



Coaching Cricketers with Physical Disability

Questions and Answer

Why should I coach cricketers with a physical disability?

Coaching cricketers with a physical 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 physical disability?

Physical disability is any impairment that limits the physical function of one or more limbs or fine or gross motor skills. The physical disability may either be congenital or a result of injury, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, amputation, heart disease, pulmonary disease or more. Some persons may have hidden (non-visible) disabilities which include pulmonary disease, respiratory disorders, epilepsy and other limiting conditions.

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

People with a physical disability face a variety of difficulties. These include:

- Decreased hand eye coordination
- Impaired verbal communication
- Decreased physical stamina and endurance
- Inability to easily access sporting facilities and grounds

What should I consider when coaching an cricketer with a physical disability?

- Don't ask the cricketer what caused their impairment. If they want to tell you they will.
- It is not necessary to have extensive knowledge about the cricketer's disability. Encourage them to educate you on what they can and can't do. Then work slowly with them to increase intensity, duration and complexity of activities you are getting them to complete.
- Be open to modifying your coaching style to suit the cricketer.
- If the cricketer uses a wheelchair or other aid and think of it as a piece of sporting equipment and how you can incorporate it into the activity.
- Think about how accessible your venue is and if not accessible make modifications or change venue so that it is easier to access. For example, an cricketer using a wheelchair will find it extremely difficult to push their wheelchair on grass. Therefore it may be easier to conduct the session on a harder surface to accommodate this cricketer.

Coaching Cricketers with Physical Disability General Tips

Key Characteristics	Implications for sport participation	Benefits of sport and physical activity	Safety considerations	Special considerations	Coaching Strategies
<p>Caused by a wide variety of physical impairments to the body or spinal cord.</p> <p>May involve loss of limb, muscle control, spinal cord injuries resulting in cricketers being wheelchair bound.</p> <p>Level of disability is related to where in the spinal cord the injury occurs. The higher the injury is up the spinal cord the greater the disability.</p> <p>Cricketer may use prosthesis (artificial limb).</p> <p>Quadriplegia means that arms, trunk and legs are affected.</p> <p>Paraplegia means that the trunk and legs are affected.</p> <p>Following initial body changes in the months after the injury, disability remains the same over time, with little progression.</p>	<p>Cricketers with a physical disability take part in a wide variety of sports.</p> <p>People who were cricketers before injury are often able to adapt to wheelchair versions of sports more readily than people who were not involved in sport before injury.</p> <p>Major barriers to participation are transport and facility accessibility.</p> <p>Facilities need to be wheelchair accessible.</p>	<p>Sport participation is good for cardiovascular health, since it is more difficult to raise the heart rate to due to lack of movement in hips and legs.</p> <p>Develops good wheelchair handling skills and endurance that makes daily living skills easier.</p> <p>Cricketers with a disability have a feeling of being included.</p> <p>Increased self-esteem and social benefits.</p> <p>Sport and physical activity offer important contributions to reducing weight, increasing fitness and protection against heart disease and diabetes and reduces a sedentary lifestyle.</p>	<p>Cricketers can injure limbs without being aware of injury.</p> <p>Some quadriplegia cricketers have difficulty controlling body temperature. Care should be taken to avoid cricketers from getting too cold or hot during participation.</p> <p>Cricketers may restrict fluid intake due to lack of ability to access bathroom facilities. Encourage adequate hydration during participation.</p>	<p>Some cricketers will use wheelchairs or other aid for daily living and sport. This may cause overuse injuries. It is important to have pre and post exercise stretching and training to strengthen muscles.</p> <p>Ensure cricketers are aware of their surroundings.</p>	<p>Don't make assumptions about what the cricketer can and can't do.</p> <p>If cricketer uses a wheelchair or other aid think of it as a piece of sporting equipment</p> <p>Amputee cricketers can closely resemble their able-bodied counterparts, making it easier for coaches to concentrate on coaching the technical aspects of the sport when coaching amputee cricketers.</p> <p>Be aware of the surface the cricketer is participating on as it makes a huge difference to how hard an cricketer has to work.</p> <p>If the cricketer wants to tell you what caused their injury, they will. Don't ask them what caused their injury.</p> <p>Invite cricketers to be involved in discussions as to how game modifications can be made to make their experience more enjoyable.</p>