100 THINGS EVERY PROFESSIONAL CRICKETER MUST KNOW

THE OFFICIAL BCCI CRICKETER’S HANDBOOK

an initiative of GaSports
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreword</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction to the Official BCCI Cricketer’s Handbook</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART I – MAKING YOUR BODY WORK FOR YOU</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section 1: 10 things to know about your body</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. What is the human body made of and what roles do each of its components play?</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What phases of growth does the body go through and at what ages?</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How do training and practice help improve performance?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What are the features of a good training routine?</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. What are the roles of warm-up and cool-down routines?</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What are the roles of posture and breathing?</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How should fitness training goals and methods differ during season and off-season?</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. What role does sleep play and what is sleep discipline?</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. How do smoking, drinking and using recreational drugs affect the body?</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Who are the professionals to approach for advice on training the body?</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Periodisation Chart</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section 2 – 10 things to know about what you consume</strong></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. What are the different types of foods and what roles do they play in our bodies?</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. What is meant by a balanced diet? How does it differ for athletes?</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. How does one keep track of food and liquid intake?</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. What are supplements and what role do they play?</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. What precautions must one take before consuming supplements?</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. What are good hydration practices?</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. How can vegetarians meet their nutritional needs?</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. What is the appropriate nutrition intake before a workout or a match, after training or a match, during rehab or recovery and off-season?</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Who are the professionals to approach regarding nutritional requirements?</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match Day Nutrition</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section 3: 10 things to know about recovering from injuries</strong></td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. What does the term ‘injury’ mean? What are the different types of injuries?</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. How can one take precautions against injuries and what are the signs of an injury?</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. What are the various kinds of treatment available to address injuries?</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. What are the key components of first aid?</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Why is rest an important component of recovery from an injury?</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. When is surgery required? What is the recovery time after a surgery?</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. What is rehabilitation and why is it important?</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. What are the benefits of undergoing physiotherapy treatment?</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. How does one prevent recurrence of an injury?</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
30. Who are the professionals to consult for treatment and rehabilitation in case of physical injury or illness?  

Glossary of Common Injuries  

**PART II – USING THE POWER OF YOUR MIND AND EMOTIONS**  

**Section 4: 10 things to know about your mind**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>63</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 4.1: How is the mind connected to the body?</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4.2: What is the role of the mind in training and improving skills?</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4.3: How does training the mind improve sports performance?</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4.4: How can mental aspects be included in training and pre-match routines?</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4.5: What is visualisation? How can it enhance performance?</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4.6: What effect does pressure of competition have on the mind?</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4.7: How can one improve focus and develop a positive mindset?</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4.8: Some cricketers talk about experiencing “in the zone” – what is that and how does one achieve it?</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4.9: How can one give the mind “rest” during a match?</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 4.10: Who are the professionals to approach to seek assistance with training the mind?</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sample Visualisation Drill**  

**Section 5: 10 things about dealing with mental and emotional hardship**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>81</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 5.1: What are the constituents of mental health?</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5.2: What is the origin of human emotions and why do different people react differently to the same incidents?</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5.3: How is mental health related to sports performance?</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5.4: What are triggers for and signs of stress and anxiety? What are coping mechanisms?</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5.5: What is depression and what are its symptoms?</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5.6: When must one seek professional help for depression?</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5.7: What is the role of grieving? How can one deal with the loss of a loved one, through death, end of a relationship or otherwise?</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5.8: How can one deal with breaks caused by injuries, poor form, non-selection and similar incidents?</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5.9: How can one deal with the mental challenges that the end of a career brings?</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 5.10: Who are the professionals to consult when dealing with different mental health challenges?</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mental Health: Useful Information**  

**PART III – GROWING AS A PROFESIONAL**  

**Section 6: 10 things about legal and commercial rights and obligations**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>101</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section 6.1: What is meant by “rights and obligations”?</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 6.2: What is a contract? How can a contract be concluded and what should one keep in mind when entering into a contract?</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 6.3: What remedies are available if a contract is breached or violated?</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
54. What are the different kinds of contracts one can expect to sign in professional sport? 107
55. What are sponsorships and endorsements? What must one keep in mind before granting such rights to third parties? 109
56. What is licensing and merchandising? What must one keep in mind before granting such rights to third parties? 112
57. What are components of brand value? How can it be actively enhanced? 113
58. What is the role of a sports agent or a talent manager? 114
59. What are the things to consider while developing a relationship with a sports agent or talent manager? 115
60. Who are the professionals to approach regarding contractual, legal and commercial aspects that come up in a career? 117

Section 7: 10 things about managing money 121
Introduction 122
61. What is meant by financial planning? 123
62. What are various sources of income in professional sport? 124
63. What are savings? How can they be initiated and their value enhanced? 125
64. What are the various forms of investment and what is a balanced investment portfolio? 126
65. What is “sweat equity” and what should one be aware of when entering into such a transaction? 128
66. What is the role of insurance? What types of insurance are available? 129
67. What are the different kinds of taxes one should know about and pay? 132
68. How can one save money through tax planning? 133
69. How can financial planning be beneficial post retirement? What is estate planning? 134
70. Who are the professionals to approach to help with managing finances? 135

Financial Planning Overview 136

Section 8: 10 things about media interactions 138
Introduction 139
71. What are the different types and categories of media? 140
72. What role does the media play in professional sport? 141
What are the pros and cons of media visibility? 142
73. What are the types of social media platforms and how can one best use them? 143
74. What precautions must one take with social media? 144
How can one respond to ‘trolling’ and criticism on social media? 145
75. How accessible should a cricketer remain to the media? 146
76. What are ways to avoid media related controversies? 147
77. How can one prepare for a media interaction? 148
78. What are the features of a good interview? 149
79. How can one respond to negative coverage, especially if it is false? 150
80. Who are the professionals to approach to help with media interactions? 151

Sample of stock phrases to try to avoid in an Interview 152
Section 9: 10 things about Professional Integrity  
Introduction  
81. What are the underlying values of sport and what is the meaning of integrity?  
82. What is age-fraud? What are potential legal and other consequences of age-fraud?  
83. What is doping and what are performance enhancing drugs?  
84. What are the anti-doping procedures one must be aware of?  
What is a therapeutic use exemption?  
85. What precautions must be taken to protect oneself from innocent doping violations?  
What are the consequences of failing a drug test?  
86. What are match-fixing and spot-fixing?  
87. What should one do when approached by a third party to fix or influence a match or share confidential information?  
88. What constitutes “bullying” or “ragging”? What are the remedies available?  
89. What constitutes “sexual harassment”? What are the remedies available?  
90. Who are the professionals to approach regarding sports integrity issues?  
List of Offences under the BCCI Anti-Corruption Code  
List of Offences under the ICC Code of Conduct  

PART IV – PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE  

Section 10: 10 things about setting career and post-career goals  
Introduction  
91. What are the different types of goals one can have?  
92. How can one set SMART goals?  
93. How can one ensure clarity while going about one’s goals?  
94. What are some good practices for achieving big ambitious goals?  
95. What are the systems and processes that can help one to stay on track?  
96. How can one monitor and evaluate progress towards goals?  
97. What is the role of one’s beliefs while achieving goals?  
98. How can one make use of one’s strengths to achieve goals?  
99. What is the ideal end result of a goal?  
100. Who can be approached to help plan career and post-career goals?  
Sample Athlete Goal Sheet  

Conclusion  
Editorial Board - Profiles  
Bibliography
FOREWORD

I have had the chance to serve Indian cricket for many years as a professional cricketer, and I believe it is indeed a privilege that I can continue to contribute after my retirement. I have enjoyed and learnt much from participating in the sporting journeys of the next generation of our country’s cricketing talent.

As a coach to young cricketers, I have realised that it is important to create an environment that supports and empowers them as they prepare to participate and succeed at sport. During my playing career, I was fortunate to have a number of mentors, who contributed to my success in various ways. In that sense, there is a lot of value in having the awareness to know what information to seek and whom to seek it from.

I see this handbook as a valuable resource that can be referred to from time to time. A wide range of topics is covered, which I hope will enable better decision making, especially among younger cricketers. The information can not only aid sport performance but also provide guidance on several off-field matters.

GoSports Foundation is an organisation that I am closely involved with as a member of the Board of Advisors and I am very glad that they have been able to work with the BCCI on this valuable project. I hope that this partnership can grow and enable more such initiatives in the future.

- Rahul Dravid, Former India Captain
INTRODUCTION TO THE OFFICIAL BCCI CRICKETER’S HANDBOOK

Given the various challenges of modern day sport, programmes that are focused on the well-being, welfare and personal growth of professional cricketers are of paramount importance. Creating platforms to support cricketers on their journeys is critical for the sustainable and wholesome development of the sport. While success is greatly celebrated and widely acknowledged, equal focus is required on preparation.

It is natural to be completely devoted to your game as a professional cricketer and always seek opportunities to improve performance. You will need the guidance of several professionals in the course of your career. In that sense, it is beneficial to be well-informed about various things to begin with, as that can help you be one step ahead and make smarter choices at all stages of your career and your life. Creating this handbook for professional cricketers is a way of making relevant knowledge more easily accessible to those who aspire to play and succeed.

This Official BCCI Cricketer’s Handbook has been titled “100 Things Every Professional Cricketer Must Know”. It has ten sections on various topics related to professional cricket. Each section has ten questions and, so, there are a hundred questions in total with brief answers provided to each. There are also various tables, lists and quotes from cricketers that you might find interesting. At the end of each section, the professionals to approach are mentioned in case you need further clarifications.

You might be a bit wary of the amount of content. That is the reason that the information is presented in the form of questions. You can go through the contents and start reading the book from a specific question or a section that most appeals to you. The handbook can be used either to get wide-ranging information about a topic or as a reference when a particular issue demands your attention.

Information is an empowering tool as it enables awareness and the ability to make the right use of all available resources. Once you have gone through the contents, you will realise that the awareness increases your confidence and clarity. You can prioritise things that need your attention and take better decisions. This will also develop your ability to communicate and inspire others.

This project has been made possible with the dedicated efforts and contributions of the GoSports Foundation team and all the various experts involved. This knowledge can also be made more accessible in the future through the appropriate use of technology and translation to various languages and formats. It is our hope that this initiative will inspire and enable individuals involved with the sport and further our endeavour to prepare our cricketers for what tomorrow might bring.

Happy reading! We wish you much success in your cricket career!

- The Board of Control for Cricket in India
We hope that you find this handbook valuable and can treat it like a trusted senior or elder sibling who is there to advise and help when you have questions, concerns or are facing an unusual issue.
PART 1
MAKING YOUR BODY WORK FOR YOU
SECTION 1

10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR BODY
INTRODUCTION

Sport is possible because of the physical abilities of human beings. It is the same with cricket too and professional cricketers have to know their body and train hard to make it work well for their game. Therefore, it is very valuable to know how the body functions. If you understand how the body operates, you will be constantly aware of whether everything is working fine. And knowing why it operates the way it does helps you improve your technique and perform at your best.

The study of the various ways in which the body of a living organism works and functions is called physiology. Sport Physiology is the study of how sport training programmes affect the body. One is bound to have a lot of questions as one explores this topic. Firstly, you could be curious about the parts of the body and the phases of growth. You might wonder, “How does training actually improve performance?” People might have told you that warm ups, cool downs, posture, breathing, fitness routines are all important but you might have thought, “What does it actually do to my body?”

This section of the handbook provides answers to some of these questions. Reading through it will help you make informed choices about your body and be better prepared for the physical challenges in your career. You will get to know the reasons for and value of the various training routines and this will make sure you don’t simply follow what is said. Various professionals who can help you are also mentioned and their roles described.
The human body is basically the whole physical structure of the human being. It is made up of numerous basic elements like hydrogen, carbon, oxygen, calcium and phosphorus. It is about 65% water and the total water content in an average human weighing 70 kg is roughly 45 litres. Cells are the fundamental unit of life. Groups of similar cells give rise to various kinds of tissue groups like muscle tissue and nervous tissue. A structured group of tissues together forms an organ that performs specific functions in the body. Organs that perform a similar function are called organ systems.

The important organ systems in the body are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organ System</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circulatory system</td>
<td>It consists of the heart and blood vessels.</td>
<td>Enables the circulation of blood in the body for supply of oxygen &amp; nutrition to the cells &amp; removal of waste products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digestive system</td>
<td>It consists of the mouth, food pipe, stomach, small and large intestines, as well as the liver, pancreas, gallbladder, and salivary glands.</td>
<td>Enables the digestion of food &amp; absorption of nutrition for life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endocrine system</td>
<td>It consists of the endocrine glands like the pituitary, thyroid and pancreas.</td>
<td>Enables the creation of specific hormones required for the body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musculoskeletal system</td>
<td>It consists of the human skeleton, which includes bones, ligaments, tendons, and attached muscles.</td>
<td>Gives the body its basic structure and the ability to move.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nervous system

It consists of the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord) and the peripheral nervous system (the nerves).

Helps the body to coordinate with the various systems and respond to the environment.

Reproductive system

It consists of the internal and external sex organs.

Involved with conception and reproduction.

Respiratory system

It consists of the nose, windpipe, and lungs.

Enables the circulation of oxygen in the body through breathing.

Urinary system

It consists of the kidneys, bladder, and urethra.

Enables the purification of the blood by removal of excess salts, water & waste products from the body.

While all the organ systems must work together, it is the musculoskeletal system that plays a prominent role for an athlete. The combined actions of joints, bones, and muscles produce movements such as walking and running. The muscular system is composed of a number of muscle fibres and all body movements depend on these fibres. Training the body increases the quantity and capacity of the muscle fibres.
WHAT PHASES OF GROWTH DOES THE BODY GO THROUGH AND AT WHAT AGES?

Understanding the phases of growth is important while developing the training routine that is appropriate to one’s age. The most basic aspect of growth is the production of new cells in the body. As the number of cells increases, the amount of tissue and the size of the organs also increase. There is a high rate of production of new cells during early phases of growth and this stabilises during the last phases of growth. The rate of production goes down during the last stages of life thus leading to failure of some organs and eventually, death.

These are several phases of growth that the body goes through during a career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infancy</td>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>The highest rate of growth occurs during infancy and all the organ systems gradually develop. Generally, by the end of the first year, the average baby is twice its height and three times its weight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childhood</td>
<td>3-11</td>
<td>Here the rate of growth is high and the abilities of the body slowly increase. The mind collects memories and patterns to guide the body for all future purposes and experiences. This is an extremely important phase for a child to be skilled with ‘motor competence’ and also be introduced to simple sport-specific skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescence</td>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>Here the rate of growth reduces and mainly revolves around the skeletal muscles and the secondary sexual characteristics. This phase of growth follows puberty. One will be able to learn slightly more complex and subtle movements. This is also the time to learn proper posture, techniques and advanced sport specific skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Adulthood</td>
<td>20-35</td>
<td>This is the last phase of physical growth. By now, one would have to be well versed with all the basic movements, techniques and skills but will be able to further improve them. This is the phase where the body will be able to perform at its best, so care should be taken regarding maintenance and recovery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlife</td>
<td>35-45</td>
<td>This phase occurs between ages of 35 and 45. This phase is when there is minimum growth in the body. The capacity of the lungs decreases and the metabolic rate gradually slows down. However, the individual has a deeper understanding of the abilities of the mind and body. In sport, this is usually the phase during which one retires and special attention must be given to mental health.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOW DO TRAINING AND PRACTICE HELP IMPROVE PERFORMANCE?

It is natural for a cricketer to spend a lot of time in training and practice and it is worth understanding what the training is doing to the body and the effect it is having on performance. Training and practice are mainly undertaken to develop motor competence skills, strengthen the body and then develop the cricket specific technical and motor skills.

Skills: Fundamental body movements are the basis for all kinds of physical activity.

It is the manipulative movements that are most commonly used by athletes. What one is doing by practicing a sport is actually mastering these complex movements (For example, playing a defensive shot or bowling an out-swing delivery). Once a cricketer has mastered it using the right kind of techniques, he/she will be able to replicate these movements in the game and make best use of the body’s capabilities.

Strength: It is defined as the muscle’s ability to generate force. All sports require muscles to produce or withstand force in various amounts. Training that focuses on strength and endurance improves the ability of the muscles to engage in physical activity over long periods by delaying the onset of fatigue. It can also improve flexibility and coordination of the various muscle groups and this improves sports performance.

Training results in the development of muscle memory (neuromuscular memory).

The concept of muscle memory makes the exercise routines that much more relevant. To build good muscle memories, one has to focus on the quality of the training routines and not quantity. The muscle memories improve the ability to learn and take right decisions quickly which, in turn, improves performance.

There are three main categories of fundamental body movements:

- Locomotor - body movements that move the body from one place to another. They include body movements like walking, running, hopping, leaping and jumping.
- Nonlocomotor – body movements of certain body parts, or even the whole body, without causing the body to travel. Common examples are bending, stretching, extending and lifting.
- Manipulative – body movements involving both the body and an object. At a basic level, this includes movements like throwing, catching and dribbling.

Muscle memory refers to the ability of the body to reproduce a particular movement without conscious thought, acquired as a result of frequent repetition of that movement. The muscles "remember" the actions as a result of the practice. It is not that the muscles consciously store the memories but you just get so used to performing a task that you involuntarily do it even without being mentally focused on it.
WHAT ARE THE FEATURES OF A GOOD TRAINING ROUTINE?

Cricket requires a combination of three essential qualities – Skill, Fitness and Mental Strength. Good training routines include a combination of all the three aspects. Cricket is largely a skill based game with a lot of technical qualities involved. Skills can be developed as the years go by, but a good level of fitness and mental strength is required throughout one’s career.

Physical fitness can help one to perform consistently and prevent injury. It is important that the right techniques and routines are used to maximise the ability of the body. The routines for cricketers cannot be like that of conventional body builders. This is because, as a cricketer, one needs the ability to produce power from the various muscle groups as opposed to just looking big and bulky.

The routines should ideally involve multiple muscle groups. The workouts should be developed such that one is progressing to tougher routines so that one can keep gaining strength. Workouts that involve the body movements that are specific to cricket are useful to develop posture and coordination. The routines must be not only sports specific but also task specific (i.e., batter, bowler, wicket keeper etc).

Training routines also need to give attention to relaxation techniques. The ability to relax mentally and physically has many long term advantages. They can help reduce anxiety, stress and fatigue and lead to better concentration. Relaxation cannot be achieved whenever one wishes to, and therefore needs to be developed over time with practice. It is important to include this, along with other mental preparation techniques, in everyday training routines. One could look at ways to develop hobbies that take one’s mind off the game temporarily and help to relax.

“To break it down, medium pace bowling is basic athleticism – and now there are many quality and specific training modules. One has to do professional strength and cardio-vascular training daily to keep the body in shape.”

- Jhulan Goswami
WHAT ARE THE ROLES OF WARM-UP AND COOL-DOWN ROUTINES?

Warm Ups and Cool Downs are an essential part of any rigorous physical training routine. While warm ups are usually done before beginning a routine, a cool down is done at the end. Warming up gradually prepares the body for the routine. Cooling down allows for a gradual recovery of the body after training and helps fight fatigue. Together, they give the body a chance to ease into and out of a training session.

Warm up exercises prepare the body for exercise by increasing the blood flow to the muscles to be exercised. Doing this also gradually increases the body's temperature. It helps to prepare the heart and ensures that the demand made on the body systems is gradual as well. This eventually reduces the risk of injury.

The type of warm up needs to be appropriate for the activity planned, the age and fitness level of the participants. Examples of warm up include walking, jogging, playing light games and simple stretches, especially of the muscle groups that will be used in the training. Sports specific movement patterns (i.e., movements that are relevant to cricket) are used during the warm up and these will include muscle as well as neural (Nerve) stretches. This is also a way to ‘activate’ or switch on key muscle groups like the stability muscles of the body.

The cool down is as beneficial as the warm up. The aim of cool down exercise is to return the body gradually to a state of rest. A cool down generally begins with bringing breathing under control. Light jogging leading to gentle walking and stretching the muscle groups are commonly used. This ensures that the muscles return to their normal length, reduces the chance of muscular soreness and begins the repair process of the body. It prevents blood pooling in the muscles that have been worked. Deep breathing helps to oxygenate the system and reduce fatigue by regulating the blood lactic acid levels. An advanced ‘cool down’ period is a crucial component of the post match/play recovery period that will also involve hydration, diet, massage, contrast baths and active movements.

About the General Adaptive Syndrome!

The General Adaptive Syndrome is what makes any exercise routines meaningful. It refers to the three stage response of the human body to any stress:

Alarm Stage: The initial reaction to a stressor is a hormonal response to provide instant energy.

Resistance Stage: The body eventually increases its ability to respond to the demands placed on it by making adjustments in its structures or enzyme levels.

Exhaustion Stage: The prolonged stress overwhelms the system and causes fatigue.

Through your exercise routines, you actually make your body ‘adapt’ to it by making adjustments such as creating more muscle fibres, thus increasing your strength. Proper planning of the routine and taking sufficient rest ensure you increase your capabilities progressively. However, overtraining exhausts your body and undoes all the hard work.
WHAT ARE THE ROLES OF POSTURE AND BREATHING?

Good posture is the foundation of any training routine. Without the right posture, the body cannot produce maximum power and will be prone to injuries. Good posture also makes breathing easier and keeps the body healthy in the long run. Posture is linked to a combination of physical and neurological factors such as vision, balance and awareness of movement. Posture is based on symmetry and balance and therefore stability of the body.

Posture is about body awareness. Muscles of the body have to work collectively to produce strength, power, and coordination. Ideal posture is the means to attain maximum body capacity with minimum stress and strain on the various parts. The process of evaluating one’s posture is called posture analysis and this uses various methods to check for any wrong postures. After that, correction exercises are used to rectify the posture and develop better balance.

