Dr. Yashwant Kalepwar
Director, Physical Education & Sports, Sahir Annabhau Sathe Mahavidyalaya, Mukhed, Nanded, Maharashtra, India

Impact of poor performance on the mental ability of players

Abstract
Physical fitness is considered as the crucial part of a player to get succeed in any sports. But the contribution of mental toughness can’t be denied in the success of a player. It is observed that a player who is not mentally strong, can’t be much successful in any sport. Mentally strong player is very determined and performs consistently at every stage of game. It also shows the character of a player who performs in tough situations and shows his/her mental toughness. These days, it is seen that the pressure of performance on the players is so much that he/she can survive only if there is mental toughness otherwise it is almost impossible for a player to survive without mental toughness. The current article highlights the importance of mental toughness in a player’s life.

Keywords: Performance, mental, toughness, sports

Introduction
It is said that a player should be mentally strong so as to perform well at any stage of game. A coach can only prepare a player physically but the mental toughness required to perform consistently in sports; comes from the inner side of a player. So the focus of a player should be on the game whether he/she on field or off the field. There are many examples of international players who are mentally strong enough to perform even after injuries. If we talk about Cricket then there are many Cricket players who got injured and then came back and perform better.

Some of the examples of players from the field of Cricket are Sachin Tendulkar, Yuvraj Singh, Ashish Nehra etc. Cricketer Sachin Tendulkar got injured and faced an injury named ‘Tennis Elbow’. To recover from that he had to pass through an operation and be far away from the game of Cricket for three to four months. In an interview, he accepted that to recover from that kind of injury, his mental toughness played an important role as he wants to play more and more Cricket after getting recovered. The belief of playing again for his country made him to be recovered more easily and effectively.

Similarly, there are more players such as Yuvraj and Ashish Nehra who had serious problems. Yuvraj Singh had to face from the most dangerous disease ‘Cancer’ after winning the Cricket World Cup 2011. He also accepted in an interview that this self-belief helped a lot to recover from this vital disease and he got a chance to play again in national team at international level.

A cool mind is very crucial in every sport. A player should be active and sharp so as to make strategies against the opponents. For that, a player is given Yoga session as a part of training. These days, it is observed that a player gets disturbed from the external factors and can’t concentrate on their game. So coaches facilitate a Yoga session for the players so that the mind of a player can be cool and the concentration level can be raised.

In sports, it is said that a player should be mentally strong along with physical capabilities as a mentally strong player can fight against their opponents more effectively rather than a player with lesser mentally strong.

When it comes to sports, having mental strength is nearly as important for players as physical fitness. Pressure can get to the best sports stars and mental training is therefore a vital skill to possess. “When the going gets tough, the tough get going” is one way to say it. Or, as one sports psychologist put it, mental toughness is “the ability to consistently perform toward the upper range of your talent and skill regardless of competitive circumstances.”
The Importance of Mental Skills in Sport

Often people put too much emphasis on the physical capabilities of an athlete, when the mental skills they may have, or lack, are just as critical to their success. It’s as though they don’t acknowledge the fact that mental skills, self-awareness and the ability to understand and work with other people, are just as vital to your success as being able to run fast or step off of both feet, or throw a long ball. Imagine that elite performance is about creating a perfectly circular wheel with spokes shooting out from the hub. The spokes represent all the different elements needed to create peak performance. This includes physiology, tactics, strategy, mental skills, conditioning, nutrition, and physiotherapy. In essence all of these spokes combine to create a perfectly round wheel which runs efficiently.

Setting short term goals keeps an athlete focused on productive actions. This avoids the mind wandering off into unproductive thoughts, which in turn impacts emotions and physiology.

People who are mentally tough, have a sense of positive self-efficacy. They inherently believe they are going to achieve a positive outcome and their thoughts express this.

The ability to manage your emotions to ensure you are in the most productive state to compete is a skill most elite athletes develop to some degree. It also includes the ability to stay composed to make quality decisions.

Visualizing a successful end result is a hallmark of mental toughness. Every coach knows that visualization is a key skill athletes can develop which helps them to become better at performing at their sport. This vital mental skill prepares an athlete’s body to execute under pressure and to keep doing so in the heat of competition.

Sports can encourage children to be outgoing and build social skills. Participating in a sport can even instill important characteristics such as teamwork, time management, and discipline. Children learn how to push themselves and push their teammates while developing friendships and coordination skills in the process. In order for an athlete to be as successful as possible, they must work to develop mental toughness.

When exploring the depths of mental toughness, it is important to note that athletes shouldn’t just find a way to continue going through the motions. Athletes need to remain just as engaged and focused on delivering a high-quality performance in dire situations as when they are feeling fresh. Whether someone is racing against the clock or competing against other athletes, this toughness should allow the athlete to remain competitive and at the front of the pack, not just a presence on the field. It is easy to deliver a top-notch performance when the pressure is off or when people feel fresh. It is more important to keep that level of energy when fatigue or pressure sets in.

Conclusion

When pushing athletes to develop this toughness, there are some important facts that coaches need to remember. Remind the athletes that they possess more heart and strength than they give themselves credit for. Help remind them that their limits are only perceptions developed by their mind.

No matter the activity, always encourage athletes to practice visualizing their success. This is a great way for athletes to overcome any mental limitations. Success for most athletes is achieving something that they have never done before. In order to accomplish this, they will need to break down their mental barriers. Recommend meditating or going for a walk to think about their success.

When athletes start to have their doubts, encourage them to have faith and stay mentally strong. They have worked hard...
developing the skills necessary to enjoy success. Tell them to trust in their training, their teammates, and themselves to overcome any obstacle. Mental toughness comes with experience.

References