modifying your coaching style to suit the cricketer.
- Make your instructions simple and easy to understand
- Ask the cricketer if they understand your instructions and get them to repeat them to you
- Provide visual examples
- Be patient
- Create established routines

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Disability	Characteristics	Coaching Tips
Intellectual Disability (General)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IQ below 70 • Can be mild, moderate or severe • Difficulty in learning and processing information quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure well planned and structured training environments • Keep instructions short and concise • Seek clarification of understanding
Down syndrome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genetic cause • Likely to have associated impairments • Can be moderate to significant intellectual disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide visual examples • Be patient • Be aware of the cricketers limitations
Autism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown cause • Communication difficulties • Difficulty in becoming involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create established routines • Provide highly structured and least distracting environments
Fragile X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inherited genetic condition • Attention deficient disorder • Short-term memory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide visual examples • Prepare for transitions with highly structured routines • Positively reinforce good behaviour
Prader-Willi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading know genetic cause of obesity • Compulsive eating • Low-energy expenditure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set firm rules and expectations • Signal changes and transitions to activities • Provide clear and concise instructions

Cricketers with an Intellectual Disability General Tips

Key Characteristics	Implications for sport participation	Benefits of sport and physical activity	Safety considerations	Special considerations	Recommendations to coaches
<p>May have known causes (Down syndrome, Autism, etc) or have no apparent known cause</p> <p>Chronological age may not match developmental ability</p> <p>Sub-average intellectual functioning</p> <p>Deficits in adaptive behaviour</p> <p>Occurs during developmental period (birth to 18 years)</p> <p>May have additional impairments (congenital heart defects, epilepsy, hearing loss, poor eyesight)</p> <p>May not have had the opportunity to participate in sport</p>	<p>Varying levels of ability</p> <p>May require additional motor skill development before performing specific sport skills</p> <p>May require increase supervision</p> <p>Lack of exposure to sports may embarrass participant through lack of skills</p> <p>May be on support pensions therefore access to funds to participate in sport and recreation may be limited</p>	<p>Participation in sport and recreation will have a positive impact on quality of life for people with an intellectual disability (self-esteem, physical fitness, motor and social skill development)</p> <p>Participation in inclusive sports environments will help to break down stereotypes and increase connection with local community.</p>	<p>Ensure that you are aware of medical history (e.g seizures information , number, length of time, presence of auras – where cricketer is able to tell of onset)</p> <p>Ensure that emergency action plan is in place</p> <p>Ensure that a safe environment free of obstacles and distractions is available for training and participation</p>	<p>Cricketers with an intellectual disability are likely to take various forms of medication. Be aware of what these are and the potential impact on participation. Ensure that you stress the importance of needing to know if medications change and the impact that this will have on performance and participation</p> <p>Cricketers may have difficulty transferring skills from one environment to another, For example shifting from an indoor venue to an outdoor venue may cause concern for an cricketer with autism</p> <p>Cricketers with an intellectual disability are comfortable with routine and structure</p>	<p>Don't be afraid to ask questions</p> <p>Determine level of ability in all domains (learning, social and physical)</p> <p>Plans skills and drills that are age appropriate (I.e. chronologically appropriate, but modified based on their ability according to their cognitive understanding)</p> <p>If cricketers are participating in the activity with cricketers without a disability, find out prior experience other team members have had with cricketers with a disability. This will help in creating a more positive and welcoming environment</p> <p>Be aware of the basic motor skills required for success in specific sports</p> <p>Don't overload participants with instructions</p> <p>Provide practical examples with repetition</p>