In its most basic form, a good posture is one where:
- There is a straight line from the ear through the shoulder, hip, knee, and ankle joint.
- The head is centred.
- Shoulders, hips, and knees are of equal height.

Breathing: The way one breathes has a lot to do with one’s athletic performance as well as general quality of life.

Breathing affects every system in the body. Breathing properly can decrease stress and muscle tension, calm the nerves, sharpen the focus, minimise negative thoughts, reduce fatigue and promote stamina. With a little training, a cricketer can learn, or relearn, a simple way of breathing that can improve athletic performance.

Slow, rhythmic diaphragmatic breathing is an example of a useful breathing technique. It can give a cricketer the feeling of relaxed energy. It can ease stress, especially during moments of anxiety, like before the start of an innings. Many cricketers also practice yoga which combines the elements of good posture and breathing, while ensuring the muscles retain their elasticity.
Once a cricketer has fitness training goals, breaking down the training schedule to specific details based on the goals will help one to plan ahead. To develop an annual plan, one needs to be aware of the various tournaments that one is likely to take part in. If there is a continuous stretch of matches and tournaments to participate in, such a period can be considered the season, and the period where there are no or fewer matches can be the off-season.

If one wants to improve fitness, the thumb rule is that one needs to build endurance, strength and power during off-season and be able to maintain that strength during the season. Off-season should typically start with a period of rest to recover completely from the previous season. One should then analyse the areas that need improvement and develop a workout plan accordingly with the help of a professional.

Developing such a plan has several benefits to a cricketer. It can minimise the risk of injury. It can increase running speed and bowling speed. It can improve reflexes and reduce the effects of fatigue. The fitness goals can be designed in such a way that it ensures the overall improvement of performance.

Once the season is underway, a daily routine needs to be put in place so that one can maintain the strength gained. Many in-season fitness drills are incorporated into training routines (e.g., fielding drills, running between wickets when in nets, etc.). New in-season training protocols are being developed for cricket based on research in other sports, which allow the physios and trainers to maintain cardiovascular fitness but without overloading the skeletal system.
WHAT ROLE DOES SLEEP PLAY AND WHAT IS SLEEP DISCIPLINE?

Sleep is the natural state of rest for the mind and body. It usually occurs for several hours during the night. In this state, the eyes are closed, the consciousness is temporarily lost and all the muscles in the body are relaxed. The main function of sleep is restoration – a person physically and mentally recovers from all the stress caused while being awake. Numerous studies, especially in football and rugby, show that athletes with poor sleep habits have increased injury rates.

Sleep is a very important aspect of training in sport. It is during sleep that all the repair, learning and improvement in the body and mind actually occur.

One needs quality sleep to actually make use of all the training and improve one’s performance. Lack of sleep has many undesired effects like reduction of reaction times, increase in fatigue, and reduction of muscle strength, lower accuracy, improper posture and impaired judgment. This further leads to low motivation, focus and stamina.

Sleep discipline is a process of improving the quality of sleep by practicing a routine where the sleeping and waking times are consistent. Sleep does not always occur involuntarily and one has to make an effort to initiate it. It occurs in several stages and one typically requires 7 hours of quality sleep to remain healthy.

There are many ways to improve the quality of sleep:

- Sleeping in a dark room or one with minimum light.
- Maintaining a comfortable room temperature that does not irritate or arouse the nervous system.
- Sleeping at a consistent time and place each day.
- Maintaining a relaxed posture where there is no strain on any of the muscle groups in the body.
- Avoiding caffeine products or other stimulants just before going to sleep.
- Avoiding use of a computer or mobile phones just before going to sleep.
- Compensating for sleep debt by taking carefully planned “naps” during the day.

Some of the processes occurring during sleep are:

- Repair and growth of various tissues in the body.
- Release of growth hormones required for developing the muscle groups.
- Glucose metabolism that regulates glycogen levels and improves endurance.
- Consolidation of memories that result in learning.
- Stabilisation of the hormone levels related to the healthy mental state.
To build good muscle memories, you have to focus on the quality of the training routines and not quantity. The muscle memories improve the ability to learn and take right decisions quickly which in turn, improves performance.
Developing a fitness plan has several benefits to a cricketer. It can minimise the risk of injury. It can increase running speed and the bowling speed. It can improve reflexes and reduce the effects of fatigue. The fitness goals can be designed in such a way that it ensures the overall improvement of performance.
# HOW DO SMOKING, DRINKING AND USING RECREATIONAL DRUGS AFFECT THE BODY?

It is very important that a professional cricketer steers clear of habits like smoking, drinking and using recreational drugs. These habits have a very bad effect on the body. It can undo all the hard work that one has put in during training and practice; it can also prevent one from having a long successful career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smoking</th>
<th>Drinking</th>
<th>Recreational Drugs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Cigarette smoking harms nearly every organ of the body.</td>
<td>• Drinking above the prescribed limit causes harm to a number of organs of the body.</td>
<td>• The major effect of recreational drugs is on the brain and the nervous system of the body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• It causes inflammation of the wind pipe and reduces the ability of the lungs to function properly.</td>
<td>• Initially, it dehydrates the body as the kidney would need a lot of water to purify the blood.</td>
<td>• It alters the way nerve cells normally send, receive, and process information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• When one breathes in tobacco smoke, some tar is deposited in the lungs. Lungs are lined with tiny hairs called cilia that 'sweep' germs and maintain one's health. When the lungs are coated with tar, their function is disabled.</td>
<td>• It increases the acid levels in the stomach and harms the inner lining.</td>
<td>• Drugs also affect the heart rate and the ability of the lungs to perform smoothly. Many drugs also cause liver damage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• This, in turn, has an effect on one's stamina and the oxygen carrying capacity of the blood.</td>
<td>• It interferes with the nervous system and brain, thus preventing one from being able to think clearly.</td>
<td>• It can also cause lack of sleep and lead to behavioural problems like short-temper, paranoia and impulsiveness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In the long run, smoking is known to cause cancer and heart diseases.</td>
<td>• It also affects the ability of the liver to store enough energy and this affects stamina.</td>
<td>• All recreational drugs are tested for in drug tests for players and many such drugs can stay in the system and be detected in the testing sample for up to 1-2 months.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHO ARE THE PROFESSIONALS TO APPROACH FOR ADVICE ON TRAINING THE BODY?

There are many professionals that one could approach and each of them plays a specific role:

i) **Strength and Conditioning Coaches:** Their primary goal is to improve athletic performance, which usually means improving one's speed, strength and power (varies according to athlete and sport). They also teach proper posture and lifting techniques, motivate people as they work out, and analyze performance before and after the programme.

ii) **Physiotherapists:** They play an important role in injury management and recovery. They start by evaluating the athlete's needs and then, developing treatment and exercise programmes that are best for the full recovery of the body.

iii) **Sports Physicians:** There are professional medical doctors, usually specialists in bones, joints and muscles. They assess major injuries and suggest appropriate treatment. They also help to check if one is ready to begin a fitness programme or return to play following an injury.

iv) **Masseurs:** They help with pain, stress and physical ailments by massaging and kneading muscles and soft tissues, in order to help relax the body. Masseurs advise on relaxation techniques to help prevent muscle problems and relieve stress.
“...from 2015 I changed my training. I started lifting, snatching, cleaning and dead lifting. It was unbelievable. I saw the result. I remember running after a ball in a Test series in Sri Lanka and I felt more power in my legs. It was, like, ‘wow’. This training is addictive. The last year-and-a-half it has taken my game to another level.”

– Virat Kohli
**Periodisation** is the systematic planning of athletic or physical training. Every athlete wants to be able to peak at the right period of time during a year so as to be able to give the best performance on the biggest platforms. The concept of sport periodisation can help one achieve that. It divides the year-round conditioning programme into phases of training which focus on different goals.

### SAMPLE PERIODISATION CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macro Cycle</th>
<th>Sport Season</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Season Stage</td>
<td>Recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meso Cycle</td>
<td>General Preparation (1-2 Months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Aim</td>
<td>Rest &amp; Repair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro Cycle</td>
<td>Maximum Strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardio - Vascular Training</td>
<td>Maintain Power, Speed &amp; Strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance Training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility Training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Reading:**

*Book:* Men's Health Book of Power Training by Robert Dos Remedios
Cells > Tissues > Organs > Organ Systems > Human Body.

All growth is due to the production of new cells.

Muscle memories last a lifetime; work to build the right ones.

The ability to relax is as important as your training routine.

Warm up prepares your body, cool down ensures recovery.

Correct posture can help you produce maximum power.

Build strength off-season, maintain it during the season.

“Sleep is the best medicine”.

Cigarettes, alcohol & drugs can harm every organ of the body.

A qualified Strength & Conditioning coach is your fitness teacher.
SECTION 2

10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT WHAT YOU CONSUME
INTRODUCTION

Nutrition refers to the process of consuming food necessary for health and growth of the body. Food is the fuel that runs the body. While a normal homely diet could enable an athlete to perform, a proper nutritional plan developed with the help of a professional can add significant value. It can enable a small but meaningful improvement in the abilities, which could make the difference at the competitive level.

All aspects related to food and liquid intake of athletes are referred to as Sports Nutrition. To understand its role, you might want to know what the different types of food are and the roles that they play. You might also want to learn how to develop a balanced diet that can boost your performance and recovery. Other common questions are,

“How do I keep track of the food I eat?”
“What is the role of supplements?”
“What should I eat at various stages of training?”
“Can blood tests help spot nutrition issues?” and
“Who are the professionals I can approach for advice on nutrition?”

This section of the handbook addresses these topics. It can help you become aware of how to maintain a diet even when you are on tour and be conscious about what you consume. You will also learn to be watchful of the supplements, sports drinks and any other substances that might be offered to you. You can then use the knowledge to follow a personalised nutrition plan that suits you best.
WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF FOODS AND WHAT ROLES DO THEY PLAY IN OUR BODIES?

Food is any substance that can be consumed by an individual to provide nutritional support to the body. There are seven main types of nutrients that the body needs. Consuming the right amount of these seven nutrients on a daily basis helps to build and maintain health. Each of the nutrients plays specific roles in the body.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrient</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carbohydrates</td>
<td>They are the most important energy source. They are the fuel for all the basic functions of the mind and the body. The digestive system breaks down the carbohydrates into glucose (blood sugar) and the body uses this sugar as energy for the cells, tissues and organs.</td>
<td>Rice, wheat, ragi, millets, as well as fruits and vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proteins</td>
<td>They assist the body in growth and repair. They are used for building and repairing muscles, bones, red blood cells and other tissues. They are also used up for producing hormones. One needs to consume protein every day, because the body doesn't store it the way it stores fats or carbohydrates.</td>
<td>Animal products like meat, fish, poultry, milk and eggs as well as vegetable sources like beans, lentils, dried peas, nuts and seeds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fibres</td>
<td>They aid the body in digestion, which in turn is essential for helping the body make use of the rest of the nutrients.</td>
<td>Whole grains, fruits, nuts, seeds and vegetables.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
They help to maintain skin and hair, cushion vital organs and provide insulation as deposits beneath the skin. They are necessary for the production and absorption of certain vitamins and hormones. They can also serve as sources of energy. They regulate all the chemical reactions of the body and are therefore needed for growth and development. There are 13 vitamins and some common ones are vitamins A, B complex, C, D, E, and K.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fats</td>
<td>They help to maintain skin and hair, cushion vital organs and provide insulation as deposits beneath the skin. They are necessary for the production and absorption of certain vitamins and hormones. They can also serve as sources of energy.</td>
<td>Animal-based foods such as meats and milk products as well as vegetable oils. Nuts and seeds are a good natural source.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamins</td>
<td>They regulate all the chemical reactions of the body and are therefore needed for growth and development. There are 13 vitamins and some common ones are vitamins A, B complex, C, D, E, and K.</td>
<td>Sources are diverse; include meat, fruits, vegetables, fruits, nuts, dairy products and even sunlight. They must be a part of the diet as much as possible instead of being taken as supplements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minerals</td>
<td>They help the body in maintaining bones and muscles. They are also necessary for making enzymes and hormones. The essential minerals are calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, sodium, potassium, chloride and sulphur.</td>
<td>Like vitamins, the sources of minerals are diverse and are again best consumed through the diet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Water is a critical nutrient for good health. It is the primary constituent of blood that carries oxygen, nutrients to and waste products from the cells of the body. Water also helps to control body temperature.</td>
<td>Drinking water, juice, milk and foods high in water such as fruits and vegetables.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT IS MEANT BY A BALANCED DIET? HOW DOES IT DIFFER FOR ATHLETES?

A diet usually refers to a consumption pattern in which the amount and kind of food, as well as the times at which it is taken, are regulated for a specific purpose. A balanced diet is a kind of a diet plan that provides the body with all the essential nutrients required for the cells, tissues and organs to function optimally.

A balanced diet contains all the seven kinds of nutrients in the appropriate amounts. It involves having a variety of food at regular intervals. However, it is important to remember that a diet plan can be unique to each individual and it’s always best to develop a plan after consultation with a professional. Usually the professional will suggest some simple tests that can check for the nutrient levels in the blood and prescribe a diet accordingly.

Eating a proper, nutritious diet offers numerous health benefits that can keep one mentally and physically well for long periods. The kind of food the body needs differs at various stages of preparation and performance. An athlete could also use the glycaemic index (GI) to decide on what type of food to eat. GI ranks food and fluids by how ‘carbohydrate-rich’ they are and how quickly they affect the body’s blood sugar levels.

Not sticking to a diet can have a negative effect on an athlete. Foods that include excess sugar are especially harmful. They damage the liver and disturb the regular metabolism of the body. This could lead to weight gain, loss of reflexes, increased fatigue and loss of coordination. Eventually, this results in the development of chronic diseases.

Athletes generally require more energy as they train a lot more than common people. This means that one needs to eat larger quantities based on one’s calorie expenditure from training. Carbohydrates are the body’s main energy source and need to be given special attention. Athletes also require high-quality proteins (with all the essential amino acids) in order to support proper muscle development and gain strength.

Special attention must also be given to certain specific vitamins and minerals for keeping the body strong and minimising fatigue.
HOW DOES NUTRITION HELP IMPROVE PERFORMANCE?

Like in all sports, a cricketer’s performance can also be improved through the right kind of nutrition.

There are several ways in which a proper nutrition plan can boost performance:

- It can ensure that the body has enough reserves of energy at all times (carbohydrates).
- It can improve bone and teeth strength (proteins and calcium).
- It can improve the strength and endurance of the body (proteins and magnesium).
- It can enhance brain function (Essential Fatty Acids, vitamins and minerals).
- It can help control and maintain body weight (protein).
- It can help control body temperature and chemical balance (fluid intake).
- It can help to recover well after a training session, a match or after an injury break (proteins and minerals).
- It can improve cardiovascular abilities by keeping the heart functioning at its peak (regulating fats and cholesterol).
- It can prevent muscle fatigue and reduce the risk of injuries (carbohydrates and vitamins).

There are also methods to test if there is a deficiency of any nutrient in the body that might be affecting performance. If a cricketer has a deficiency, it can be taken care of in the nutritional plan through proper supplements. A proper nutrition plan ensures that the body performs to the best of its abilities.
HOW DOES ONE KEEP TRACK OF FOOD AND LIQUID INTAKE?

Keeping track of food and liquid intake means being aware of one’s consumption at all times. This can be done manually by maintaining a food journal or through mobile apps that are available. Keeping track usually starts by undergoing a dietary assessment with an expert, who analyses one’s intake and makes recommendations.

The two main aspects of food intake are **amount and timing**. Only if a cricketer is aware of the amount (or dosage), will he or she be able to increase or decrease the quantity of food consumed. For example, a cricketer can increase the stores of energy in the body by regularly eating specific amounts (in grams) of high-carbohydrate foods. If carbohydrate intake in the diet is restricted, a person’s ability to perform for long periods is compromised because there is not enough glycogen kept in storage to fuel the body.

It is equally important to eat at the right time. For example, many cricketers eat very little protein for breakfast but then feast on a high protein dinner when, ideally, the protein intake ought to have been spread evenly throughout the day. The goal is to consume at least 20 grams of protein every 3 to 4 hours.

Just like analysing the performance in the field helps a cricketer to make technical adjustments, analysing the food intake helps one to eat better. The basic idea of tracking consumption is to ensure that a nutritional plan is helping the cricketer meet performance goals. Checking if a day’s or week’s intake has met the nutritional plan is a good way to start tracking intake.

“Sandwiches were a constant feature in breakfasts, and I absolutely hate sandwiches. I would be really annoyed every time I found it on the menu. And then there was also bacon. I wasn’t accustomed to eating bacon before my WBBL stint. I don’t even like fish much. I have always been an all-things-chicken aficionado, as you’d expect of a Punjabi”

- Harmanpreet Singh on her diet in Australia

While on tour, taking pictures of the meals and discussing them with an expert is a good practice.
Just like analysing the performance in the field helps a cricketer to make technical adjustments, analysing the food intake helps one to eat better. The basic idea of tracking consumption is to ensure that a nutritional plan is helping the cricketer meet performance goals. Checking if a day or week’s intake has met the nutritional plan is a good way to start tracking intake.
As a cricketer, one spends a lot of time under the sun doing a lot of physical activity, during training and playing. The body controls its temperature by losing fluids, and failing to replace those fluids is a problem. Excessive fluid loss reduces your endurance capacity, power, and concentration and increases reaction time. This also strips the body of essential electrolytes. Therefore, hydrating adequately is very important.
WHAT ARE SUPPLEMENTS AND WHAT ROLE DO THEY PLAY?

A dietary supplement is one that is intended to provide nutrients to the body that may otherwise not be consumed in sufficient quantities. For a cricketer, consuming appropriate quantities of nutrients is necessary and it cannot always be done through the diet. Supplements can fill this gap and further boost the abilities of the cricketer.

Some of the common types of supplements are:

**Hormonal Supplements:** Performance is driven by certain hormones in the body and these supplements provide the additional boost required.

**Energy Supplements:** Training and performing at a desired level requires energy. They provide the additional energy required to work harder and help muscles grow.

**Protein Supplements:** These supplements boost muscle development by increasing the protein level in the body. They also help one to increase strength and endurance.

**Vitamin and Mineral Supplements:** These supplements provide the body with various nutrients, especially in the case of deficiencies. These are important recovery aids that will help with growth and repair.

The existing diet and training goals of a cricketer need to be analysed before considering the kind of supplements required. A few supplements may be helpful to cricketers in specific circumstances, especially where food choice is restricted. Moreover, a cricketer might have genetic weaknesses which result in a higher need for some nutrients. Supplements can help in such cases as well.
WHAT PRECAUTIONS MUST ONE TAKE BEFORE CONSUMING SUPPLEMENTS?

While supplements are useful, there are many precautions that one needs to take while using the supplements.

First, the suitability of supplements changes from person to person, hence it is necessary for one to know which kind of supplement suits one best and consume them accordingly. Second, there is the potential for supplements to be contaminated or to contain illegal substances that lead to a positive doping test.

A cricketer should always take supplements only under the guidance of a nutritionist or a medical practitioner. They will be able to differentiate between supplements for nutritional deficiency and those for performance.

One should never make the call independently or based on Internet/informal advice. Suggestions given by family, friends and fellow cricketers should be checked with a professional rather than going with advice blindly. When one is taking supplements, one should also regularly check if they are having the desired effect, and discontinue if side effects are seen.

There are age restrictions on the use of supplements as well. It is generally recommended that individuals under 18 do not take supplements as it can harm the growth of the body. Moreover, taking supplements is not the only way to help one’s performance. Other methods are available and one should explore all the options.

One should be sure that a supplement will not lead to a positive drug test. For this, it is important to check if any ingredient listed on the package is a prohibited substance. Also, one should be watchful that a supplement is not contaminated by prohibited substances during the production process or at any stage before it is consumed.
WHAT ARE GOOD HYDRATION PRACTICES?

Hydration is one of the most important aspects of playing sport. It basically involves consuming the right kind and amount of fluids. It raises your body’s fluid level above and reduces the negative effects of fluid loss during games and training.

As a cricketer, one spends a lot of time under the sun or flood lights during training and playing. The body controls its temperature by losing fluids, and failing to replace those fluids is a problem. Excessive fluid loss reduces your endurance capacity, power, and concentration and increases reaction time. This also strips the body of essential electrolytes.

A practical way to monitor sweat loss is to weigh yourself before and after exercise. Each pound of weight lost equals one pint of fluid, and each kilogram equals one and a half liters. These losses should be replaced as soon as possible by drinking water and sports drinks.

If the duration of activity for an individual cricketer is fairly continuous for 1 hour or longer, a sports drink is the better replacement fluid. However, if the activity lasts less than 1 hour, water is the best option. In either case, one should have about a litre of fluid replacement every 30 minutes during strenuous, continuous activity. How much one needs to drink depends on how much sweat one loses.

Energy-electrolyte drinks can replenish the minerals lost through sweating, thus ensuring that the body has everything it needs, even on hot days.

Cricketers can rely on various sports drinks for this purpose. Ideally, a sports drink should:

- Balance out the fluids lost through sweating
- Supply one with energy in the form of carbohydrates during prolonged strenuous activity
- Be hypotonic or isotonic in order to ensure a rapid fluid intake

These days, there are also many devices like the refractometer that can provide the information required to check the hydration levels. One should try to make use of such instruments available to constantly monitor hydration levels in a scientific way.
About Hydration!

• Practice your fluid plan during the week, particularly for heavy training sessions, and get used to drinking during training.

• Begin a training session/match well hydrated, by increasing your fluid intake the day before. This will ensure that only moderate amounts of fluid are needed on match day.

• Drink at least 250-500 ml of fluids at regular intervals during training and competition. Make the most of opportunities such as warm-up, breaks during over changes, the fall of wickets and when not fielding to sip on a drink.

• You might sometimes need a sports drink to help replace electrolytes and energy. Use isotonic sports drinks to replace fluid, electrolytes as well as carbohydrates.

