



ISSN: 2456-0057
IJPNPE 2017; 2(2): 95-97
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www.journalofsports.com
Received: 11-05-2017
Accepted: 16-06-2017

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Meaningful understanding of sports training with respect to skilled performance of athlete

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Abstract

We use the term training in various contexts. We talk of training of teachers, administrators, police and army personnel, medical and paramedical functionaries including, working in nongovernmental organisations and volunteers engaged in various events. In these contexts, by training we mean, an organised and systematic instructional process which aims at improving an individuals' ability to play their assigned roles effectively and meaningfully. However, this kind of understanding of the term training cannot be applied to the concept of sports training. The term sports training is specifically used in the context of athletics, sports and games which could be a training of sports persons, coaches and teachers of physical education. It is also used by scientists and experts who belong to the field of sports science and medicine, sports bio-mechanics, exercise physiology, sports psychology and other fields like yoga and science movement. But even in these contexts, the concept of sports training is understood differently. In this paper, therefore, we shall learn the meaning of sports training, its aims, characteristics and principles and also about sports skills.

Keywords: Bio-mechanics, physiology, sports training

Introduction

We use the term training in various contexts. We talk of training of teachers, administrators, police and army personnel, medical and paramedical functionaries including, working in nongovernmental organisations and volunteers engaged in various events. In these contexts, by training we mean, an organised and systematic instructional process which aims at improving an individuals' ability to play their assigned roles effectively and meaningfully. However, this kind of understanding of the term training cannot be applied to the concept of sports training. The term sports training is specifically used in the context of athletics, sports and games which could be a training of sports persons, coaches and teachers of physical education. It is also used by scientists and experts who belong to the field of sports science and medicine, sports bio-mechanics, exercise physiology, sports psychology and other fields like yoga and science movement. But even in these contexts, the concept of sports training is understood differently. In this paper, therefore, we shall learn the meaning of sports training, its aims, characteristics and principles and also about sports skills.

Sports Training: Meaning

Sports training is a special process of preparation of sports persons based on scientific principles aimed at improving and maintaining higher performance capacity in different sports activities. It is a particular type of training designed to improve fitness and abilities to perform in a given sport. It includes strength in training, corrective and restorative exercises, conditioning and cardiovascular training. It also includes mental and psychological training and advice on nutritional values.

Performance Development through Sports Training

Sports' training is especially focused on optimal performance in a particular sport. Its main aim is to develop the performance capacity of sports persons, so that they achieve the highest possible performance. To do so, it is essential to be mentally strong. The ability to manage stress and anxiety associated with different sports need to be strengthened.

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Competition in sports makes the participants face varied situations which require the individuals to be mentally fit.

Objectives of sports training

The main objectives of sports training are as follows.

1. Improvement of physical fitness: The performance in sports generally depends upon physical fitness of a sports person. Every sport activity needs specific type of physical fitness, and hence, the improvement of various components of physical and skills related fitness like strength, speed, coordination, endurance and flexibility is an important aim and objective of sports training.

2. Acquisition of sports skills: This includes motor skills as well as basic movement skills. Fundamental motor skills are prerequisites to the learning of sport-specific skills. Every sports activity requires observing certain specific movement procedure to tackle a particular task.

This movement procedure is known as technique and when this technique is learnt and perfected, it leads to skill development. Whenever sports persons include in technical training, they focus on acquisition of motor skills relevant to a particular sport. Fundamental motor skills such as hopping, jumping, skipping, kicking, throwing, catching and striking are prerequisites to the learning of sport specific skills of basketball, football, gymnastics, tennis, cricket, badminton etc.

3. Improvement of tactical efficiency: Tactical training is designed to improve various strategies and is based upon analysis of the tactics of opponents. Specific training in sports helps the sports persons to make the best use of their abilities and techniques so that the chances of success in competition are increased. The training develops three kinds of tactics: offensive, defensive and high performance tactics. Tactical efficiency is enhanced by providing the sports persons with knowledge of rules and repeated opportunities to perfect tactical abilities in them.

4. Improvement of mental abilities: Are critical for high level performance in any sport. The training aims at development of positive attitude towards sports and competition, dedication and devotion towards particular sport or event, sincerity and honesty, self-confidence and optimum level of aspiration.

Characteristics of Sports Training

Some of the important characteristics of sports training are:

1. Sports Training is Individual-specific: The needs of every individual for performing in a particular sport are different from those of another. If we take the example of the sprint event, even a small difference in time and speed or distance decides the performance record, victory or defeat. The difference depends on individual-specific capabilities. It is, therefore, necessary to identify the individual potential during the training. By identifying their needs, training may be focused at improving the identified gaps in the abilities of that sports person.