• Avoid excessive amounts of caffeine and alcohol (they have a diuretic effect and cause further dehydration).

• Monitor your urine colour: it should be pale, not dark in colour.

• Replace both fluid and carbohydrate losses at the end of a match. The amount is individual, however general guidelines indicate that for every kg of weight lost during a match, replace with 1.5L fluid.
HOW CAN VEGETARIANS MEET THEIR NUTRITIONAL NEEDS?

Being a vegetarian puts an individual at a certain disadvantage but that does not mean one's nutritional needs cannot be met. Indian cricket history has been full of examples of successful cricketers who are vegetarian. Vegetarians just need to give a little extra attention to their nutritional plan.

The most important nutrient for vegetarians to consider is protein. Vegetarian cricketers can successfully meet their protein needs by eating a variety of plant foods. Most grains contain all 9 essential amino acids, just in lower amounts than an equivalent serving of animal foods. Hence, vegetarian athletes must consume higher portions of plant protein to compensate for the lower content of the protein in their food.

Besides protein, there are certain vitamins and minerals that might have to be additionally consumed as supplements. This includes Vitamin B12, Vitamin D, Antioxidants, Calcium and Iron. However, this is best supervised by a professional.

In cricket, being a vegetarian does not have too much of an impact on performance. Being diet conscious and regularly consuming foods like whole-grains, pasta, cereal, fruit, vegetable, legumes, nuts and seeds is often good enough.
"Vegetarian food contains all the vitamins and protein you need to be at your best and is free of all the fat, cholesterol and toxins found in meat."

- Anil Kumble
WHAT IS THE APPROPRIATE NUTRITION INTAKE BEFORE A WORKOUT OR A MATCH, AFTER TRAINING OR A MATCH, DURING REHAB OR RECOVERY AND OFF-SEASON?

Before training or match: The best pre-training snack is a food that raises one’s blood sugars slowly. The snack should be about 250-350 calories, mostly carbohydrates, a little protein, and very little fat. These foods are slow digesting; therefore, the sugars from the foods are released very slowly into the bloodstream, which translates into a steady energy supply over several hours. The best prepared cricketer is one who has eaten small meals and snacks every few hours up to 1½ to 2 hours before an event, with decreasing amounts of protein and fat the closer it gets to competition. Some of the good slow digesting (low glycemic index) pre-workout foods are apples, oranges, grapes, grapefruit, banana, whole grain bread/chapatti, ½ cup of whole wheat pasta, oats, yogurt, nuts, raisins, dates, energy bars, etc.

It is advisable to eat at least 45 minutes before starting physical activity so that the food has time to settle. If eaten just before working out, the body will not have time to digest the food and it will lie in the stomach because blood has been diverted away from digestion and to the working muscles, causing one to feel bloated or sick.

After training or match: After a moderate workout, one need not worry about rapidly refuelling because one’s muscles are not depleted. However, it is important to recharge the energy reserves with carbohydrates and compensate for the loss of fluids and minerals. If one has done exhaustive exercise, one should plan to replace carbs, water and sodium as soon as tolerable—particularly if one will be exercising again within six hours. Adding a little protein to the recovery meal or snack helps
repair damaged muscle, reduce soreness, and also enhance glycogen replacement in the body. A wise protein target is about 15 to 30 grams protein for a 65-70 kg cricketer, taken right after (and/or during) exercise.

**During recovery and rehab:** Nutrition plays a vital role in one’s recovery or rehabilitation. Substances present in foods such as proteins, antioxidants, fatty acids and vitamins which assist in various functions related to cellular repair and tissue growth. The best thing to help speed up recovery is to consume a mixed diet with a wide variety of foods. In addition, certain supplements for micronutrients can be taken but only after consulting with an expert. One should also avoid foods that can result in inflammation in the body like sugars, fried foods, bakery products and alcohol.

**Off season:** One of the major concerns during the off-season is a loss of fitness and weight gain. About 25 to 30 percent of weight loss, if apparent, relates to muscle loss and a proportionate increase of fat percentages. It’s difficult for the body to build muscle and lose fat at the same time. Building muscle requires calories. If one is restricting calories during off season, one’s body does not have the fuel it needs to create new muscle tissue.
WHO ARE THE PROFESSIONALS TO APPROACH REGARDING NUTRITIONAL REQUIREMENTS?

The professional to approach with regard to this is a qualified Sports Nutritionist. Generally, a sports nutritionist will begin by assessing the kind of nutrients required for the cricketer through some tests. He or she will then help one to develop the nutritional plan based on the training routine and performance goals. Once the plan is underway, he or she will also help one to monitor the plan and see if all the food consumed is having the right kind of effect.

In the case of injury or a break, he or she will be able to tell one how exactly one needs to change the diet keeping long-term goals in mind. Finally, during the off-season, the nutritionist will evaluate the plan and explain the changes that need to be brought in the preparation for the next season.

It is important that the cricketer trusts his/her nutritionist as there are many professionals with their own views and ways of thinking. Getting too much advice or using diet plans of others will actually end up being confusing and might not suit your body type.

Typical Process Flow:

- Assessment
- Nutritional Plan
- Monitoring
- Updates to Plan
“...I feel it is the eating habits that really contribute to having a fit regime along with the training aspect as well....as you play more and more international cricket we need more time to be in the right shape. It actually helps you think better, react better on the field and all of that.

...I feel what’s important is what you’re eating at what point of time. If by some chance I’m getting a craving to have something that is not recommended for me, I will try to have it on the breakfast table because it gives me the opportunity to burn it throughout the day.”

– M S Dhoni on keeping fit off-season
MATCH DAY NUTRITION

Cricketers need to stay fueled and hydrated throughout a game.

Hydration:

Before: Maximise glycogen stores before play using high-carbohydrate nutrition and drinks.

During: Replenish used-up glycogen at a maximum rate using complex carbohydrate-protein drinks.

After: Recover using high-protein and carbohydrate drinks.

Pre-match nutrition: When fuelling for a game, basic guidelines are as follows:

Days leading up to a match: Consume adequate carbohydrate (7-10g carbohydrate per body weight) to ensure glycogen stores are fully topped up.

1.5-2 hours prior to the match: Consume a pre-event meal that is high in carbohydrates (low- moderate GI), low in fat and moderate-low in protein. Good examples are: Wholegrain breakfast cereal with semi skimmed / skimmed milk, Wholegrain sandwich with peanut butter & jam/ low fat cheese and salad, Durum wheat pasta or Basmati Rice with tomato based sauce (low fat), Baked potato with cottage cheese filling.

1 hour prior to match: Top up glycogen stores with a small snack that is high carbohydrate (moderate to high in GI) and low in fat. Good examples are: 1-2 no of fruits (apple, banana, pineapple, watermelon, and papaya), Fruit smoothie, 200g low fat yogurt or a sports bar.

30-45 minutes prior to event: Supply your body with high GI liquid fuel like 500 ml isotonic sports drink with amino-nutrients.

Match Day Nutrition:

Players should take advantage of the breaks between play to hydrate and top up glycogen stores. High carbohydrate, low fat foods and fluids are recommended. However it is important for each player to practice during training, so that they are able to establish what works best for them.

1. Replacing fluid losses with an isotonic sports drink and water needs to be a priority
2. Good low fat high carbohydrate options are:
   a. Fruits
   b. Low fat smoothies
   c. Pasta /rice with a low-fat side dish
3. Bananas can also be eaten at during intervals

Post match nutrition:

At the end of the day, players need to replace fluid and carbohydrate and prevent muscle breakdown. Immediately after a training session or an event (0-30 minutes) players need to replace any fluids lost as well as to refuel muscles by eating or drinking carbohydrate-rich foods and beverages with adequate amounts of proteins to prevent muscle damage.

The aim should be to ingest 1-1.2g of carbohydrate per kg body weight immediately after training (i.e. 50-100g of carbohydrate) with about 20g of protein.

Good examples of recovery snacks are:

- Fruits (Banana, Apple OR Dried raisins, prunes, dates) with 200ml protein shake
- Cereal-Protein bars
- 1 bowl of fruit salad with 200g Low fat yogurt
- 250-300ml smoothie
- 3 slices of toast with 4-6 eggwhites

Following a post exercise snack, a more substantial meal containing both carbohydrates and proteins needs to be consumed (3-4 hours) post match.

Cricket is a sport based on power through hitting, sprinting or throwing/bowling, you need endurance and fast recovery (especially if you are playing more than once a week) to perform at your best to the last ball.

Additional Reading:

Book: Nancy Clark’s Sports Nutrition Guidebook
Each nutrient has its own role and sources.

You are what you eat, plan a balanced diet.

Every nutrient affects your performance in a unique way.

To track your food intake, know about amount and timing.

In case of a nutrient deficiency, supplements can help.

Always speak to a nutritionist before you pop a supplement.

Sports drinks can hydrate and replenish lost minerals.

Be aware of plant proteins in case you are vegetarian.

It's best to eat at least 45 minutes before you start to train.

Scheduled an appointment with a nutritionist yet?
SECTION 3

10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT RECOVERING FROM INJURIES
INTRODUCTION

Injury is part and parcel of a professional cricketing career. It is common for cricketers to suffer injuries, especially bowlers. This is usually a difficult period as one becomes anxious about the time and procedures required for healing properly. Knowing about sports medicine is useful in this regard. It is a branch of medicine that deals with the prevention and treatment of injuries related to sports and exercise.

There are many kinds of questions that one may have about injury and treatment. Firstly, you might be curious to know about the various common types of injuries. Next, you might have questions about the treatments involved. It is common to wonder, “How much rest is needed?”, “When is surgery required?” or “How long will rehabilitation take?” You could also be curious about the various professionals involved in sports medicine.

This section provides the answers to these questions. It looks at some of the technical aspects of treatment like first-aid, surgery, rehabilitation and physiotherapy. Recovering from injuries and preventing recurrence is also discussed. Reading through all these topics will help you to understand the causes and consequences of injuries. This will enable you to be mentally prepared for career breaks due to injury and recover as quickly as possible.
WHAT DOES THE TERM ‘INJURY’ MEAN? WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF INJURIES?

The term injury refers to damage caused to any part of the body. There are many causes of injury like accidents, falls and physical combat. It is generally observed that injuries are caused by something that is not in one’s control.

There are two main types of injuries – traumatic injuries and overuse injuries. **Traumatic injuries** are those that are caused as a result of a sudden accident, impact, fall or over-exertion while **overuse injuries** are those that develop gradually over a longer period due to repeated stresses. While one can’t predict or avoid traumatic injuries, one can take precautions to avoid overuse injuries.

Some of the common injuries relevant to cricketers are:

- **Cuts and Abrasions** – where the layers of skin are scraped or torn as it rubs against a hard surface. Usually, this occurs when one has a fall. It can also be the result of ill fitting equipment. The most common sites for scrapes are the hands, elbows, and knees.

- **Muscle Cramps** – where a muscle gets locked in spasm causing a sudden tight, intense pain. Muscle cramps are also recognised as a forcibly contracted muscle that does not relax. Some of the common causes of cramps are insufficient warm up and preparation, overuse of a muscle (fatigue induced), dehydration/electrolyte imbalance, holding a muscle in a fixed position for an extended period or neural fatigue.

- **Muscle Strains** – where the muscles get overstretched. This usually occurs as a result of a sudden jerk, overuse, or improper use of a muscle. They cause mild pain or swelling and may limit movement of the affected muscle group. Muscles strains are graded according to severity.

- **Muscle Tears** – where the muscles may be damaged either partially or completely. It is a bit more serious than a strain and takes longer to heal. It usually occurs when a sudden jerk overstretches the muscle fibers completely or causes a sudden overload that a muscle can’t bear. Muscle Tears are also graded according to severity.

- **Tendonopathies** – where there is an inflammation of the tendon attachment of the muscle (the tendon is the anchor that attaches the muscle to bone).

- **Concussion** – where the brain moves suddenly within the skull causing temporary damage to the brain cells. It can be caused by a direct impact to the head or by a blow to the body that forces the head to move too quickly (e.g. whip lash Injuries).

- **Bone Stress Reactions or Fractures** – where the natural process of new bone re-modeling (laying down of new bone tissue in response to loads and stresses) is unable to keep up with the destruction of bone tissue from overuse. Most common in cricketers is ‘shin splints’ (which is an inflammation of the bone of the shin) and lumbar spine (lower back) stress fractures.

It is natural that one might be tempted to push oneself as hard as possible during training and performance. But it is important to be aware of the capacities of the body and careful about using the various muscle groups before exerting too much pressure on them.
Injury prevention in professional sports is one of the main aspects of sports medicine. Most athletes look for ways to take precautions against injuries because of the kind of effect it can have on a career. However well prepared and physically fit a professional athlete may be, injury remains a matter of chance. But this does not mean that one can’t minimise the risks.

Overuse injuries are a result of a combination of issues over a long period of time. Many such overuse injuries are slow to develop and start with small aches and pains. These subtle symptoms develop gradually into an injury. The thumb rule is that if you are not feeling 100% right at any particular point in training, match or tournament, you must consult a qualified sports physio or sports medicine doctor regarding the same. Even minor pain or discomfort could have reasons and lead to consequences.

Always seek advice on a graded exercise routine to allow tissues (bone, muscle, ligament, fascia and tendon) to adapt to the new forces and loads you are subjecting them to. Most injuries occur when they have insufficient time to adapt.

Here are some of the things to keep in mind:

- **Sports specific training:** In every sport, there is a certain muscle group that is used more than the others. Strengthening that group through training is useful.

- **Strengthening the core:** This involves strengthening the abdominals, the glutes and the lower back muscles. Compound exercises in the gym are beneficial for this. A strong core improves overall strength and stability and is essential for maintaining balance and symmetry - the key components to good performance and minimising injury risk.

- **Proper nutrition and hydration:** Proper intake of food and fluids can not only prevent injury but also help one heal faster.

- **Paying attention to minor aches and pains:** Some injuries are the result of a series of small micro damages to a part of the body over time. Addressing even small issues can prevent major damage.

- **Knowing common injuries:** Every sport has a list of injuries that commonly occur, one can take precautions accordingly.

- **Proper posture:** Learning the proper posture and technique for all training routines can prevent excessive strain on a muscle group and thus, avoid injuries.

- **Not being over enthusiastic** and ensuring that the body is not getting over trained.
WHAT ARE THE VARIOUS KINDS OF TREATMENT AVAILABLE TO ADDRESS INJURIES?

Medicine is the science that involves the identification, treatment, and prevention of injuries and illness. There are several kinds of treatment available to address injuries depending on the extent of the damage. If one faces an injury during a match, it is best to first consult a medical professional who is available at the site. If the injury is minor, simple first-aid treatment works but in case it is something more serious, one may require other medical procedures in a hospital.

All kinds of treatment are best undergone after consultation with a professional. Some of the general kinds of treatments that may be used are:

- **PRICE therapy:** This stands for Protection, Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation. This is the kind of first aid treatment for swelling of injured muscle tissue in case of strains and sprains.

- **Pain relief:** Non steroidal tablets, creams and sprays can be used to ease pain and reduce any swelling right after the occurrence of the accident. However, sometimes by ‘masking’ the pain you may be worsening the initial injury. Also, the medication could be non-compliant with doping protocols.

- **Immobilisation:** This involves a procedure that holds a joint or a muscle group in place by preventing the movement. It can help prevent further damage that might occur through movement. It can also reduce pain, muscle swelling and muscle spasm. Some injuries (muscle strains, disc injuries) often respond better to not being fully immobilised.

- **Corticosteroid injections:** A corticosteroid injection is generally used when one has a severe inflammation. It can help relieve pain caused by injury. Interventions such as this must be a collective decision with specific outcomes in mind.

- **Physiotherapy:** It is a specialist treatment where techniques such as soft tissue mobilisations, joint mobilisations & manipulations, exercises, taping/splinting etc are used to aid healing, improve range of motion, strengthen the surrounding muscles, and return the normal function of the injured area.

- **Surgery and procedures:** Severe injuries such as broken bones or completely torn ligaments may require corrective treatment. This may include a surgery to fix the bones with screws or rods. It might also include using parts of healthy muscle tissue from another part to build a damaged tissue.
WHAT ARE THE KEY COMPONENTS OF FIRST AID?

First Aid refers to the assistance given to an individual right after suffering from an injury or illness with the intention of providing a cure, preventing worsening of condition and promoting recovery. In case of sports injuries, the primary goal of first aid is to stop the activity and prevent further damage.

The objective of first aid for muscle tissue injuries (strains, sprains, tears) is to prevent, stop and reduce swelling. When soft tissue is damaged, it causes swelling due to the accumulation of body fluids or internal bleeding from damaged blood vessels. This swelling causes pain and loss of movement, which prevents the muscles from being used properly.

With muscle tissue injuries, it is also advisable to immediately spray the affected/injured area with a pain relief spray. The sprays work using 2 mechanisms:

1) numb the area and

2) act as a counter-irritant to make you forget about the pain. There is a local anesthetic also mixed in – but this doesn’t work to heal the problem, it only delays the pain sensation.

If the injury causes a cut or abrasion that leads to bleeding, it’s important to stop the blood flow quickly. Here, first aid involves washing the wound with water, and applying an appropriate bandage with an antiseptic until medical help arrives. A deep cut will probably require stitches and, therefore, one should prevent the loss of blood as much as possible. It is important to maintain basic hygiene standards like using fresh gloves, syringes and cotton wool.

If one is unable to move after getting an injury, it is the best if one is stretchered off the field and the first aid is given outside. In the case of more serious injury where a player is unconscious, advanced first aid methods like mouth-to-mouth breathing and CPR can be used. However, it is always best that a trained professional does this.

The primary treatment to stop swelling of injured soft tissue is with the PRICE method.

- **Protection**: Stopping activity immediately and protecting the injured part from additional damage either through taping or bandage.

- **Rest**: Resting the area to allow the tissues time to heal.

- **Ice**: Applying cold therapy (ice or an ice pack wrapped in a thin towel) to reduce swelling and pain. Ice causes the blood vessels to narrow and limits internal bleeding at the injury site. Normal application time is 10 mins on and 20 off – repeated.

- **Compression**: Tightly wrapping the injured body part with an elastic bandage or wrap to help keep swelling to a minimum. It is advised to apply ice to the injured area over the compression wrap.

- **Elevation**: Raising or elevating the injured area to reduce the blood flow and swelling to the area.
WHY IS REST AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF RECOVERY FROM AN INJURY?

Rest means to stop or reduce the movement of the body in order to relax, heal, or recover strength. The period of rest required depends on the part that is injured, the sport that is being played, the severity of the injury, and also varies from individual to individual as people heal differently.

One might be advised complete bed rest or partial rest depending on the injury. There are two main advantages of resting. Firstly, it immobilises the affected part and ensures that it does not come under any physical strain. Secondly, rest ensures that most of the energy in the body can be used for growth and repair of the tissues. Both these aspects are really important for complete healing.

Lack of adequate rest increases the possibility of recurrence of an injury. Usually a medical professional, like a physiotherapist, will be able to guide one to gradually change from a period of resting to a period of active training. You may also hear sports physios use the term ‘Active Rest’ which means to rest from the pain provoking activity or movement but continue with all pain free activities. This ensures all the other muscles and systems of the body stay functioning normally. Also, some injuries like tendon injuries have to be attended to in a controlled manner to heal them and are actually damaged further by things like stretching.
WHEN IS SURGERY REQUIRED? WHAT IS THE RECOVERY TIME AFTER A SURGERY?

Most sports injuries don’t require surgery, but very severe injuries such as badly broken bones or completely torn muscle, ligament or tendon tissues may require it. It could also be used when there are constant issues due to the recurrence of an injury. Many are afraid of having surgery and consequently feel anxious leading up to the actual procedure. Today, treatment levels are quite advanced and ensure that procedures are done smoothly without causing much discomfort or having a major risk.

Common surgical procedures in sport include repair of cruciate ligaments, meniscal knee surgery or shoulder labral operations. Surgery can be used to rebuild torn soft tissue, align bones and re-position joints. Some procedures will be fairly straightforward and may not last long, while more serious and complex injuries will take longer and may need to be carried out under anesthetic with a team of doctors.

Recovery time after surgery will depend on the nature and severity of the injury and the subsequent surgical procedure. Most injuries will require a long rest period following surgery. This is because the affected joint, muscle or area of soft tissue should be allowed to heal fully through rest and non-use of the part. Once healing has started, physiotherapy is commonly used to build strength in and around the injured area and increase the range of movement and flexibility around the joint or muscle. Typically, post surgical recovery time is around 6 – 12 weeks but in some cases, this might be stretched to 3 to 9 months for large ligament repairs like an ACL reconstruction.
Overuse injuries are a result of a combination of issues over a long period of time. Many such overuse injuries are slow to develop and start with small aches and pains. These subtle symptoms develop gradually into an injury. The thumb rule is that if you are not feeling 100% right at any particular point in training, match or tournament, you must consult a qualified sports physio or sports medicine doctor regarding the same.
It is natural that one might be tempted to push oneself as hard as possible during training and performance. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the capacities of the body and careful about using the various muscle groups before exerting too much pressure on them.
WHAT IS REHABILITATION AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Rehabilitation refers to the activity of restoring something that has been damaged to its former condition. In sport, rehabilitation is the approach used for the prevention, evaluation, and treatment of injuries. A personal, committed rehabilitation effort can be very useful in enabling one to regain peak performance as soon as possible.

The kind of rehabilitation depends on the injury involved. Generally, a medical professional develops a rehabilitation plan that provides one with the schedule of recommended activities. This plan takes into consideration the age of the cricketer and the time of the season.

Proper nutrition is vital during rehabilitation and can ensure a quick recovery. Rest is also an integral part of the rehabilitation plan. A focused programme can improve flexibility, strength, and range of motion, and help one to return with confidence. It is important to know the do's and don'ts during a rehabilitation process and to remain patient till one heals completely.

Different rehabilitation techniques:

- **Strength training and stretching:** They help the body to stabilise the joints against the excessive force that they are subjected to, thereby preventing and healing injuries.

- **Proprioceptive training:** This refers to aligning the joint in the right position and making sure that there is proper posture, balance and co-ordination of the muscle groups around that joint.

- **Endurance training:** This refers to regaining maximum potential post the injury. This usually complements strength training but is to be done carefully so as to avoid overload.
WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF UNDERGOING PHYSIOTHERAPY TREATMENT?

Physiotherapy treatment is a part of rehabilitation and is usually carried out under the supervision of a physiotherapist. The objective of physiotherapy is to help the body’s mobility and includes regular supervised exercise routines that help one to recover well after injury. A physiotherapist will develop a personalised routine based on the current condition and abilities to promote a fast recovery.

By using physiotherapy as a treatment, physical pain in problematic areas will be minimised and mobility will be improved. The treatment will improve the blood flow and will aid in fluid drainage. It might include both passive and active exercises. Passive exercises typically include simple things like a massage, while active exercises are ones that are more complex and need the help of a therapist.

A physiotherapist will be able to identify problems in posture/technique and remedy them before a serious injury occurs. The larger goal of physiotherapy is to improve performance. Hence, the physiotherapist will emphasise the acquiring of proper technique that helps prevents recurrence of injuries. He/she will also be able to identify problems in posture/technique and remedy them before serious injury occurs.

Some of the common physiotherapy techniques include:

- Joint mobilisation (to reduce pain and stiffness by movement)
- Muscle stretching (to promote flexibility and full-range of motion)
- Joint manipulation (to reduce pain by sudden thrusts)
- Massage (to ease pain without movement)
- Dry needling
- Taping
- Specialised soft tissue techniques (e.g. myofascial release)
- Biomechanical corrections
HOW DOES ONE PREVENT RECURRENCE OF AN INJURY?

Recurrent injury is one that occurs at a location on the body that previously sustained the same injury. Subsequent injuries could be influenced by the first injury. Recurrent injuries could have an impact on the future participation of the injured, and could even pose a challenge to the career of a cricketer.

Ankles, knees, shoulders, and muscle tears/strains are most prone to recurrent injuries. Correct treatment to strengthen the injured muscle or bone is very important. One should not rush back to training, especially if one encounters niggling pain, soreness or stiffness.

Poor posture, neglecting symptoms of pain or weakness, incomplete or poorly graded rehabilitation, poor warm-up, and overuse are often the reasons for recurrence. If one ignores proper rest and rehab during the first injury, there is a chance that such an injury reoccurs. Also, understanding why the injury occurred in the first place (especially if gradual in onset) is also very important as routines will need to be corrected to prevent recurrence.

Some ways to avoid recurrence are:

- A rehabilitation plan which is developed specifically to the needs of the individual.
- Modifying techniques and posture to prevent strain on the injured tissue (correcting imbalances & asymmetries).
- Including appropriate warm up and cool down exercises during training.
- Ensuring good neural mobility and movement patterns.
- Taking physiotherapy in the form of manual therapy, massage or manipulation at regular intervals.
Who are the Professionals to Consult for Treatment and Rehabilitation in Case of Physical Injury or Illness?

If a player gets injured, a physiotherapist present at the site will be able to make a preliminary assessment. He or she will be able to provide first aid and advise the coach on whether the player can continue or needs to be withdrawn from the game. Based on the extent of the injury, suitable next steps will be developed.

The team physiotherapist may also request investigations (e.g., MRI, X-ray, CT scan, ultrasound scan) to further diagnose or confirm an initial diagnosis of the injury.

Further treatment for a sports injury usually depends on the severity and the part of the body affected. In the Indian scenario, it is advised to always seek a doctor who is a sports medicine expert. A cricketer can seek them out through team officials and references from peers.

Correct and early diagnosis is the key to a good outcome and should remain the priority. You can’t treat properly what you haven’t diagnosed!

Typical Process Flow:

- Assessment
- First Aid
- Investigations
- Diagnosis
- Treatment Plan
- Rehabilitation
- Facilitated return to sport
“I’ve always endorsed that I want to play more and more matches. And as I was playing more and more, the body and rhythm kept going. I always used to stretch it to the maximum and as I have always been saying, control the controllable. Injuries are a part and parcel of the game and if you are injured, you are injured. So accept that fact, do the right things and when you come back, come back 120 percent fit not 100 percent.”

– Zaheer Khan
## Glossary of Common Injuries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Common Injury</th>
<th>Brief description of Injury</th>
<th>Typical Recovery timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1.    | ACL Injury    | Over-stretching or tearing of the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) in the knee. A tear may be partial or complete. | Complete tear if operated = 6 - 9 mths  
Partial tear (not operated) = 8 - 12 weeks  
Complete tear (not operated) = 3 - 6 mths |
| 2.    | Meniscal Injury (knee) | Tearing of the meniscus within the knee | If operated = 6 - 8 weeks (though can be 3 months)  
If it is a mild injury (bruising) = 3 - 6 weeks |
| 3.    | Shoulder Injuries | 1. Rotator Cuff strain/tendonopathy  
2. Labral Tears | Mild = 2 weeks, Mod-Severe = 8 - 12 weeks  
Mild, non-operated = 6 weeks  
Mod-severe, operated = 4 - 5 mths |
| 4.    | Ligament Sprain | Over stretching of a ligament present at any joint in the body. | Grade 1 Tear = 3 - 4 weeks  
Grade 2 Tear = 8 - 10 weeks  
Grade 3 Tear (surgery) = 3 - 6 months  
(can vary depending on which body part involved. E.g. finger ligament vs. ankle) |
<p>| 5.    | Hamstring Tendonopathy | Inflammation of where hamstring tendon inserts into the bone, generally from overuse/overload or poor biomechanics | 8 - 24 weeks |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Common Injury</th>
<th>Brief description of Injury</th>
<th>Typical Recovery timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Lower Back Injuries</td>
<td>1. Disc Bulge</td>
<td>Mild–mod = 3 - 6 weeks (depending if bowler or batter). Severe = 6 -12 weeks (non operated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Pars Stress Reaction (bone)</td>
<td>8 - 12 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Pars Stress Fracture</td>
<td>4 - 6 mths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Mild Concussion</td>
<td>A temporary damage to the brain caused by a fall or hit on the head or by violent shaking.</td>
<td>Full Recovery within 2 - 4 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Hamstring muscle Injury</td>
<td>Over-stretching or tear of muscle fibers and related tissues of the hamstring.</td>
<td>Grade 1 Tear = 3 - 4 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 2 Tear = 6 weeks (up to 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 3 Tear (complete tear ) = 12 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Tennis Elbow</td>
<td>Inflammation of the tendons of the elbow caused by overuse of the muscles of the forearm.</td>
<td>Full Recovery within 10 - 24 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Groin Strain</td>
<td>Over-stretch or tear of one or more of the muscles of the groin area of the legs.</td>
<td>Same as hamstring muscle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Muscle Pull/Strain</td>
<td>Over-stretch or tear of a muscle or a muscle group. Graded from 1-3 depending on severity of strain/tear</td>
<td>Depends on the muscle/muscle group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Everyone recovers at different rates due to a number of reasons. The above are rough timelines for recovery. Your sports physiotherapist will be able to give you a more accurate return-to-sport timeframe after fully assessing the injury.

Additional Reading:
Book: The Test of My Life: From Cricket to Cancer and Back – by Yuvraj Singh
An injury could be due to trauma or overuse. Injuries are a matter of chance but risks can be minimised. The level of treatment depends on the extent of injury.

First-aid prevents further damage and promotes recovery. No treatment is adequate without proper rest.

Need for surgery depends on how severe the injury is. To restore your body fully, proper rehabilitation is a must. Physiotherapy can minimise your pain and improve mobility.

Be patient as you recover to avoid recurrence of your injury. Correct and early diagnosis is a key to a good outcome.
PART 2
USING THE POWER OF YOUR MIND AND EMOTIONS
SECTION 4
10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR MIND
INTRODUCTION

The need to understand your mind may become relevant to you the day that you begin to play professional cricket. A coach or team member could infer your mood through your body language and behaviour but only you will know your innermost thoughts and feelings. An awareness of ways to analyse feelings and use various mental preparation techniques is, therefore, useful for any professional cricketer. Concepts of psychology can help in this regard.

You might have heard about psychology but will probably have many questions regarding the topic. Firstly, you might want to understand the relationship between mind and the body. You might wonder, “What is the role of the mind in learning and performance?” Some of the doubts could be “How can I mentally prepare for a match?”, “How can I improve focus and concentration?” You might also be curious about concepts like “visualisation” and “being in the zone” and the kind of outcome they can produce.

The answers to these questions are to be found in this section. Thoughts, emotions, moods, memory, confidence, anticipation of a result and ability to focus are all factors controlled by the mind and are explained as concepts in psychology. Reading through this section will help you get to know about several such concepts that you can use to prepare mentally and become self-confident.
HOW IS THE MIND CONNECTED TO THE BODY?

The mind involves a number of mental states that help one to be aware of and react to the world around. The brain is the physical organ that enables one to experience these mental states that make up the mind. The brain and all the other organs of our body constantly communicate with one another through the nervous system. It is this physical connection that relates the mind to the body.

Mental states based on thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and attitudes can positively or negatively affect the physical abilities. Being conscious of breathing is a simple way to notice the level of arousal – for e.g., tiredness, alertness or panic. In that sense, the body and the mind influence each other. For example, the mental state of anxiety causes the body to produce certain hormones. On the other hand, developing the fitness level of your body through good eating habits and exercise routines can improve mental toughness.

The mental state of an individual is also related to social interactions. Many times, groups of brilliant individuals could collectively perform lower than expected. On the other hand, the collective physical ability of a group of averagely skilled individuals could be much higher than expected. Performance, therefore, is a result of a mixture of psychological, social and physical aspects.

Positive thoughts energise the body whereas negative thoughts could slow you down. One can develop the ability of the mind to push the body. This requires a certain amount of disciplined training which results in specific habits. Good habits can serve you best while bad habits could become your worst masters. Considering that consistency in performance depends on the mind, most training routines in sport include psychological aspects.
WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE MIND IN TRAINING AND IMPROVING SKILLS?

Learning is the process of acquiring new knowledge or a skill that results in a change of behaviour, ability and worldview. Many changes are permanent but do not happen all at once. The mind is the place where all the learning is consolidated. It can be as simple as learning to bowl for the first time or as complex as learning to bowl a Yorker. Any skill that is acquired needs the mind.

There are many theories of learning that explain the role of the mind in learning and improving skills. When learning happens by observing or imitating other influential members, usually elders, then it is referred to as learning through observation. When learning happens through practicing a certain skill multiple times by gradually improving and perfecting it, then it is learning by repetition.

Most learning involves the practice of activities. The activities could be either physical or mental. They are dependent on the abilities of the mind, like thinking, reasoning, intelligence, problem-solving and having a positive attitude. The mind coordinates with the body through the nervous system to gain, absorb and make use of the new skill and knowledge. Through the practice of continuous learning, one can improve one’s mental and physical abilities.

It would be crucial to understand the difference between focused practice and mindless practice. In focused practice, the mind is active at all times and one is able to learn and improve faster. This also leads to the faster inculcation of useful habits. Setting specific improvement goals can prepare the mind for focused practice, e.g., "I’m going to hit the bowling target at least 6 times in the next 18 balls".
HOW DOES TRAINING THE MIND IMPROVE SPORTS PERFORMANCE?

Given the kind of competition that one encounters in cricket, the mental aspects of the game like approach towards a match, personal expectations and attitude determine one’s success. One could be extremely talented and skillful but it is the training of the mind that ensures consistency and longevity.

Mental toughness is one of the key attributes required for succeeding at the top level. It is comprised of three components – depth of focus, positive approach and coping skills. This mental toughness is inborn to a certain extent but can also be acquired through training of the mind. It mainly helps to control one’s thoughts and ability to think positively.

Various mind training techniques such as visualisation, self-talk and meditation can help one overcome obstacles and achieve one’s full potential. It can be useful to manage thoughts, withstand pain, control emotions and improve confidence levels. It can help to maintain focus over longer periods of time during a match and handle distractions. Training the mind eventually helps one actively distinguish thoughts that are useful for performance from those that are not at all times.

Often, training routines for team sports include team building aspects which are focused on creating environments that nurture individuals to perform at their best while having a positive influence on others.

Whatever techniques one might use, the improvement is much better when one is around people who are supportive and encouraging throughout the process of learning. Receiving timely appreciation and positive feedback is an important part of the mental preparation and has a long-term effect on the mind.

A Few Tips for Mental Training:

- Have mentally tough role models who are approachable.
- Write down your thoughts, feelings, anxieties, strengths and learnings.
- Stay alert as you learn, always look to redirect efforts instead of quitting.
- Visualise successful outcomes; don’t just day dream successful results.
- Stop listening to yourself, start talking to yourself!
- Minimise distractions in your training environment.
- Set clear goals that can motivate you.
Including mental aspects in training and pre-match routines can help in developing good habits and honing instincts. Good mental training ensures that one’s responses are spontaneous without relying too much on conscious thoughts. For the responses to be spontaneous, they must come from habits and instincts developed by long and continuous practice.

The process of including mental aspects in training starts with evaluating one’s own abilities with the help of a professional. General aspects like improving concentration can be worked on during the initial phases of preparation. During the last phase before competition, one may work on aspects that are specific like overcoming stress, anxiety and fear. Whatever the routine, it is important that it is in coordination with the physical training aspects.

Most of the mental training aspects take time to show results. You should be patient and work consistently. The basis of most mental training is documentation. If you are able to write down your thoughts, feelings, anxieties and constructive suggestions, you will be in a much better position to be aware of your abilities. Devoting 15 minutes every day early in the morning is a good way to start the process.

It is important that one does not think too much before a match. One should avoid thoughts about what will happen, how one will bowl or bat, how many runs one will score, etc. The focus should be on the aspects of the game that are under one’s control. Visualisation and positive self-talk practiced over long periods are especially handy techniques.
During moments of distress, one should think about resolving the issue and make a habit of reporting or sharing concerns rather than burying them in the mind. One should also encourage and support others, especially outside sport. If you are dismissive, critical and negative, then it is likely that you will have a similar mindset during the game as well.
It is natural to go through a lot of emotions during a match. The mind remains as active as the body during performance. Just as you can give the body some rest during a break in the match, you can also learn to give the mind some rest from the mental effort that concentration requires.
WHAT IS VISUALISATION?  
HOW CAN IT ENHANCE PERFORMANCE?

Visualisation can be an effective method of mental practice. It is the process of using one’s own imagination to create visions of what one wants to achieve and how to make it happen. It is a great exercise to improve focus and handle anxiety but it needs regular practice for it to be effective.

In sports, mental imagery is often used by players to improve skills. This can be achieved by picturing the achievement of a specific feat. In cricket, one can picture hitting a particular shot, taking a catch, bowling a yorker, etc. This prepares the mind without stressing the body and ensures that all the energy in the body is focused on the task at hand. It is possible to also visualise the mode of recovery from a setback or how to handle pressure (like facing lots of dot balls). This can be excellent preparation for tough situations.

Visualisation or mental imagery works because when one imagines oneself performing perfectly and exactly as one wants, one creates neural patterns in the brain, just as if they had physically performed the action. That thought can stimulate the nervous system and prepare the mind for the actual event.

Generally, there are four processes involved in visualisation:

• **Relaxation** - using a relaxing technique like slow breathing to prepare the mind gently for the exercise.

• **Realism** - making a conscious effort to imagine a certain thing realistically as though actually executing the skill.

• **Regularity** - making regular attempts for a specific period of time.

• **Reinforcement** - writing about the experience to create better imagery each time.

It is important that one does not get illusional with visualisation. There is a difference between day-dreaming and visualisation. The imagery that one practices should be realistic. Ideally, it should be rooted in the processes involved and not the result, e.g., imagining holding a cricket bat and hitting a straight drive vs. imagining giving interviews after winning a World Cup.

It is normal if you are not able to ‘see’ the imagery when you imagine it; it is sufficient if you are able to ‘feel’ it.
WHAT EFFECT DOES PRESSURE OF COMPETITION HAVE ON THE MIND?

Pressure is mainly a result of focusing on the consequences of a result. The extent to which it affects performance is completely dependent on the player. Feeling pressure is good because it shows the intent of the cricketer to play well and it helps to stay sharp and focused. However, feeling too much pressure could affect performance. It can result in loss of concentration on the field.

Everybody feels pressure but one can train in a way that one knows what to do under pressure. This generally depends on the ability of shift focus to the technique, game, advice of the coaches and match situation. The ability to shut out the past or future consequences and to focus on the next delivery alone can make a big difference. If affected by distraction or anxiety, regaining calm through deep breathing is also a way to handle the situation. Through regular training, you will be able to do so effectively.

“It’s like having 100 kgs put over you. After that, even if you put a mountain, it will not make a difference.”

– M S Dhoni (on coping with pressure that comes with representing India)

At the end of the day, a cricketer should not be afraid of negative thoughts or doubts. A good technique is to keep some positive thoughts ready for introduction during high pressure moments and focus on them instead. Recollecting positive memories will help one build up a positive self-talk for occasions when the negative thoughts attack. This is the best way to deal with pressure.
HOW CAN ONE IMPROVE FOCUS AND DEVELOP A POSITIVE MINDSET?

Focus:
Focus is the ability to control one’s attention. For an athlete, shifting focus quickly has its own use: observing; grasping of the proceedings; drawing an inference of what will happen next; selecting a response, and the actual response are all the phases which require quick shifts of focus. But the ability to control the choice and depth of concentration are factors that one has to make special efforts to develop.

Concentration and focus are related. Concentration requires focus. Focus sets the platform for one to concentrate. It is something one can acquire over a course of time, with practice. One way of achieving high levels of concentration is by practicing mindfulness through meditation. It helps to put all the mental effort on a single task or a memory for a long period.

Positive mindset:
A positive mindset can ensure that one stays in a frame of mind that supports performance despite the loss of form. It is generally a result of positive thoughts. It enables one to accept responsibility for one’s failures and learn from it. A positive mindset is different from mere positive thinking. It is a result of habits practiced over long periods of time and requires conscious effort to develop.

There are several useful thinking patterns that can enable the development of a positive mindset. One should always talk constructively about one’s game with the coach and fellow teammates.

If one can focus all the efforts on a particular task in physical training, one will be able to replicate it on the field. Keeping focus revolves around being able to resist distraction in the environment around. This involves being able to pay attention only to the happenings of the ground in practice or match. Developing favourable habits can help in this regard, e.g., paying attention to technical details while learning a new skill (like the movement of the elbow while hitting a cover drive) or switching focus between deliveries.

During moments of distress, one should think about resolving the issue and make a habit of reporting or sharing concerns rather than burying them in the mind. One should also encourage and support others, especially outside sport. If you are dismissive, critical and negative, then it is likely that you will have a similar mindset during the game as well.

Moreover, it is important to stay connected to the games/times where you played well in the past and remind yourself about what you did that made the innings a success. Speaking positively about yourself and others, living with self-respect and destroying any inferiority complex can all greatly help in developing a positive mindset. Such a mindset can enable preparation for a variety of life situations.
SOME CRICKETERS TALK ABOUT EXPERIENCING BEING “IN THE ZONE” – WHAT IS THAT AND HOW DOES ONE DO IT?

Being in the zone simply depicts the mental state of operation in which a person performing an activity is feeling energized focus, involvement, and contentment. It is a state of deep absorption – a very deep level of concentration where you forget about everything else except your game. You have no worries or distractions and are in complete control of yourself. “In the zone” is where performance becomes easy and automatic, where emotions triggered by competition do not have any negative effect.

Achieving this ‘zone’ revolves around improving concentration and core skills to a very high level.

There are certain things one can try to improve performance and give oneself the best chance to experience being in the zone:

- **Drill:** This includes practicing the skills repeatedly over long periods of time. When it comes to an actual game, the muscle memories will kick in and the player will experience being in the zone.

- **Practice under pressure:** It’s very effective to set targets while practicing and even better to play practice games where one simulates how it feels to succeed under pressure situations. Having the ability to create mental imagery is a good skill to develop if one wants to mentally prepare for such situations. This involves creating vivid and detailed images in the mind about the likely competition environment.

- **Regulating emotions:** In the heat of the moment, it’s easy to lose focus (due to over-arousal). One can take oneself out of the game situation for a moment to give time to refocus. Being able to do it effectively increases the chances of controlling emotions and therefore, being in the zone.

- **Pre-performance routine:** One can create self-awareness about what one can control before a match and develop a favorable routine that can be replicated across one’s career.
HOW CAN ONE GIVE THE MIND “REST” DURING A MATCH?

It is natural to go through a lot of emotions during a match. The mind remains as active as the body during performance. Just as one can give the body some rest during a break in the match, one can also learn to give the mind some rest from the mental effort that concentration requires. This has many benefits and can help one to perform well throughout the length of a match.

Giving the mind “rest” is especially useful while waiting for your turn to bat or bowl as well as during breaks in a match. It is important that one does not overthink about the game during a break. One should avoid analysing one’s mistakes and let go of what has just happened. One could rather shift attention on other routine activities like drinking a bottle of water or inspecting equipment to take the mind off the game completely. Finally, as the break comes to an end, one can gradually refocus back to the game through breathing techniques.

This ability to switch focus back and forth is useful for giving the mind rest during a match. Being able to do so actually improves focus, provides the mind-space to analyse the match situation and reevaluate the match strategy. It can fight anxiety and avoid lapses of concentration. Thinking about your game throughout the day may showcase commitment but also has negative consequences by tiring your mind.
“It’s a habit that I read a lot and I do that even before going in to bat. I do this not only in international matches, but in domestic matches too. Reading helps me calm down and fight the jitters before stepping out to bat.”