2. To Achieve High Performance in a Sports Competition: The important feature of sports training is its focus on enabling the sportsperson to achieve the highest possible level of performance in any of the sports competitions. It is a process which is spread over a long period of time.

3. Sports Training is a Scientific Process: It is highly influenced by the scientific methods, to achieve best result the knowledge from various dimensions of sciences has to be incorporated during the process of training.

4. Coach has an Important Role: A coach helps in building confidence, boosts morale and acts as a friend and a mentor. A coach is like a 'philosopher and mentor' on the sports field.

5. Optimum Development of Sports Persons: To achieve optimum performance sports training should be planned, systematic and scientific and to achieve same, different means and methods are used. These means and methods are constantly modified and used in different conditions. Sports' training is a continuous process for optimum development and perfection of sports persons.

6. Sports training: an Educational Process: Sport training is basically an educational process and it develops all the aspects of personality. High performance is not possible without developing the personality because both aspects are inter-related and interdependent of sports training.

7. Sports training: A Process of Development of Hidden Talent: The training helps in observing and assessing the performance level of the player at any given moment. While doing so the hidden talent in a sportsperson is identified. This talent is systematically nurtured through the required specific training inputs.

Methods of Sports Training

There are various methods of sports training that are mentioned below:

- Continuous Training Method
- Circuit Training Method
- Interval Training Method
- Plyometric Training Method
- Repetition Training Method
- Weight Training Method
- Fartlek Training Method
- Cross Training Method

However in this paper only two methods are described

1. Interval Training: It involves maximum intensity work with intervals. This intensity work is alternated with periods of rest or low activity so that the body adjusts to work and rest. This method involves more of cardiovascular activities of individual.

2. Cross Training: refers to training in different ways to improve the overall performance. Cross training uses different methods collectively to improve fitness and increases effectiveness of the training process for every human.

Principles of Sports Training

It is important to know the basic principles that must be reflected in sports training. These are:

1. Continuity of Training: which is the key to ensure the best outcome in a sport. The training of the sports persons has to be continuous and regular. Hence, too long a break in the training should be avoided and the condition of optimum load should be created.

2. Increasing the Training Load: there is a relationship between the load and adaptation process. Training load should be gradually increased to enable the body, to adapt higher demands progressively.

3. Active Participation: It is a well-known fact that a player who is passively engaged in the training does not develop abilities and always remains totally dependent upon the coach or the physical education teacher and never develops confidence or improves performance capabilities. Therefore the teacher/coach must ensure that the sports persons participate in the training with conviction and sincerity.

4. Planned and Systematic Training: To achieve a high level of sports performance in competitions, the training must be well planned and conducted in a systematic manner for better results.

5. General and specific training: Both general and specific training of a sports person are equally important because general training creates the base and specific training helps to achieve high performance. General training needs to general conditioning of the body such as developing strength, speed, endurance, flexibility, agility, balancing, ability in general. General training is done by general exercising for the development of all the muscle group of the body whereas specific training consists of specific exercises with the aim to develop specific strength, specific muscle group and specific motor abilities required for a particular sport.

6. Clarity with respect to all aspects of the concerned sport and games more importantly, its techniques and tactics for performance enhancement is the key.

7. Cyclicity: The training can be organised in three different cycles: *Macro cycle*: having duration of 3–12 months; *Meso cycle* of 3–6 weeks; and *Micro cycle* of 5–10 days.

8. Ensuring results: Sports training is planned to achieve the expected results in small and major competitions or tournaments.

9. Critical training load: The training load may be increased to meet the higher demands of competition in unforeseen situations. The training load should be managed more than the general load. This critical load should be measured 4-5 times in a year.

10. Adaptability: The adaptability to the training load should be in proper proportion between the load and recovery. Then only a sports person gets adapted to the training load.

11. Uniformity and differentiation: The uniformity may be in terms of time and duration of the activity, whereas, the load may vary as per the capacity of the individual sportsperson. It is an established fact that no two individuals are alike. The sports persons participating in the training are different in terms of age, health condition, individual capacity, recovery pace and physique. Keeping these factors in view, the training must be planned as per the needs of the individual sports person.

12. Feasibility: Training of the sports person should be planned and conducted to draw the maximum benefit. Too little or too much training needs to be avoided.

Conclusion

The principles of training promote a steady and specific increase in physical ability by specifically adapting a training regime to the needs of a sport, and most importantly, to the individual needs of each player. Training is an integral part of a player's success and in most cases, training will enhance a player's performance, however, if the body is stretched too far, performance will almost always decrease. It is important for not only coaches, but players to be familiar with the basic principles and processes of training so they can evaluate training programmes and determine their adequacy in maintaining health and preventing injury.

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