- Mithali Raj
WHO ARE THE PROFESSIONALS TO APPROACH TO SEEK ASSISTANCE WITH TRAINING THE MIND?

The professionals who can help with training the mind are sports psychologists. If consulted, a sports psychologist not only helps when one is facing difficulties but can also guide in improving one’s mental game.

Sports psychologists study the relationship between personality and performance. Individually they can work on improving a player’s mental toughness, self-confidence, motivation. Moreover, they can also help create environments for teams that enable team work and coordination.

One should keep in mind that one could approach a sports psychologist at all times and not only when one faces poor form or another difficulty. Do not expect to receive pills or medication, rather the consultation is more likely to be a conversation.

Once consulted, it would be important to implement the ideas discussed and persist with them for at least 5-7 weeks to see meaningful results. You should not feel disheartened if a certain technique was not useful. It is important to be patient and results will show soon enough.

In short, sport psychologists can help:

- Enhance performance
- Cope with the pressures of competition
- Recover positively from injuries
- Include mental aspects in training
- Enjoy sports
"At the end of the day, it’s really internal. When I have done well, I’ve found that I’ve mentally really relaxed, in a good space. These are important things that I need to get in, what is called the inner game. Getting the inner side of yourself right, not being too nervous, relaxed at the crease, learning how to deal with failure, learning how to bounce back, learning how to be emotionally ready for each and every day.

It’s a confidence thing. Sometimes it doesn’t click. You try and do the same routines that in the past have got you that success or that state of mind and it doesn’t seem to work sometimes. It is a tough game sometimes. The important thing is when you’re doing well and when you’re scoring runs you’ve got to make it count. I think that’s really important. You’ve got to realise that you’re going to hit some rough periods in your career so when things work for you you’ve got to make it last as long as you can."

– Rahul Dravid
SAMPLE VISUALISATION DRILL

There are many levels to visualisation and you might take several days to achieve each level.

Level 1: **Object** - Begin by imagining something familiar to you, like a cricket ball. When you have a clear image of the ball, focus on the details like the surface, color and seam.

Level 2: **Person** - Imagine yourself holding the ball preparing to bowl to a batter. Focus on the way you will hold the ball, the way you appear, the stance of the batter and the nature of the pitch.

Level 3: **Environment** - Imagine the entire environment on the field during an actual match situation. Focus on the noise of the spectators, the fielders in various positions, the umpires, the sight screen and the batter preparing to face the ball.

**Once you have reached Level 3, you can begin to mentally practice bowling a particular type of delivery**

- Using a relaxation technique like slow breathing, prepare the mind gently for the exercise.
- Imagine starting your run-up. Feel the ball in your hand, focus on the seam position.
- Imagine delivering the ball. Try to see where it pitches and how it swings.
- Imagine the batter facing such a delivery. Try to focus how one would face such a delivery and the intended result.
- Imagine taking a wicket of the delivery, how it felt and the adulation of the team mates.
- Analyse why the particular delivery was effective and resume the imagination of bowling the next delivery.
- After the end of the exercise, write down interesting thoughts about the experience.

In a similar way, a number of instances can be mentally practiced before actual games.

**Additional Reading:**
**Book:** The Psychology of Cricket: Developing Mental Toughness by Stewart Cotterill and Jamie Barker
**Online:** https://www.mentaltoughnesstrainer.com/training-for-sports/
The mind and body influence each other, take care of both.

Always do focused practice rather than mindless practice.

Training your mind can make your good form last longer.

Want to know yourself better? Document your thoughts.

Visualisation is different from day dreaming, be aware.

Pressure is unavoidable; what matters is how you react to it.

Learning to resist distraction improves your focus.

Practicing being “in the zone” aids high performance.

Like your body, your mind needs rest too.

You don’t need to wait for “difficulties” to meet a sports psychologist.
SECTION 5

10 THINGS ABOUT DEALING WITH MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HARDSHIP
INTRODUCTION

Hardship refers to a period or situation of difficulty. Going through hardship is a part of life and almost everyone goes through it. It has certain effects on the wellbeing of a person. It affects both mental and physical aspects of the body.

Cricket is a popular game and cricketers are regarded highly in our society. They are expected to perform every time they step onto the field. This presents opportunities but also challenges since it is practically impossible to succeed every time you play. In a long career, you are bound to go through different periods of time when you might feel low. It is important that you take care of yourself at such times. Being aware of a few concepts of mental health can help you to recognise the symptoms in case of any issues.

You might be curious to know what mental health is. Questions like “How can I deal with not getting selected into the team?”, “How can I understand my feelings?”, “How can I cope from setbacks?” are common. You might have heard about ‘depression’ and want to know more about it. You might also want to be aware of the professionals to approach in case you need help and when you should do so. This section of the handbook will help you address these questions and doubts.
WHAT ARE THE CONSTITUENTS OF MENTAL HEALTH?

Mental health refers to the level of emotional, psychological and social wellbeing of an individual. It affects the way that one thinks, feels or acts. It also determines how well one manages emotions, develops relationships and takes decisions. It is a part of every stage of life right from birth to death.

The human brain is responsible for memories, thoughts, feelings and moods as well as for physical aspects like coordination, balance and body movements. Most of these are interlinked and any imbalance or disruption of one often affects another. Good mental health signifies that the functioning of the brain is proper and in place. It includes being able to realise full human potential, cope with stress, work productively and make meaningful relationships.

There can be instances in one's life where the mental health can be affected. There are several things that can contribute to such issues. This includes biological factors, chemical imbalances or deficiencies, bad life experiences or family history. Medical advancements have ensured that such issues can be attended to.

There are many symptoms and early warning signs of issues regarding mental health. By being aware of such issues, learning certain coping skills, developing a good support system and taking professional help as and when required, one can take good care of oneself.
What is the Origin of Human Emotions and Why Do Different People React Differently to the Same Incidents?

At the time of an incident or an interaction, emotions are chemical responses occurring in the brain while feelings are the resulting state of mind due to such responses. According to Robert Plutchik’s theory, there are eight basic emotions: Fear (feeling afraid), Anger (feeling angry), Sadness (feeling sad), Joy (feeling happy), Disgust (feeling unpleasant), Surprise (feeling caused by something unexpected), Trust (feeling secure) and Anticipation (feeling of expecting something). The kind of emotions triggered depends on the genetic makeup of an individual and are influenced by personal experiences, beliefs and memories.

Emotions trigger a response in the body, which in turn affects one’s behaviour. It is also the driving force behind motivation and the influence one has. One can train to imbibe certain empowering beliefs about oneself and match situations in order to feel positive emotions more often. This in turn may lead to better performance and create positive experiences for the future. While past experiences do matter, one need not be bound by them forever.

One’s beliefs also influence the emotions experienced. It may not always be the event or competition which leads to emotions but one’s belief about the event, which can vary among individuals. This, therefore, results in different emotions for the same situation. For example, if a cricketer’s resources meet his/her demands, then he/she will perceive the competition as a challenge and experience positive emotions. On the other hand, if the resources are insufficient, then he/she will perceive the upcoming competition as a threat and experience negative emotions.
HOW IS MENTAL HEALTH RELATED TO SPORTS PERFORMANCE?

Most sports, even if they involve a team game, are highly individual in nature as they are completely dependent on one’s abilities to perform. These expectations often cause pressure or stress to the mind. It is important that an athlete copes well under such situations and learns to manage the emotions that are triggered.

While one competes at the international level, one faces certain situations that may increase the risk of developing mental health problems.

Each of these factors could lead to a variety of problems – ranging from basic issues like anxiety disorders, panic attacks, sleeping problems, eating disorders and anger issues to more complex ones like depression, disassociation, paranoia, psychosis and even suicidal feelings. The ability to deal with complex emotions, recognising the symptoms and seeking professional help when required are helpful when dealing with hardships.

One needs to be clear that such issues are treatable and be free of any inhibitions regarding addressing them. Seeking help is always a better option than suffering in silence. It is not a sign of weakness or timidity. Moreover, one will also be able to encourage and inspire others from the community to seek help.

In a cricket career, there are bound to be several factors that can affect mental health:

- Physical injuries
- Performance issues like poor form, trouble at beginning/end of an innings, inability to achieve milestones
- Non-selection into a team
- Bad professional relationships with peers/coaches
- Bad personal relationships with family/friends
- Continuous participation without sufficient breaks
- Rigors of training
- Impractical expectations
- Retirement
- Social Media trolling and media criticism
Emotions trigger a response in the body, which in turn affects one’s behaviour. It is also the driving force behind motivation and the influence one has. One can train to imbibe certain empowering beliefs about themselves and match situations in order to feel positive emotions more often. This in turn may lead to better performance and create positive experiences for the future.
Avoiding exclusively identifying yourself with the sporting role and expanding self-identity to other pursuits can be useful in dealing with challenges that end of a career brings.
WHAT ARE TRIGGERS FOR AND SIGNS OF STRESS AND ANXIETY? WHAT ARE COPING MECHANISMS?

Usually, stress or anxiety is caused because of challenges faced by a person. Stress is the mental strain caused by difficult circumstances. Anxiety is a feeling of unease with regard to an uncertain future life experience. Stress and anxiety interact with one-another. In the sense, stress is seen to be the stimulus that puts demands placed upon the athlete. For example, a competition is a stressor in itself. Now, this competition can cause anxiety depending on how an athlete perceives the competition (i.e., whether they see it as a challenge or a threat).

A common approach to coping with stress is problem-focused coping where one tries to deal with the demands that cause pressure. For that, mental imagery or visualisation can be used. This technique involves simulating stressors that one might face in the competition during practice, since one often practices in comfortable and friendly environment. This can help enhance confidence during actual competition. Emotion management through establishing social support systems, using relaxation techniques and developing positive thinking habits can also be beneficial as it decreases emotional distress and promotes positive well-being.

The most effective way of dealing with anxiety is through proper breathing techniques and mindfulness. Moreover, anxiety can also be conquered by improving physical fitness which, in turn, increases mental strength.

The signs of stress and anxiety in a player can be seen at 3 levels:

- **Cognitive symptoms** - they relate to thought processes, including memory problems, restlessness, poor judgment, loss of confidence.
- **Physical symptoms** - these include muscular tension, sweaty hands, headaches, insomnia, low energy.
- **Behavioural symptoms** - they relate to patterns of behaviour like inhibited posture, fingernail biting, avoiding eye contact and erratic behaviour.
WHAT IS DEPRESSION AND WHAT ARE ITS SYMPTOMS?

Depression is a medical illness or a mental health disorder that negatively affects how a person feels, thinks and acts. It causes a feeling of sadness and loss of interest in activities which were once enjoyable for the person. Ultimately it reduces the person’s ability to function. Depression is a serious medical condition that should not be taken lightly.

The triggers for depression could be many – poor performance, personal loss, financial instability, non-selection in the team, retirement among others. Athlete depression is widely discussed as a topic these days and it is always advisable to seek professional help.

The symptoms of depression can be traced to four different components of a human being:

- **Feelings**: sadness, hopelessness, guilt, angry outbursts, etc.
- **Thoughts**: trouble in concentrating, decision making, memory along with delusions/hallucinations.
- **Behaviours**: withdrawing from people, substance abuse and attempting self harm.
- **Physical Problems**: lack of energy, changes in appetite, unexplained weight loss or gain, body aches, disruption in sleep.
WHEN MUST ONE SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP FOR DEPRESSION?

Mild depression is a common illness which can be taken care of at the beginning stage. However, if the depressed mood lasts for more than two weeks, it is advisable to consult a mental health professional as soon as possible.

The most common aspect of the mental health disorders is that the symptoms tend to change over time. Sometimes, one may feel that everything is under control when it is not. One should recognise the early signs of any erratic and unexpected behaviour.

When one encounters common symptoms such as the following, it is best to seek professional help:

- Thoughts of harming the self
- Difficulty in carrying out the most basic activities
- Difficulty in relationships
- Feeling like drinking or taking harmful drugs
- Sudden mood swings and erratic feelings
- Unusual change in weight or loss of appetite
- Feeling of hopelessness
WHAT IS THE ROLE OF GRIEVING? HOW CAN ONE DEAL WITH THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE, THROUGH DEATH, END OF A RELATIONSHIP OR OTHERWISE?

Grief is the natural response to a loss. The grieving process is an opportunity for the mind to appropriately mourn a loss and then heal. When a person loses someone or something valuable/dear to them, the brain triggers an emotion based on pain. This leads to a mental response of a feeling of grief.

There are certain basic things that might help a person in the grieving process:

• Letting the feelings be expressed and released: One shouldn’t refrain from having a good cry or listening to a particular song which reminds one of the person.

• Talking about it when one can: An effective way to cope with grief is to talk about it with people who are in the position of trust.

• Preserving memories: Anything which is related to the person and has memories associated with it- be it good or bad, is to be preserved.

• Meeting others who have gone through similar experiences.

While engaging with a person going through grief, it is always better to remain silent and listen or offer support (by saying things like “I am sorry for your loss, I am here for you”) rather than reason the loss (by saying things like “She did what she came here to do and it was her time to go” or “There is a reason for everything”).

To explain grieving, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross put forward a model which includes five stages:

• Stage 1: Denial – refusing to accept the reality of the loss

• Stage 2: Anger – feeling infuriated about the circumstances

• Stage 3: Bargaining – dwelling about the “What If” and “If Only”

• Stage 4: Depression – feeling hopeless and unable to carry on

• Stage 5: Acceptance – eventually accepting the loss and moving on

While this is a concept that can help with dealing with loss, it is not a standard model and varies from person to person. It is just a tool to help frame and identify what one feels.

Grieving is very normal, and almost everyone goes through it. But the problem begins if grief takes over life and one begins to feel helpless, hopeless, and worthless. When one acknowledges grief, finds support, and allows time for grief to work, one is in a much better position to handle the situation.
“I still miss him every day. My father passed away in 2014, just after I returned from playing my debut international series (T20 Internationals against Sri Lanka). Even when I step onto the field, I feel, he is watching me from somewhere.”

- Rajeshwari Gayakwad
HOW CAN ONE DEAL WITH BREAKS CAUSED BY INJURIES, POOR FORM, NON-SELECTION AND SIMILAR INCIDENTS?

For a cricketer, injury presents many challenges. All the progress made in the game comes to a halt. In addition, there is physical pain and discomfort of the treatment. This is the scenario, where commitment to the sport is really tested. It is, therefore, a phase which is best used in a positive way.

Every cricketer is bound to face a 'poor form' phase in a career. Often, poor form is a state of mind. While one can train to be as consistent as possible, it is impossible that one maintains top form throughout one’s career. One should accept this fact. Once this is has been accepted, one can look at changing thinking patterns. Then, if there are any technical shortcomings, those can be rectified with continuous practice. You should not let poor form define your abilities or bog you down and always be in a position to understand the reasons for it. It is best to avoid the reaction of the media and fans and take the opinion of people of trust, like senior players or coaches.

If one is not selected in a team, it is natural to be disappointed but what everybody observes is your attitude about it. One might be tempted to be angry, start a blame-game or quit but should rather approach people to further improve. If one continues to be active and hardworking, one is bound to improve and be able to prove one’s ability whenever provided with the chance.

An additional stressor is the pressure to win. This pressure can push one to emotional extremes. It must be accepted that performing at a high level is not completely in one’s control and all that one can do is to prepare properly.

This phase provides a chance for psychological strategies such as cognitive restructuring (i.e., preventing from engaging in self-defeating internal dialogues and encouraging positive self-talk to enhance motivation), imagery (i.e., visualising or seeing successful recorded past performances to enhance motivation and positive mindset), goal-setting and relaxation techniques. These techniques can also help deal with anxiety.
“The biggest lesson was that when you're out of form, your mindset is to keep thinking about things like “I've not scored, I've not scored.” And you don't really concentrate on the fact that you're actually running around. Earlier I used to put a lot of pressure on myself if I had not scored. I would go into a shell, then I would go into the next match in that zone. Now it's not like that. If I don't score, I know I'm at least running, doing everything else. So I just be grateful and keep playing. The day will come when I score runs again."

- Smriti Mandhana
HOW CAN ONE DEAL WITH THE MENTAL CHALLENGES THAT THE END OF A CAREER BRINGS?

For professional athletes, saying goodbye to the sport is unavoidable but one of the toughest things they have to do in their life. Athletes train extensively for years, in many cases, consuming the majority of their young lives but don’t anticipate what may occur when they retire.

Not all cricketers will enter retirement with ease and willingness; many will struggle with adapting to a “regular life”. It can be difficult to replace the days which were filled with rigorous training in the team environment, the time spent traveling and adrenaline rush of competing. The public support, recognition and adulation of fans could suddenly disappear. This is a time where one is prone to depression.

There are a number of good practices useful for handling retirement from sport:

- Preparing for post career opportunities during the last phase of the playing career.
- Avoiding exclusively identifying oneself with the sporting role and expanding self-identity to other pursuits.
- Discovering interests and competencies for other activities beyond the sport (perhaps considering coaching or the mentoring of other players).
- Acquiring stress management and time management skills.
- Consulting a sport psychologist to help explore further avenues and adaptation techniques.
- Expanding the social support group since the majority of one’s friends and associations will be from the cricket world; therefore, one could feel lonely and isolated immediately after retirement.
WHO ARE THE PROFESSIONALS TO CONSULT WHEN DEALING WITH DIFFERENT MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES?

The professionals who can help in this aspect are mental health professionals. These include Psychiatrists, Clinical Psychologists, Social workers and mental health counselors.

**Psychiatrists** are physicians who are certified in using the biomedical approach to treating mental health issues, including use of medications. They specialise in dealing with any type of mental disorders.

**Clinical psychologists** study psychology and apply it for the purpose of diagnosing and addressing mental disorders using a range of therapy based techniques.

**Sport psychologists** can work in collaboration with other experts to diagnose, treat and rehabilitate.

**A mental health counsellor** is similar to a counselor except he/she uses interaction based services to address mental health disorders.

All the professionals serve the same purpose but differ in the way they operate.

**Typical Process Flow:**
- Diagnosis
- Treatment
- Rehabilitation
- Monitoring
“I was waking up looking at the clock hoping the clock had stopped, or that a pylon had fallen on the field and the game had been canceled, or the stadium had collapsed – as long as there was no one in it, of course. You end up thinking of all sorts of ways you wouldn’t have to go to the ground.”

- Jonathan Trott about his hardship
## MENTAL HEALTH: USEFUL INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Mental Health challenge</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>The bodily response to pressure or threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>The feeling of worry and tension about something which is uncertain</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>The persistent feeling of sadness and hopelessness</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Eating disorder</td>
<td>A relationship with food that one finds difficult to manage</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Anger issues</td>
<td>Constantly expressing oneself through unhelpful or destructive behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Sleep disorders</td>
<td>Inability to sleep soundly and regularly</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Panic attack</td>
<td>An exaggeration of body’s normal response to fear, stress or excitement</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Disassociation</td>
<td>Severe detachment from reality post a traumatic event</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Loneliness</td>
<td>Feeling lonely persistently, even if surrounded by people</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Personality disorder</td>
<td>Erratic uncontrollable attitudes, beliefs and behaviours</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Paranoia</td>
<td>A feeling as if one is constantly under threat, fearing the unknown</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Psychosis</td>
<td>Perceiving or interpreting reality in a different way from people around you</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Seasonal affective disorder</td>
<td>Depression that one experiences at a particular time or season of year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Suicidal feelings</td>
<td>Being preoccupied with thoughts about ending one’s life</td>
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### CHECKLIST TO SELF-DIAGNOSE

**CLINICAL DEPRESSION:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Symptom</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Sadness and hopelessness</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Restlessness and easily irritated</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Trouble in concentration</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Loss of interest in activities and hobbies</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Indecisiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Lack of energy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Lack of sleep</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Unexplained change in weight</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Body aches</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Difficulty establishing and maintaining personal relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Reading:**

**Book:** Coming Back To Me: The Autobiography of Marcus Trescothick

**Online:** [https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2013/nov/25/cricket-depression-jonathan-trott-ashes](https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2013/nov/25/cricket-depression-jonathan-trott-ashes)
Mental health can affect how we think, feel and act. Your beliefs influence the emotions you experience. Seeking help is always better than suffering in silence.

There are techniques to cope with stress and anxiety. Depression is a medical condition and common in sport.

Check for symptoms to know if professional help is needed. Grief is a natural response, but don’t let it define your life. Seek the company of supportive people when injured.

Avoid identifying only as a cricketer, expand your pursuit. Speak out, seek help and support others in need.
PART 3
GROWING AS A PROFESSIONAL
SECTION 6

10 THINGS ABOUT LEGAL AND COMMERCIAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS
INTRODUCTION

As a professional cricketer, it is natural to encounter and be asked to sign a number of contracts. Have you ever looked at a legal contract and felt a bit worried about its length and confusing language? Have you signed contracts after only asking about their commercial value without understanding their full implications and terms? Have you ever felt that you have been cheated but are helpless because you signed a contract too quickly?

As your career progresses and you receive recognition for sporting achievements, commercial opportunities like sponsorships will open up. However, it is never too early to know about your rights and the laws that govern them. This section seeks to provide you basic awareness about contracts, provisions of the law and the scope of your rights under the law. This information will help you to be alert, aware and proactively protect yourself and your interests on your path to professional success.
WHAT IS MEANT BY “RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS”?

Rights and obligations form the basis of any deal or contractual arrangement between two parties. Simply put, rights are entitlements available with respect to the transaction while obligations refer to the duties that one is required to perform to hold up one’s end of the bargain. Each person must be granted certain rights and fulfill certain obligations in order for the transaction to be successful.

Obligations may vary depending on the opposite party one is contracting with. Generally one is entitled to enjoy one’s rights only if one performs one’s obligations in return. It is the concept of “give and take”. If someone is giving you something of value, you should expect that they will want something in return then or at a later point. This exchange is the basis of most human relationships.

Each person is the owner of certain personal rights. These include one’s name, appearance, likeness and image. This means that no one can use, for commercial purposes, the name, images or other identification that represents an individual without seeking permission and a license whether or not for a fee. Similarly one has the right to choose when and how to render services including playing in matches, appearing at events, etc., and one cannot be compelled to do these without one’s consent.
WHAT IS A CONTRACT? HOW CAN A CONTRACT BE CONCLUDED AND WHAT SHOULD ONE KEEP IN MIND WHEN ENTERING INTO A CONTRACT?

A contract is a valid agreement between two parties which can be enforced in a court of law. The enforceability of a contract is determined by certain conditions such as: the contract must contain an offer which has been accepted and provide value in some form for both parties. This can include a fee, a promise to do something or other value. Further, a party should not be compelled or manipulated into signing a contract, and must have entered it of free will; the subject matter involved should be lawful and legal.

You must be careful while entering into contracts. While oral contracts are acceptable as a form of contract, it is difficult to prove their validity in a court of law. Therefore, written contracts are more reliable and should always be insisted on. One cannot sign a valid contract before attaining the age of majority – i.e., 18 years. A contract for the benefit of a minor may be signed on his or her behalf by a parent or legal guardian. When one turns 18, one will have the opportunity to ratify/sign or reject all contracts that were signed by the parent/guardian.

If all that was relevant in a contract was the fees, it would be only one paragraph long.

It is natural for one to look at the amount of money that one is receiving under a contract and end at that. However, one should receive advice and understand the full legal implications of the contract before signing. It will help to avoid agreeing to something that limits future opportunities or hampers behaviour in ways that are not desired.

Most often, contracts are not “take it or leave it”. A contract presented by someone else will be drafted in a manner most favourable to that person. The first draft offered should act as a starting point and not the last and final offer. It is important to provide comments and feedback on a contract and to attempt to have the contract reflect one’s desired positions through a negotiation process. One who is aware of one’s rights and is willing to stand up for own interests is always likely to be taken more seriously and, in the long run, will always get a better deal.
WHAT REMEDIES ARE AVAILABLE IF A CONTRACT IS BREACHED OR VIOLATED?

A breach or violation of a contract occurs when one person does not deliver or fulfill his or her part of the bargain, or does anything that the contract prohibits. There are four remedies available in such cases: rescission of contract, damages, specific performance and injunction.

**Rescission of Contract:** The most common remedy is for the non-breaching party to rescind the contract. This means that if there is a breach of contract, the non-breaching party is not required to continue fulfilling his obligations and may terminate the contract. This remedy is usually resorted to in addition to other remedies. In simple terms, when one party stops performing its obligation, the other party can stop as well.

**Damages:** Any person who suffers by breach or violation of a contract can institute a suit in court for damages. ’Damages’ means compensation in terms of money for the loss suffered by the injured party. Normally, a contract would mention the penalty for such a situation. For example, if one agrees to appear at a particular event in accordance with an appearance contract and fails to appear on the scheduled date, there may be a liability to pay damages to the other party for breach of the contract and loss caused.

**Specific performance:** Specific performance is an order of the court that the defaulting party should perform the contract according to its terms and conditions. This remedy is available in two cases: when one cannot calculate the damages from non-performance of an act that is not capable of substitution or where the breach of a contract relates to failure in transferring certain specific products. However, Indian courts have held that specific performance of contracts for personal services like endorsements and appearances is not enforceable.

**Injunction:** An injunction is generally a court order to refrain from doing a particular act. For example, a company could obtain an injunction to restrict one from signing an endorsement agreement with a rival brand for the duration of the contract in order to prevent a breach of the contract. In simple terms, the court protects the non-breaching party from further harm or anticipated harm by curbing the breaching party’s conduct.
WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF CONTRACTS ONE CAN EXPECT TO SIGN IN PROFESSIONAL SPORT?

It is likely that you will be presented with multiple opportunities to enter into arrangements with different people and entities. Here are some examples:

**Playing Contracts:** These contracts include engagements where your services could be sought in the capacity of a professional. Such engagements could be with a club, the state cricket association or the national association. These contracts are generally standard contracts that are delivered to all cricketers engaged, though the fees may vary by seniority and performance. The cricketer may also be approached by authorized private leagues to become a member of a team and participate in the league.

**Sponsorship Contracts:** Individual sponsorships are quite common in professional sport, these may be a mixture of monetary and value in kind (likely to be cricket equipment). These contracts set out the rights and obligations of each the cricketer (often, to use the product) and the sponsor (for example, the quantity of products and/or payments to be received as well as the timelines).

**Endorsement Contracts:** Endorsement contracts govern relationships with the manufacturers/promoters of products or services you may have agreed to endorse and promote in exchange for compensation. These contracts contain specific responsibilities that you may be required to fulfill. For instance, you may have to agree not to use a competitor’s product or service in the same category, to dedicate a certain number of days for commercial shoots and a commitment to publicise the products and services on your social media channels.

**Appearance Contracts:** Appearance contracts allow for compensation for appearing at public functions. For example, you might be invited to speak or participate in a cricket camp or tournament, attend a product launch or a store opening. The terms of such appearances and the compensation rates are established in these contracts.

**Contract for Representation with a Sports Agent:** These contracts set out the terms under and the extent to which a sports agent may manage and grant your commercial rights to third parties, as well as the commission payable to the agent for each commercial deal negotiated by the agent on the cricketer’s behalf. Further, these contracts also specify the payment schedule, and the approvals that the sports agent might need from you before signing contracts on your behalf.
Know your Contract!

- A contract is a valid agreement between two parties which can be enforced in a court of law.
- Written contracts are more reliable than oral contracts or verbal agreements as there is evidence of what has been agreed.
- You should not be compelled or manipulated into signing a contract; you must enter it of free will.
- You cannot sign a valid contract before attaining the age of majority – i.e., 18 years.
- Understand the full legal implications of the contract; the money is just one part of it.
- Provide feedback on a contract and take it through a negotiation process; do not blindly agree to the terms.
- A breach or violation of a contract occurs when one party does anything that the contract prohibits.
- There are remedies available if your contract is breached and consequences if you breach them.
- There are different types of contracts in sport and you should always identify the purpose.
- Being aware of your rights and standing up for your interests is key to sustained professional success.
- Seek legal advice before entering into any contract.
WHAT ARE SPONSORSHIPS AND ENDORSEMENTS?
WHAT MUST ONE KEEP IN MIND BEFORE GRANTING SUCH RIGHTS TO THIRD PARTIES?

Sponsorship is a marketing tool used by a company or an organisation where it pays an individual for some or all of the professional costs involved in return for recognition. It is natural, once you are reasonably successful, that you will attract the attention of sponsors. There are a whole host of sponsors involved in professional sport. Some sponsor teams, others sponsor individual players. In terms of individual sponsorships, a cricketer’s first few sponsors are likely to be those for equipment. The sponsorships may be merely in-kind (where you are given the equipment free) or monetary (where you are paid to exclusively use the equipment provided).

Endorsement is when one publicly shows support for a particular product, service or brand. To endorse something means to vouch for its quality and to suggest its use to others. In return, one gets some sort of ‘compensation’ (most likely fees) for the endorsement. Other forms of compensation such as sweat equity may also be offered. An endorsement has a much more personal touch than a sponsorship. When an individual endorses something, they are publicly saying that they ‘recommend’ or ‘suggest’ others to try a particular product because they think it’s good. The brand may use the endorser’s name, likeness and image for promotional activities during the term of the agreement. This may extend to obligations to make posts on social media channels.

Early on in the career, you might be tempted to take up every commercial offer that you receive. However, the ability to refuse the wrong relationships early on increases long term brand value and makes you more attractive once you are an established international sportsperson. It is in your best interests to be mindful in accepting associations that match your personality and long term interests. Ultimately one’s reputation is influenced by the company one keeps and that includes the brands one endorses to the public.

Besides the commercial endorsements, as an influential member of society, one could consider endorsing social or other causes that one believes in, would like to be associated with or would like to contribute towards. Ideally, a social cause should be something that has affected you on a personal level and something you can speak about with passion and understanding.
Being aware of your rights and standing up for your interests is always beneficial in the long run.
You have the chance to establish your identity and value in the market using your personality and sporting achievements. All individual cricketers can be considered as brands because every cricketer has a name, distinctive appearance, reputation and a public personality. You have the chance to establish your identity and value in the market using your personality and sporting achievements.
WHAT IS LICENSING AND MERCHANDISING? WHAT MUST ONE KEEP IN MIND BEFORE GRANTING SUCH RIGHTS TO THIRD PARTIES?

In the sporting context, the terms licensing and merchandising are used to refer to arrangements between sporting teams or individual sportspersons and the producers of merchandise and related products.

**Licensing** involves the grant of right by a sportsperson to the use of the name, image, likeness, or other facets of the personality for promotional purposes.

**Merchandising** arrangements are generally the right to brand merchandise and products with symbols, logos and emblems, and this right is much sought after by different kinds of manufacturers. For instance, a cricketer may grant a manufacturer the right to brand products with his or her name or use a signature on the product packaging.

There are several aspects to be considered prior to granting any licensing or merchandising rights. In particular, the following must be subject to careful deliberation, and should be captured as part of any licensing and merchandising contract entered into by the cricketer:

- **Approval for Quality Control of Merchandise:** This permits one to examine the merchandise and ensure that the quality of the products is to your satisfaction and pre-determined standards. This is important as product quality reflects on one's brand reputation, given that it bears one's name.

- **Guarantee of Marketing Spend and Sales Efforts:** It is desirable that the manufacturer provides an assurance to make best efforts to ensure maximum sales of the licensed merchandise. This can be achieved through a minimum marketing spend, a minimum guarantee in terms of royalty payable to the cricketer and/or a minimum annual sales target with commercial consequences for failure to reach the target.

- **License Fees and Royalties:** The fixed license fees to be paid, as well as the percentage of the profits to be paid out as royalties must be decided and captured in the contract to establish the commercial basis of the transaction.
WHAT ARE COMPONENTS OF BRAND VALUE? HOW CAN IT BE ACTIVELY ENHANCED?

A brand is something that has created awareness, reputation and prominence in a unique way in the marketplace. The value that is attached to the brand is usually referred to as brand value. This value is both economic and emotional. It makes the brand special, distinct and creates a certain appeal to the potential consumers of the brand.

Considering that successful sportspersons tend to be public personalities, either at a local or a national level, it is likely that the use of their attributes can have an impact on the market. All individual cricketers can be considered as brands because every cricketer has a name, distinctive appearance, reputation and a public personality. One has the chance to establish one’s identity and value in the market using one’s name, face, personality and sporting achievements.

You can develop ways to protect the brand value through your career. You should attempt to connect with brands that you truly believe in and must educate yourself about its products and services. Leveraging brand value while exercising commercial rights can help you maximise your financial returns and create future opportunities.

Being aware of and further developing brand value adds immense commercial utility. Early in your career, you may have to choose to work with brands and people that will use platforms in the media to make you more widely recognised. You can also grow your brand by utilising digital and social media proactively. The public generally connects with honesty and authenticity as much as it does with performance. Unlike performance, these qualities are always in your control and can help you build your brand.
WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A SPORTS AGENT OR A TALENT MANAGER?

A sports agent or a talent manager is a person or organisation that can represent one in one’s professional dealings with other entities. As an indicative example, a sports agent/manager would work with one’s sponsors to negotiate and execute contracts, receive payments, coordinate appearances and schedules, and also put effort to make sure one gets exposure for one’s performances. With a sports agent to look into the commercial matters, one’s focus can remain on cricket.

Agents represent the cricketer to the outside world and convey the image that the cricketer is seeking to portray. It is important that one knows and likes the appointed agent and the agent invests time and effort in getting to know and understand his/her client because it is going to be a crucial relationship as a career progresses. They can add additional value by coordinating regularly with coaches, trainers and others monitoring career progress and performances and providing constructive feedback from these various sources. The agent can also assist with career and post-career planning.

The right time for signing up with an agent depends on the circumstances. To build a solid platform for the career, one must work with an agent who isn’t looking to commercialise too soon, as this might prevent long-term and reputable brand associations. Also, in terms of creation of playing opportunities, agents play a much smaller role at the junior level but may start playing a larger role as a career progresses.

In most cases, the agent receives a commission, which is a percentage of the commercial opportunities that are generated or sourced by the agent. One may also choose to pay the agent a monthly professional fee or retainer for regular tasks he or she undertakes on one’s behalf such as liaising, coordinating, seeking opportunities, accounting, tax filings, press relations, investment management, travel arrangements and scheduling. Generally, agent commissions hover around 7.5-15% of earnings and can go up to about 20% in some exceptional cases.

With regard to entry into contracts or other legal obligations, the agent could create the opportunity but the final call should always be yours and you should make this call after gaining full information and context.
WHAT ARE THE THINGS TO CONSIDER WHILE DEVELOPING A RELATIONSHIP WITH A SPORTS AGENT OR TALENT MANAGER?

A good way to identify potential agents or talent managers is by speaking with fellow cricketers. Senior cricketers who one trusts will often be able to give good recommendations for agents, their practices, and ethics and the pros and cons of associating with them.

You must take the following aspects into account to discuss and capture them in your representation agreement with your agent.

**Exclusivity:** In most cases, the agent will want a cricketer to appoint him/her as an exclusive agent representing the cricketer in all commercial and career related opportunities so that the agent can focus and dedicate efforts and be rewarded for them. A cricketer must enter into an exclusive relationship only when one is confident that the agent in question is able to provide him/her all the services required and has the cricketer's best interests at heart.

**Term/Period:** This refers to the intended duration of the contract. Often, contracts with agents are long-term contracts while other contracts are for shorter durations and have renewal provisions under which the contract may be extended for further periods. The agent will try and retain the option to have a longer term association while it is usually in a cricketer's best interest to have a contract that lasts for short durations and may be re-evaluated each year before being renewed or extended.

**Minimum guarantee:** A minimum guarantee refers to the amount of money that a cricketer is entitled to receive from the agent regardless of whether or how the agent creates commercial opportunities. Only a few sportspersons at the very highest level command minimum guarantees. Such minimum guarantees might not be advisable early in a career as they motivate agents to extract short-term value rather than carefully and thoughtfully lay the platform for building the brand.

**Agent commission:** This is the percentage of the commercial earnings that is retained by the agent. One should be clear how that share will be calculated and if the share includes salaries, awards, etc., or merely the commercial opportunities that are sourced by the agent. It is important that the agent has adequate incentives
to further the client's interest but the share should not be so high as to exploit the client.

**Territory:** A cricketer's rights may be broken up by territory and it must be clear in the contract whether the agent is representing the cricketer worldwide, in India or in any other territories.

**Right of first refusal:** The agent will often want the right to renew his or her association with the cricketer even after the term of the contract is over. This may be achieved through a right of first refusal clause in the contract which aims to give the agent the right to match the best commercial offer that the cricketer receives from another person and continue the relationship with the cricketer on these revised terms. A right of first refusal clause that extends beyond the period of the contract is not enforceable under Indian law. This means that a cricketer is free to negotiate with anyone once the contract period is over without obligations to the previous agent.

**Break-fee/Transfer-fee:** More recently, a number of agents are including break-fees or transfer-fees in the event that the cricketer terminates the contract and signs up with another agent. Although the legality of these clauses is unclear, it is important that the cricketer avoids accepting such terms as these are first and foremost, service contracts and revisions are always client driven.

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**About the Sports Agent/Talent Manager:**

- A sports agent/talent manager is a person/organisation who can represent you in your professional dealings.
- Choose your agent wisely; it is a crucial relationship as your career progresses.
- Agents could create a commercial opportunity but the final call to take it up should always be yours.
- Agent commissions need to be negotiated wisely; it should incentivise actions of the agent but the share should not be too high either.
- Ideally, sign a contract with your agent that lasts for short durations and may be re-evaluated each year or at regular intervals.
- You are free to negotiate with anyone once the contract period is over without obligations to the previous agent.
- A contract must specify whether the agent is representing you worldwide, in India or in any other territories and whether the representation is “exclusive”.

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WHO ARE THE PROFESSIONALS TO APPROACH REGARDING CONTRACTUAL, LEGAL AND COMMERCIAL ASPECTS THAT COME UP IN A CAREER?

Lawyers: It is always a good idea to consult a lawyer before one signs a contract or if one has any questions on contractual, legal and commercial matters. Lawyers understand the legal implications of contracts, as there are many contractual clauses that could affect commercial opportunities that may arise down the line. The lawyer can also assist with negotiations on getting one the most favorable deal structure and protect one’s broader interests.

Accountants: In respect of commercial, tax and financial matters, having a trusted chartered accountant is crucial. While one should aim to hire a chartered accountant to help with accounting and tax filings, ideally an accountant will also participate in and advise on the structuring of contracts and transactions. One’s lawyers can consult with the accountant while documenting the transaction.

Sports agents or Talent Managers: The importance and role of a sports agent or talent managers in the cricketer’s career have been discussed in the questions above, and the relationship of a cricketer with the sports agent would likely enable the cricketer to seek advice and draw on the agent’s connections, networks, experience and expertise in the sporting industry.

In addition to these professionals, you may also seek advice from the senior team members who might have faced similar situations, and also team or federation officials who may have experience in recurring matters that may be encountered as a part of being a professional cricketer in India.
Virender Sehwag's records, match winning performances and the post-career persona he has built make him an active professional in his post-career. He has mentored teams, done television shows, cricket commentary, is active on social media and is a popular brand ambassador.
SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION OF COMMERCIAL RIGHTS

**Cricketer’s Rights:**

- Rights to commercialise the personal name, images, likeness and attributes
- Personal endorsement rights
- Ownership of social media accounts
- Rights to control appearances
- Rights to use one’s chosen equipment (tools of trade) and attach sponsor logos thereon (subject to equipment and sponsorship regulations)

Note: The exercise of these rights are subject to League/Tournament/Team Rights as well as the nature of the contract and league/tournament rules.

**Team Rights:**

- Team branding rights, including branding on player jerseys
- Team sponsorship rights, including appearances by team members and in stadia branding
- Team merchandising and licensing rights, including the right to license team specific apparel and merchandise
- Right to utilise player appearances and images for promotion of the team and its sponsors and partners
- Team ticketing rights

**League/Tournament Organiser Rights:**

- League branding rights, including branding on jerseys of all teams
- League sponsorship rights including appearances by participating players and in stadia branding
- League merchandising and licensing rights, including the right to license online fantasy games, video games, card games etc
- Right to utilise team logos and player images for promotion of the league and its sponsors and partners
- League broadcasting rights
- League ticketing rights

Additional Reading:

Online: http://sportslaw.in/home/2014/04/21/faqs-on-sports-agents-for-indian-athletes/
Rights are your entitlements, obligations are your duties.

There is much more to a contract than just the fees.

Know the remedies and consequences for a breach of contract.

Learn about the product/service before accepting a sponsorship or endorsement.

Don’t be tempted by every commercial offer, think long term.

Using your name or image in a brand promotion requires a license and you can charge a fee.

You are a brand; be aware of your brand value.

Sports agents can play a crucial role in your career; choose wisely.

Know what you want before contracting with an agent.

Always consult a lawyer before signing a contract.
SECTION 7

10 THINGS ABOUT MANAGING MONEY
INTRODUCTION

Financial activity can be defined as an activity that involves money. Managing money by planning, organising, and controlling financial activities is referred to as Financial Planning. Its basic objective is to be able to use the money and other resources available at a certain point in a reasonable way and create a base for all future goals and purposes.

You might have a lot of questions regarding financial planning. You could be curious about the various sources of income in professional cricket. “What is the role of savings?” “Do I need insurance?” “How should I invest my money?” are all common questions. You might also want to know the kind of professionals who could assist you.

Reading through this section will make you aware of good practices and benefits of managing your money. Awareness of such practices helps in preparing for all the challenges of a career. You will also be able to create business and growth opportunities for yourself in the future. Sports careers may be short but good financial planning can help use the money earned during a career and apply it to meet long term goals.
WHAT IS MEANT BY FINANCIAL PLANNING?

Financial Planning helps one make decisions about money. It involves laying out one’s life goals, analysing one’s current financial position, identifying personal needs and creating an appropriate road map for the future. It also involves monitoring and reviewing the situation at regular intervals once the road map is implemented.

Professional cricketers generally spend a bulk of their time in training to master their sport. However, it is good to be aware of financial planning as well. While there might be individuals among family and friends in a position of trust to assist on this matter, there is a chance that they might lack the financial literacy that is required to manage finances professionally. It is therefore advisable to also seek professional help in this regard.

Good financial planning helps an individual to:

- Have a clear direction and plan to life
- Reduce stress about goals and expectations
- Be prepared for unexpected events
- Make informed financial decisions
- Maintain composure while dealing with important life events
WHAT ARE VARIOUS SOURCES OF INCOME IN PROFESSIONAL SPORT?

The income pattern of athletes is unique as compared to other professions.

Factors that could adversely affect the income sources of professional cricketer include:

- Serious physical injuries
- Non-performance
- Short span of career

It is therefore important that any money received is managed well by finding the right balance between spending and saving.

Here are a few common sources of an established professional cricketer’s income:

- Prize money and match fees
- Endorsements paid for with cash, equity or goods
- Special prizes, in cash or kind (e.g., Best Player awards)
- Salaries and wages from the federation or a professional club
- Interest earned on savings through deposits, bonds and savings certificates
- Rental from any property owned
- Profits on disposal of assets
- Dividend income and profits from Stocks and Mutual funds

Due to the diversity in the sources of income, the earnings of an athlete tend to be a bit erratic. Income may be limited during the start of a career but success and recognition usually brings a sudden spurt in income. For example, success in World Cups is bound to attract a lot of media attention and, thus, bring in sponsorship opportunities. Moreover, getting to be a part of any professional league like the IPL might also increase earnings.
WHAT ARE SAVINGS? HOW CAN THEY BE INITIATED AND THEIR VALUE ENHANCED?

Saving is income that is not spent. The surplus funds left from your income, after meeting all your expenses would be your savings. Once you have assured savings you can think about investments. Saving is important for a sports person because of the unique income pattern and uncertainty involving sports careers.

The value of savings can be further enhanced in many ways. One such way is to open a Deposit Account with a bank. It is an account which is used to preserve money and in return, the bank pays interest for depositing the amount.

However, for significantly enhancing the value of savings, investment is the best option. Once the personal expenses like utilities, loan installments, rent, and insurance premium are taken care of, a part of the remaining amount can go into investments. There are various tools like stocks, bonds and mutual funds available for this purpose but the choice depends on the amount of risk one wants to take and what scale of return one hopes to receive.
WHAT ARE THE VARIOUS FORMS OF INVESTMENT AND WHAT IS A BALANCED INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO?

Investments involve putting money to use in the expectation of some benefit in the future. The benefit from the investment is called a return. Investments help an individual to use the resources available at present to avail benefits out of them in the future.

There are many ways in which one can make wise investments. In any case, identifying the aim of investment is one of the most crucial steps since this will give one a fair idea about the investment tool to go for. There are low-risk as well as high-risk financial tools in the market with potential returns often related to the risks involved. Experts suggest that younger cricketers in their earning prime should opt for high-risk high-return products while older cricketers or those nearing their retirement should go for something that is low on risk and offers low to moderate returns. Different stages of a career will have different financial demands, so one needs to invest thoughtfully.

The nature of investments should be diverse. Having a diverse portfolio spreads the risk and reduces the burden on a single investment. For example, a cricket team of 11 players aims for a perfect mix of batters, bowlers and all-rounders. Every player has his/her own specialisation. Similarly, an investment portfolio too should aim to have the right mix of asset classes like equities, bonds, real estate & gold. A balanced investment portfolio can deliver stable returns over the long run, beating inflation and acting as a tool for wealth creation.

There are many benefits of investments:

- Investments can help to earn income from the accumulated wealth. For example, earning rent from a real estate investment like a home.
- Tax minimisation can be achieved by investing money in various financial products that are available.
- Distant financial goals, both long-term as well as short-term, can be planned and fulfilled by making intelligent and relevant investments.
- Investing wisely from a young age can help one pre-empt any financial difficulties post career and enable a smooth retirement.
LIFECYCLE OF A PROFESSIONAL CRICKETER

Training: 12-18 years is a stage when parents support a cricketer in their coaching and he/she begins to train seriously enough to build a career out of the sport.

First representation: Typically, 18-23 years is a stage where one will have first major representations usually through participation in U19s, State or District level teams. This could be accompanied by a government/private employment.

Peak: 22-35 years is the stage when one is at the peak of one’s career with opportunities to represent Zone/Country at various National and International Level competitions.

1st Retirement: Around the age of 35, a cricketer retires from the sport and faces a big change of routine.

Alternate career: 30-40 years is a stage when athletes embark on an alternate career, be it coaching, mentoring, commentating and media work, employment or entrepreneurship. This phase is also when one’s personal life often undergoes changes, including marriage, children, education, purchase of house, etc.

Retirement: Around the age of 55-65, one might undergo final retirement from all professions.

The financial plan needs to acknowledge this lifecycle.
WHAT IS “SWEAT EQUITY” AND WHAT SHOULD ONE BE AWARE OF WHEN ENTERING INTO SUCH A TRANSACTION?

The term “sweat equity” explains the ownership stake issued instead of fees to an individual who contributes time and effort (i.e., “sweat”) to a project, product or company.

While engaging in transactions that involve sweat equity, one must be careful in selecting the association. This is because accepting sweat equity positions one as the owner of a company. One needs to be watchful of the message that the association is sending out and should make sure that it is not creating any damage to one’s reputation.

One should also be able to value the sweat equity and the risks associated appropriately to make sure one is being compensated adequately. It should be measured in terms of the commitment, the value-added to the overall goals of the brand and the risks involved. While the company one has equity in may grow and succeed, there is also a chance that it may not. In such a scenario, one’s equity will lose its value. One can take professional legal and financial help in understanding and evaluating each proposition.

Often, athletes receive sweat equity when they endorse a product. This is common when endorsements relate to start up companies or new product lines. As the value of the company grows, so does the ownership stake or equity. If structured well this can be a win-win for both the endorser and the endorsed.
WHAT IS THE ROLE OF INSURANCE?
WHAT TYPES OF INSURANCE ARE AVAILABLE?

Insurance is a means of protection from the risk of financial loss. It is an arrangement by which a company undertakes to provide a guarantee of compensation in case of specified loss, damage, illness or death in return for payment of a specified premium.

For an athlete, insurance serves as an alternate form of investment and risk management because of the unique income pattern involved. It safeguards the interests of the athlete’s family for their well-being.

Insurance consists of numerous sub categories.

_Some types of insurance are particularly relevant to a sports person:_

**Life Insurance:** This insurance coverage that will yield a certain amount of money to the insured or their specified beneficiaries upon an event such as the death of the individual. For an athlete, insuring himself or herself is necessary because in case of unforeseen circumstances, his or her family will be benefitted with a predetermined amount. There are two common types of Life insurance policy: **term insurance plans** which offer financial coverage for a specific period of time in case of the unforeseen event and **unit-linked insurance** which offers both financial coverage as well as an investment opportunity.

**Health Insurance:** This is insurance against the risk of incurring medical expenses in case of an accident, illness, disability, or accidental death and dismemberment. Often an athlete undergoes rigorous training which might result in injuries or health ailments. Health insurance is useful in such circumstances.

**General Insurance:** This is an insurance policy that protects one against losses and damages other than those covered by life insurance and health insurance. This includes valuable assets such as vehicles, home, jewelry, etc. Also as athletes travel frequently, it is common to opt for travel insurance; an amount is paid in case of unforeseen circumstance, including illness, during travel.

One has to be very careful about how and when one can avail the insurance money. A lot of policies come with conditions, limitations and clauses that one must read carefully and understand completely before buying the policy.

Insurance can protect from being stumped while taking risks in life!
It is natural for cricketers to live in the moment and take up challenges as they come. But you need to consider that a cricket career is a short one. So, sufficient attention should be given to the long term future at all stages. This process should ideally begin early in the career to prevent any issues towards the end stages.
A cricket team of 11 players has a perfect mix of batters, bowlers and all-rounders. Every player has his own specialisation. Similarly, an investment portfolio too should be both balanced and diverse. A good portfolio can deliver stable returns over the long run, beating inflation and acting as a tool for wealth creation.
“I signed many documents without reading their contents. I visited a notary’s office to go through with setting up a company to handle the finances without understanding what was going on...”

- Lionel Messi on Tax fraud case

The tax systems are different in different countries and it is important for individuals to know about the new locale’s tax laws before earning income or doing business in each relevant country. Taxes paid in one country can be credited to tax returns in your home country in certain cases, so it is important to seek and maintain all relevant documentation.

If one’s earnings exceed the nominated annual minimum slab, one owes income taxes and other taxes on earnings. It is very important that cricketers perform their tax obligations, especially considering the number of people who look up to them as role models. Getting embroiled in tax evasion issues can severely harm one’s reputation and standing.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF TAXES ONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT AND PAY?

Taxes are generally an involuntary fee charged by a government entity on individuals or corporations in order to be able to fund public activities. The idea is that the state charges taxes to fund various public works and welfare services that they offer. This payment is compulsory and the failure to pay one’s full tax is called tax evasion. This is punishable by law. The amount of tax is decided by the rates and percentages, which are usually declared during the annual budget and specified in a finance law.

There are two main types of taxes – direct taxes and indirect taxes.

Direct taxes are those where the money is paid directly to the government.

These include:
- Income Tax – applies to income of all sorts, including cash.
- Wealth Tax – applies to the total value of personal assets.
- Corporation Tax – applies to the income or capital of corporations.

GST (Goods and Service Tax) now replaces most indirect taxes like excise duty, service tax, sales tax, VAT, entry tax, entertainment tax, luxury tax, etc.
HOW CAN ONE SAVE MONEY THROUGH TAX PLANNING?

Tax planning refers to those aspects of financial planning that especially refers to taxes. The purpose of tax planning is to enable an individual to minimise the money to be paid as tax while ensuring all rules are followed. Tax planning is an important part of a financial plan as this involves a big portion of the earnings over time.

There are many opportunities to ensure that taxation is legally minimised. There are specific tax laws that could apply to earnings from sport. It is important to keep track of each of the countries in which one is earning money and how many days a year one spends in those countries.

Some of the things to consider while tax planning are:

- Various tax deductions – this reduces the amount of money that will be taxed.
- Possibility of income averaging – this compensates for sudden high income.
- Income earned overseas – ensuring that one pays the minimum possible tax in different countries and claims these credits.
- Tax free bonds – investment options that won’t be taxed.
- Minimising Capital Gains Tax - for those who have invested in assets.
HOW CAN FINANCIAL PLANNING BE BENEFICIAL POST RETIREMENT?

What is Estate Planning?

It is natural for cricketers to live in the moment and take up challenges as they come. However, one needs to consider that a cricket career is often a short one compared to other careers. So, sufficient attention should be given to the long term future at all stages. This process should ideally begin early in a career to prevent the onset of panic towards the end stages.

There are several examples of cricketers who have ventured into diverse fields of business and enterprise. Every day, one comes across news about a former cricketer who has opened a new venture or engaged in social work. This was possible because of good financial planning.

Estate Planning is a crucial part of financial planning which ensures the management of your estate during and beyond your lifetime and plans your legacy. Estate includes your business assets, real estate, equities, cars, personal belongings, life insurance policies, pension policies and other financial assets. Tools for estate planning include joint holding investments, nomination, making the Will, establishing a trust, gifts, power of attorney etc.

Long term planning and making informed investments brings a lot of advantages for cricketers post retirement.

Here are some of the advantages of financial planning for post retirement:

• Being able to manage income well and preventing overspending in the initial days.

• Providing support and security to the family and ensuring that one is able to cater to their aspirations.

• Ensuring a good standard of living for oneself and one’s family post retirement.

• Minimising loss of money due to taxes.

• Reducing the need to take large risks with money for high returns.

• Enabling alternate livelihood opportunities to take up after cricket.
WHO ARE THE PROFESSIONALS TO APPROACH TO HELP WITH MANAGING FINANCES?

**Financial Advisors:** A financial advisor is a planning partner. These professionals can help one set financial goals and then figure out how to make them a reality. There are many topics that a financial advisor touches upon including; how much money to save, what types of accounts one needs, different kinds of loans available, appropriate insurance schemes as well as tax planning topics. Just like a doctor would do with the physical health, an advisor starts by helping individuals understand their financial health and then, suggests the practical way forward.

**Some of the other professionals include:**

**Wealth Manager:** Helps one to manage one's wealth. These professionals are similar to financial advisors but specifically advise high net worth individuals. A lot of banks / Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFC) have wealth managers associated with them.

**Chartered Accountant:** Offers financial advice, audits accounts and provides trustworthy information about financial records. These professionals can also help one with filing tax returns and auditing one's accounts.

**Insurance Agents:** Help people select among the different insurance schemes that are available and facilitate the process of buying an insurance policy that best suits a client need.

**Typical Process Flow:**

- Setting financial goals.
- Building investment portfolio.
- Monitoring the investments.
- Evaluating results and updating the portfolio.
## FINANCIAL PLANNING OVERVIEW:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Solution</th>
<th>Savings</th>
<th>Wealth Creation</th>
<th>Protection Needed</th>
<th>Loans Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 - 22 Years</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High (For Self)</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High investment needs with regards to equipment, coaching facilities and training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 - 27 Years</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High (For Self)</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent increase in flow of income, owing to representation, sponsorships, prize money, endorsements and other commitments.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 - 35 Years</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High (For Self)</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peak in income earning capacity.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>35 - 40 Years</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High (For Family)</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudden lifestyle change due to retirement. Focus shift to the family.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 55 Years</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High (For Family)</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settled into alternate career. Need for eventual retirement based planning.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Reading:**
- Online: [http://www.tradingeconomics.com/india/interest-rate](http://www.tradingeconomics.com/india/interest-rate)
A financial plan helps you make wise decisions about money. Income will come from a variety of sources. Don't just save, enhance your savings.

Choosing investments is like choosing the players in a team, find a balance. Accept sweat equity and value it only after careful thought.

Insurance can protect you from the risk of financial loss. Tax systems are different in different countries, be aware. Tax planning can help minimise the taxes you pay.

Cricket careers are short; invest for long term returns. Meet a financial advisor today.
SECTION 8

10 THINGS ABOUT MEDIA INTERACTIONS
INTRODUCTION

As a professional athlete, it is inevitable that you also become a public personality. Media connect us to other people, including followers of the sport, fans and members of the public. It is the platform through which the outside world gets to know about you, your greatest gifts, and your highest achievements. The media creates awareness about the performances, the personal struggles and puts them in context. This helps in establishing your reputation and therefore, creates opportunities to inspire and grow.

Given this role, you might want to know more about the media. Firstly, you might be curious about the various types of media and the journalists who might approach you. You might have questions like “How should I speak with media people?”, “What can I do to avoid media controversies?”, or “How can I respond to negative coverage about me?” Social media are becoming very popular these days and you might also want to know how best to use them. You might come across several kinds of media professionals but want to be able to pick the right ones to interact with.

This section can help you to understand the various roles and benefits of the media. By going through it, you will be able to prepare well for all kinds of media interactions. This will enable you to establish your identity, tell your story, be presentable to the public and create positive influence.
WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES AND CATEGORIES OF MEDIA?

Print media include newspapers, magazines and other publications. It is the oldest type of media and its reach is generally referred to as ‘readership’.

Broadcast media include television, radio and other productions. It is relatively new when compared to the print media and its reach is referred to as ‘viewership’ or ‘listenership’.

Digital media are the newest form of media and are a collection of all information sources available online. The information is generally made available at ‘websites’ or through apps which provide text, audio, as well as video information. These days, most print and broadcast media have online versions as well.

The person collecting, writing or distributing news and other current information on the various platforms is called a journalist. When a journalist writes about or “covers” something, it is called coverage. Generally, a cricketer could be approached by journalists from newspapers of many languages, magazines (news and lifestyle) and television channels. In sport, television channels generally provide information about “who” won and “how” one performed; print media addresses “why” the performance was important.

Any and all communication tools and platforms that are used to give information and data to the public are referred to as media. There are primarily three categories of media - print, broadcast and digital.

The newest media are social media. Social media is an internet-based communication platform that enables people to create, share and exchange information, ideas and life developments through virtual communities or ‘networks’. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat are common examples of these networks.

Unlike the traditional forms of media, social media offers platforms where the content is generated by the user himself or herself. In sport, social media helps the athlete in establishing a direct connection with peers, friends, fans and the wider world. While traditional media enables one to establish one’s presence, social media can help from then on to maintain and grow relationships as well as bring in professional opportunities.
WHAT ROLE DOES THE MEDIA PLAY IN PROFESSIONAL SPORT? WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS OF MEDIA VISIBILITY?

Sports and media have traditionally had a mutually beneficial relationship also called a ‘symbiotic’ relationship. Media coverage helps develop the popular opinion about a sport or a sportsperson and that, in turn, increases the interest that people have in sports news and events. This is especially true in the case of cricket in India as it is a sport that attracts the attention of millions of people.

It is the media that will first showcase a cricketer’s ability and then explain his/her achievements in simple terms that can be understood even by a person who does not follow sports regularly. While there is no denying the important role that media plays or can play, it is always the on-field performance that drives interest.

Media visibility is the extent to which an individual or an entity is ‘visible’ or covered in different media. This has both pros and cons.

Ideally, media visibility should not be the concern of the cricketer. One should approach professional help to handle it. While being in the ‘limelight’ brings recognition and fame, a cricketer’s primary focus should be the sport. Rather than pursue coverage, one should pursue performance and the coverage will follow.

The right amount of media visibility can enable a cricketer to be known for achievements, to develop a fan base, generate support for issues that matter to him or her and get access to sponsors. However, too much coverage can sometimes take the focus away from sport performance, create unnecessary hype and harm career prospects.
Social media involves platforms with user-generated content where an individual has the freedom to create and share information within a network or publicly.

Social media is a great way to highlight lesser-known aspects of one's personality. It can help build a loyal passionate following. Moreover, a cricketer can build awareness about important causes through it. If one is associated with any NGOs, community-projects or voluntary assignments, it can be communicated for widespread attention to the cause.

It is also common for sports reporters to look into cricketer's social media channels for interesting quotes or photos. They choose cricketers with large online following and engaging content.

This provides an opportunity as one can become ‘influential’ through this process and inspire and inform others.

Various types of social media platforms are:

- **Social networking**: platforms that allow a user to upload and share information with others who are connected to them in the network, e.g.: Facebook and LinkedIn.

- **Video-sharing**: platforms that allow a user to upload videos that can be shared with a specific group of people as well as all across the internet, e.g.: Youtube and Vimeo.

- **Live-streaming**: platforms that allow a user to broadcast or watch live video from their computers and smart phones, e.g.: Periscope and Facebook Live.

- **Microblogging**: platforms that allow a user to share content and information through a small or limited amount of characters, e.g.: Twitter and Tumblr.

- **Blogging**: where one can share articles or video content without any specified limit for others to view, comment and share, e.g.: Wordpress and Blogger.

- **Photo Sharing**: platforms for a user to upload and share images from his/her personal or professional life, e.g.: Instagram, Snapchat and Flickr.
WHAT PRECAUTIONS MUST ONE TAKE WITH SOCIAL MEDIA? HOW CAN ONE RESPOND TO ‘TROLLING’ AND CRITICISM ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

One should be very careful on social media, especially with social media posts and mentions. One should be cautious and conscious about each and every post and ensure that it is appropriate in both content and form. It is important to have a complete understanding of a topic before posting about it, especially if it is about something outside of sport. There are many ways a simple post could be misinterpreted or misunderstood. In case the post is taken out of context, you should look to clarify your stance in public quickly and clearly to prevent further damage.

There might also be restrictions imposed regarding what a cricketer can speak about, especially before, during and immediately after tournaments. So it is important that one is aware of them. Posts about confidential topics like team selection and internal strategy discussions are a total no-no and completely unacceptable. They also break every established anti-corruption code and will invite punishment.

It is common to find criticism and ‘trolling’ on social media, especially after a bad personal or team performance. It is best to put in an effort to understand the intention behind it before emotionally reacting to what is being said. People might be doing so to vent discontent that they are feeling by projecting their negative baggage on a famous individual.

A willingness to acknowledge errors is a good quality to have and can help one in the long run. But if the criticism is blunt and negative, it is best to avoid it and just focus on the next performance. Moreover, it is advisable to switch off all notifications and mentions during a tournament or a tour to avoid distraction. The platform can be used only for broadcasting messages during the period, in accordance with the applicable social media guidelines.

Precautions to take on Social Media:

- Learn about privacy settings and be aware of all information that the public can view.
- Strictly avoid posts about confidential information like team selection and strategy.
- Be aware of social media usage guidelines during tours and tournaments.
- Switch off notifications in case of distraction or loss of focus.
- Do not be obliged to follow or befriend anyone, retain your choice regarding all matters.
- Gain complete knowledge about a topic before posting about it.
- Understand your responsibility as a role model, avoid posting impulsively.
- Ignore trolls – one could be a troll’s target but need not be a troll’s victim.
- Report any misuse, harassment or hacking of your account to authorities concerned.
HOW ACCESSIBLE SHOULD A CRICKETER REMAIN TO THE MEDIA?

It is not necessary for a cricketer to be accessible to the media all the time. The most professional approach to take is to be available to the media during the off-season or when the time is not geared towards training, rest and recovery. If one wishes to distance oneself from the press, then that should be known to journalists by clearly stating the reasons.

The press usually seeks a cricketer before a big event or a tournament. In such a scenario, the time invested for this must always remain under the cricketer’s control and in consultation with the media manager. One must try to ensure that time promised to a journalist is sufficient - not too much or too little.

Building relationships with journalists – not all but a few selected - is also important and can be very useful. It can bring in flexibility with regard to how accessible one wants to be and when they want to speak to the press. However, choosing right is equally vital.

Journalists from newspapers of many languages, magazines (news and lifestyle) and television channels approach cricketers. Some might claim to be associated with a number of influential media companies and talk about how they can benefit (or even harm) a career. That is the journalist trying to establish the power equation in which they are superior. You should remember it is the journalists who want to write about you for your achievement and not the other way around.

You can look for signs that showcase professionalism on the part of the journalist. Good journalists have the cricketer’s interests as a priority and not that of the story that they will be writing.
It is the media that will first showcase your ability and then explain your achievements in simple terms that can be understood even by a person who does not follow sports regularly. While there is no denying the important role that media plays or can play, it is the on-field performance that drives interest.
Personal interviews usually occur after you have attained a certain amount of recognition through good performances. A good interview is one where you are able to convey the information related to your personal and professional life in a clear way that is both interesting and engaging for viewers. This usually happens when you have made an effort to prepare.
WHAT ARE WAYS TO AVOID MEDIA RELATED CONTROVERSIES?

Sometimes, a small error on the part of the cricketer can be blown out of proportion and create an unintended controversy. It is therefore necessary to exercise all the precaution while speaking to the media. Generally, it helps if one is cautious the first few times and then eases out gradually after gaining experience and trust in the journalist.

You need to understand that a journalist could have a motive – to sensationalise or build a story that would be of commercial benefit to their organisation - behind asking certain questions that you cannot answer comfortably. You should avoid them in a dignified way and not get aggressive. You could simply say “That’s not something I want to talk about” or “I have no comment to make about that.”

If questions related to personal life are asked, it is entirely the choice of the individual to address it. Different people have different comfort levels and the borderline between private and public life has to be always maintained by the cricketer himself or herself.

As a precaution, after an interview, one can ask the journalist to run their quotes past them on an email before publication. This should be done only if there is a specific topic that one is worried might appear to be misinterpreted when published. These days a cricketer also has the option of using social media to clarify one’s stance. However, it is important that one does not pay too much attention to what is being said about them in the media – particularly in the social media space - as it can take up a lot of emotional energy for no good reason.

“You have every right to ask me that. It’s your prerogative. But I have the right to not answer.” – MS Dhoni when asked a personal question
HOW CAN ONE PREPARE FOR A MEDIA INTERACTION?

If approached for an interview, the first thing would be to check for the name and type of media involved. A cricketer could be approached by a print journalist, a television channel or for a press conference. If one is not familiar with the name of the publication/TV channel, then basic research about it by asking friends/seniors or a search on the internet is advisable.

- If it is a print media journalist involved, then one has the freedom to be a bit more casual and address the questions with careful thought. One could also review the answers at the end of the interview and request a change in any of them.

- In the case of a television interview or a show, one would have to make a bit more effort to prepare and get things right the first time. Considering the audience both see and hear the individual, the body language, dress, and movement all contribute to the final appearance, and hence, all these aspects need attention. It is best to turn up in whatever may be your casual work ‘uniform’ of the moment. Being interviewed as an athlete is part of your working day. You may also be interviewed on television on-field between sessions/innings or after a match. While you might be tired, it is helpful if you make an attempt to be honest and composed.

- Press conferences are generally organised for the purposes of distributing information to the media regarding a specific event, match or a tournament or at the end of the day’s play. Here, a cricketer should be attentive, specific and respectful to all while answering the queries.

It is not necessary to speak in English anywhere in the world if you are not comfortable with the language. You could request a team member or official to act as an interpreter and translate the questions and your answers.

A short while before the interaction is to begin, one could think through a few difficult or ‘trick’ questions that could be asked and the answers one would like to give to them— it could pertain to injury, selection, coaching. This way, one will not be surprised or thrown off when the question arises. This will come with experience and more the interviews, the easier it will become.
**HANDLING INTERVIEWS – GOOD PRACTICES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before Interaction</th>
<th>During Interaction</th>
<th>After Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Check which media organisation the journalist is representing</td>
<td>• Be friendly, respectful and relaxed</td>
<td>• Thank the journalist for taking an interest to interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do basic research on the previous work and reputation of the journalist as well as organisation</td>
<td>• Ensure that you are appropriately dressed, especially if it is a TV interview</td>
<td>• Request the journalist and others present for constructive feedback (only after you are comfortable with the journalist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Find out what kind of report/show the journalist intends to produce</td>
<td>• Listen to each question carefully and think before answering them</td>
<td>• In case you are misquoted or misinterpreted, check to see if it is worth reacting to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do not confirm an interview unless the coach, a senior or team manager is informed about it</td>
<td>• Avoid being defensive or aggressive in case of a critical or uncomfortable question</td>
<td>• 4. If it does, always respond through official procedures (like filing an online complaint)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Anticipate the possible questions and prepare the key messages to convey</td>
<td>• Answer questions accurately based on facts rather than opinions</td>
<td>• Appreciate the journalist if you are impressed by the outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make a list of things to avoid talking about</td>
<td>• Use examples from your own career to convey a point</td>
<td>• Make use of the coverage to build your brand value</td>
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WHAT ARE THE FEATURES OF A GOOD INTERVIEW?

Personal interviews usually occur after a cricketer has attained a certain amount of recognition through good performances. A good interview is where one is able to convey information related to one’s personal and professional life in a clear way, that is both interesting and engaging to viewers. This usually happens when one has made an effort to prepare.

One of the key features of a good interview is humility. Talking down to someone or about something may sound “confident” but could seem arrogant as well. A cricketer needn’t be overawed by the opponents but neither must he/she be disrespectful.

The best way to convey confidence and determination is by using examples from your own career – like instances of playing through issues, illness and maybe the need to win to prove a point. This will convey the right message and improve the influence that the interview can have. At the end of the day, the amount of positive attention that an interview attracts is a key feature of a good interview.

Most journalists look for interesting personal stories from a cricketer’s life – they could be stories of struggle or happiness. You should try and reach into your own emotional self and speak truthfully about what the sport and the achievements mean to you. You should look to include as many personal views as possible and try to project an original image of yourself.
HOW CAN ONE RESPOND TO NEGATIVE COVERAGE, ESPECIALLY IF IT IS FALSE?

Negative coverage in the media usually involves an unfavorable report or, in a few cases, a false one. A cricketer can handle a false report but must generally ignore an unfavorable one.

If something is falsely reported, one should first check if the coverage will have an impact on one's record, or on performance in future. If one indeed feels that it either reduces the importance of a performance or makes one look uncaring/insensitive about a subject, then the journalist concerned can be called and:

- Asked to clarify the inaccurate remark in the paper or programme the next day, or

- Asked to supply an email address where a complaint can be emailed.

In case of an unfavorable report, it is important to be able to ignore such criticism. Considering the hype around cricket, there will be many instances when a cricketer feels let down by the press, especially when in bad form. There will be articles that deliberately malign one's image – during such instances, one should go back to one's own individual goals and focus on the game. Ultimately one's performance shapes public opinion more than any coverage can.

These days you also have the option of using social media to clarify any negative coverage. But this should be done only when matters are blown out of proportion. It is important not to spend too much time doing this as it affects one's focus and can lead to controversies that take up time and attention.

It is also worth mentioning that in case you are impressed about or satisfied with an article published, a video bite produced or the effort made to correct an inaccurate report, you can mention this to the journalist in a genuine manner. All journalists like being praised for their efforts but are also able to tell when praise is genuine and when it is not.
WHO ARE THE PROFESSIONALS TO APPROACH TO HELP WITH MEDIA INTERACTIONS?

**Journalists:** The first professionals from the media that one usually encounters are the journalists. During the start of a career, one needs to be clear that a journalist is a media professional first and a ‘friend’ much later. However, building and maintaining good relationships eventually with a few journalists that one trusts can bring long term benefits.

**Public Relation agents** can also be very useful once one has attained a certain level of recognition. A PR company can be engaged for a short term or a long term period; short term to start with as a test for a longer term deal is ideal. Good PR agents will:

- Help build your brand and have you known for what you are doing outside of your sport, as well as what you are doing in it.
- Value the perception that the public already has of you and work to keep it positive.
- Support you in crisis situations and help control what is being said on media.
- Educate you about effective strategies for dealing with the media as well as proper interview techniques.

- Assist in building and executing an effective social media strategy and ensure that the right kind of message is always conveyed.
- Never get in the way of your on-field preparation or duties by offering extra publicity or money as an excuse.

**Official media manager** of the team: The team’s media manager will coordinate all the communication regarding the team and preparation during tours and tournaments. It is best that one always coordinates with the media manager regarding any interactions during the season.

**Social media management companies:** They assist an individual to manage social media profiles and derive benefit (both monetary and non-monetary) out of it. One needs to be clear about the mandate before making an association with such a company as one will be held responsible for all the posts made.

**Media trainers** can coach and train to impart language and communication skills that are required to handle and harness media opportunities.
“There was a point of time, when you said something and it gets misconstrued or gets reported very differently from what you mean it to be. The sad part is you know that the journalist knows where you were coming from but just to get the headline, he shaped it differently. After it happened once or twice, it had an impact on me. .....I’ve not gone out of my way to be controversial. In a country like India if you are a cricketer and in a public space, then it is a decision you need to make”

– Rahul Dravid
SAMPLE OF STOCK PHRASES TO TRY TO AVOID IN AN INTERVIEW:

One should consciously avoid clichés and often-repeated phrases during media interactions as they can be distracting and add little value.

Some of those are:

- At the end of the day
- .you know..
- It’s like..
- I think..
- Honestly
- A great experience for me
- I learnt a lot
- A big responsibility
- I am working very hard
- Room for improvement
- Can’t take the opposition lightly
- Learn from our mistakes
- I expressed myself
- I gave 100%
- Part and parcel of the game

Additional Reading:
Book: Media Relations in Sport by Brad Schultz, Philip H. Caskey and Craig Esherick
Online: https://www.unicef.org/magic/resources/civicus_handling_the_media.pdf
SUMMARY SHEET

Know your **media categories** – print, broadcast and digital.

**Pursue performance,** media visibility will follow.

**Social media helps to** connect, inspire and grow.

Watch what you post on social media, you are a role model to many.

**Never over-commit** time for media interaction.

**Tricky questions** could have a motive, be aware.

Anticipate the questions & **prepare your key messages.**

**Be humble & avoid cliches in responding to questions**

**Nothing like working harder** when critics bog you down.

Thought about **undergoing a media training session?**

Social media helps to connect, inspire and grow.
SECTION 9

10 THINGS ABOUT PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY
INTRODUCTION

There are few other sports that activate the passion with which cricket is played and followed, especially in India. As cricket has become such an integral part of our lives, it is only natural for us to hope and expect that the sport that we participate in, watch, follow, sponsor, develop or love is played with high ideals and is determined by natural outcomes, when pursued with such ideals.

You must have often heard or read that cricket is "a gentleman’s game". Why do you believe this phrase is used so often to describe cricket? It may be because cricket and cricketers are expected to embody some of the highest human ideals, such as fair play, good sportsmanship, honesty and genuine competitive spirit.

However, we occasionally witness or come across situations where the integrity of cricket is threatened or compromised by dishonest practices such as age fraud, doping, match fixing, spot fixing and other unethical behaviour. Such practices shake our confidence in the sport and lead us to doubt whether the action we participate in is being influenced by unnatural or dishonest means.

In this context, it is important that you, as a cricketer, make informed and more importantly, ethical decisions, when presented with a choice. This is often the difference between being commended or ending up in trouble. This section of the handbook attempts to explain the various situations that may compromise the integrity of cricket and what one should do to avoid being in or to respond appropriately to such situations.
WHAT ARE THE UNDERLYING VALUES OF SPORT AND WHAT IS THE MEANING OF INTEGRITY?

At the core of any sport is the passion for the game, spirit of healthy competition and the quest for excellence, if not perfection. These values drive the players and fans. If a team is passionate about achieving a win, it has to give importance to the means that its members use to get there. The ends do not always justify the means. In fact, the means used are at the core of the sport.

Integrity is the choice to hold oneself accountable to one's values and standards at all times even when it may not help in achieving the desired result. It is an enduring personal value that helps you focus on why you play sport and how you conduct yourself.

Manipulating results through match-fixing, using performance enhancing drugs, cheating, misrepresenting one's age, creating a hostile environment, etc., to gain an unfair advantage are examples of behaviour which undermine the integrity of sport. Such practices result from participants either not recognising the values of sport or not having the integrity to place the interests of the sport always above personal interest.

Good sportsmanship, providing a fair, inclusive and safe environment, honesty, discipline, professionalism, respect, fair play and uncertainty of outcomes are some of the core values of sport. These values place the interests of the various people involved ahead of the interests of the result. While a result may have a few short term effects, it is the values involved that have long term impact not just on the game but also on societal responses.
WHAT IS AGE-FRAUD? WHAT ARE POTENTIAL LEGAL AND OTHER CONSEQUENCES OF AGE-FRAUD?

Misrepresenting one’s age to gain an unfair competitive advantage over other athletes is age-fraud. It is quite possible that a cricketer will be faced with the question of whether to join the crowd and “change his/her age”. It is tempting as success at the junior level can be seen as a shortcut to senior representation.

While age-fraud may seem profitable in the short run, playing against those much younger than one’s age only hampers progression from junior to senior level in the long-run. It also deprives other deserving candidates the opportunity to compete and imposes an unfair burden on opponents.

Misrepresenting one’s age is not only unethical and not befitting of a professional cricketer but could also result in serious legal consequences.

The BCCI closely monitors the age of athletes at the U-16, U-19 and U-22 levels. Several age verification tests and programmes are in place to weed out the menace of age fraud. Those found indulging in age fraud can face serious and career threatening consequences. Over time, an honest cricketer is likely to have a more successful and enduring career even if an age cheat has a longer and possibly more successful one at the junior level.
WHAT IS DOPING AND WHAT ARE PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS?

Doping refers to the use of prohibited substances to improve sporting performance. The offense of doping is defined as the occurrence of one or more anti-doping rule violations.

A performance-enhancing drug is any substance that is taken to artificially improve sport performance. They are usually in the form of stimulants, hormones, anabolic steroids or masking agents. These drugs typically improve concentration, enhance muscle strength, aid in training for longer periods of time or help in recovering faster from sporting injuries. Some, like masking agents, are used to cover up the signs of using other prohibited substances.

Substances and doping methods are usually banned when they meet at least two of the three following criteria:

- Enhance performance
- Pose a threat to a cricketer’s health or
- Violate the spirit of sport.

When in doubt, a cricketer should refer to the World Anti-Doping Agency’s updated list of prohibited substances & methods, published on 1st January each year, as a guide to substances that are specifically banned in sport.

Anti-doping rule violations include:

- Presence of a prohibited substance in an athlete’s sample
- Use or attempted use of a prohibited substance or method
- Refusing to make oneself available to submit a sample, after being notified
- Intentionally tampering or attempting to sabotage the doping control process
- Possession of a prohibited substance or method
- Trafficking or attempted trafficking of a prohibited substance or method
- Administration or attempting to administer a prohibited substance or method to an athlete
- An association with a cricketer or any other person who is serving a period of ineligibility

It is essential that you consult a doctor and the BCCI Anti-Doping Cell before taking any drugs for an illness, applying any creams or sprays or ingesting supplements. Use of any Nutritional Supplements, Herbal/Homeopathy/Ayurvedic/Unani medications is at your own risk.
WHAT ARE THE ANTI-DOPING PROCEDURES ONE MUST BE AWARE OF? WHAT IS A THERAPEUTIC USE EXEMPTION?

It is a cricketer’s personal responsibility to ensure that no prohibited substances enter his or her body. To prove anti-doping rule violation, the intent, negligence, fault or knowledge of use is largely irrelevant.

- The BCCI or any tournament authority may engage third parties to conduct testing on its behalf and a cricketer may be required to submit to testing on behalf of the authority or BCCI at any time or place with or without advance notice.

- You will be required to provide a urine and/or blood sample for testing

- Once collected, the sample will be securely sent for analysis to a WADA accredited laboratory.

- If your sample tests positive for a prohibited substance, you may be suspended or banned for certain periods from all forms of the game.

- You have a right to attend the ‘B’ sample analysis at the WADA accredited laboratory

- You also have a right to a fair hearing and right to appeal.

Anti-doping rules recognize that you may be required to use a prohibited substance or method to treat a legitimate medical condition for which no alternative medication is available. In such cases, you may consider applying for a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE). The TUE process is a means by which you can obtain approval to use a prescribed prohibited substance or method for the treatment of a legitimate medical condition.

Should you require a TUE, you must submit an application in a prescribed form to the applicable tournament authority or BCCI. TUE forms can be found on the BCCI website: www.bcci.tv.

If the application is rejected, you will have the chance to appeal the decision.

You could approach the 24X7 helpline that the BCCI has set up or contact the BCCI Anti-Doping Cell for assistance with the process.

Once the form is submitted, the TUE will be granted if:

- Your health will be significantly impaired if you do not take the prohibited substance.

- The prohibited substance does not enhance performance beyond bringing you back to normal health.

- There are no alternative treatments available. In exceptional cases, a TUE may be granted retrospectively.
WHAT PRECAUTIONS MUST BE TAKEN TO PROTECT ONESELF FROM INNOCENT DOPING VIOLATIONS? WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF FAILING A DRUG TEST?

As mentioned above, ingesting a prohibited substance unintentionally will not absolve a cricketer from being liable for a doping offense. Ultimately, the cricketer alone is responsible for everything that he/she ingests.

To protect oneself from innocent doping violations, one should always evaluate the need for the supplement or drug before deciding to take it. You should make yourself aware of the ingredients of the substances that you decide to ingest, whether they are foods, supplements, medicines or even creams or sprays.

It is possible that some supplements can become contaminated during the manufacturing process. Globally, standards differ in terms of the quality of the supplement or drug, its manufacturing process and the product labeling. Particular caution should be taken when buying over the Internet or when traveling overseas. It is always a good idea to consult a doctor or approach the BCCI helpline before deciding to use a supplement or drug.

There are several serious consequences of doping:

**Health Consequences:** Doping can result in increased aggression and mood swings, increase the risk of contracting hepatitis and HIV (from needle use), impotence, libido disorders, infertility, premature baldness, hypertension and cardiac deficiency, muscle, joint and bone pain, accelerated osteoarthritis etc. In some cases, it can result in severe health consequences and may even result in death.

**Financial Consequences:** A positive doping test results in financial losses. It may lead to loss of sponsorship deals, loss of prize money and loss of funding. A life ban will result in a loss of livelihood and loss of living in the manner a cricketer has grown accustomed to. It may also result in debt as legal fees and ongoing costs will still need to be paid.

**Social Consequences:** A positive doping test can result in loss of respect, isolation from peers and sport, affect emotional and psychological well-being, and damage future career prospects.

One needs to check the updated WADA prohibited list of substances. New substances are added to the list from time to time. Failing a drug test can have several consequences. It can result in a punishment of up to four (4) years for a first offense, which could potentially be career ending. The sanctions may also include erasure of previous achievements from the record books.

An updated version of the BCCI Anti-Doping Code can always be found on the BCCI website www.bcci.tv
As cricket has become such an integral part of our lives, it is only natural for us to hope and expect that the sport that we participate in, watch, follow, sponsor, develop or love is played with high ideals and is determined by natural outcomes, when pursued with such ideals.
“The captain has a big role. It is important to keep the boys’ confidence high and to keep one’s faith in them. I try to give my support to the youngsters because nobody comes in as a world beater. Okay, some rare cricketers score a century on debut, but that doesn’t mean the rest are not good enough. We have to give them more opportunities, which was not there when I started out. Captaincy these days is more off the field than on the field.”

- Sourav Ganguly on creating the ideal team environment.
WHAT ARE MATCH-FIXING AND SPOT-FIXING?

Match-fixing is the deliberate fixing or manipulation of the result of a cricket match by dishonest means. Spot fixing, on the other hand, is the manipulation of an individual event or series of events within a match, such as a single over or delivery (which may or may not have an impact on the ultimate outcome or result). Such manipulation may be brought about through a number of ways and by any person involved in the staging of a match, which may include cricketers, umpires, coaches and support staff or even venue and ground staff.

The intent of such conduct is to support bets made by the individuals involved or by a gambler or bookie who recruits such people. The potentially high returns provide bookies with strong incentives to influence and manipulate results of sporting fixtures, in order to ensure that the results or events that they have bet on actually occur. Thus match-fixing and spot-fixing are often motivated by the opportunity for making significant amounts of money.

It should be noted that while betting on sporting events is a legitimate pursuit in some countries, it is illegal in India.

Fraudulent betting on sport and the associated match-fixing/spot-fixing is an issue that has the potential to reduce public confidence in the integrity of cricket. Such corruption devalues cricket’s stature and diminishes its power to act as a tool to develop and support a society.

Match-fixing and spot-fixing and the corruption that flows from such activities, are not limited to professional or high profile cricket matches. Match-fixing or spot fixing occurs across all levels of competition, whether amateur or professional, particularly when matches are televised. If a cricketer is found to have fixed a match result or a particular event in such match, it’s likely that he/she will be suspended/banned from taking part in any competitive cricket in the future, and could even serve time in jail in some cases.
WHAT SHOULD ONE DO WHEN APPROACHED BY A THIRD PARTY TO FIX OR INFLUENCE A MATCH OR SHARE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION?

In the event that you are approached, requested or engaged by any third party to compromise the integrity of a particular match or competition, it is vital that you report such activity to the appropriate authorities as soon as practicable.

The following occurrences must be reported to the appropriate authority:

• If you are approached by a third party to share confidential information regarding a match, team, venue or pitch.

• If you are approached by someone trying to fix a match or event, whether or not you are offered an incentive to help that individual.

• If you know or reasonably suspect someone else is trying to fix a match or event, or that they have been approached to fix.

• If you have received any actual or implied threats of any nature.

Reports should be made to the appropriate person or department within your team or organisation as notified to you. You should ensure that he/she is aware of who that person is. Reporting such individuals may be particularly hard if the rewards are high or if such individual is a close friend or is in a position of trust. However, you must not be tempted or scared and must be courageous enough to act appropriately in the interests of preserving the integrity of the sport.

In the event that you fail or refuse to report such activity and it comes to light at a later time, you may face an investigation from the anti-corruption unit of your team or organisation, and may be suspended or banned from playing cricket for a considerable period of time.

In the context of approaches, you should also be aware of the practices of ‘grooming’ and ‘honey trapping’. Grooming includes the giving of gifts and building of an apparent relationship of trust from an early age or for a long period of time. This builds obligation and a false trust, which will be exploited later. Honey trapping includes the provision of sexual favours and otherwise putting someone in a compromised or embarrassing position that provides an opportunity for blackmail at a later stage. Such a circumstance may seriously compromise your decision making and expose you to integrity breaches.

The BCCI has its own Anti-Corruption Unit and also has an Anti-Corruption Code to address corruption issues and related misconduct in all cricket matches that are under the jurisdiction of the BCCI or its member associations. Contact details for the BCCI Anti-Corruption Unit along with an updated version of the BCCI Anti-Corruption Code can be found on the BCCI website at http://www.bcci.tv
WHAT CONSTITUTES “BULLYING” OR “RAGGING”? WHAT ARE THE REMEDIES AVAILABLE?

At different points in a career, you may be faced with a situation where you are subject to unwelcome behaviour known as bullying or ragging, by a teammate or any other person associated with the team or system. It could occur across all levels of cricket.

Bullying is an act of aggression by a person of superior strength or position to harm or adversely influence another person, either psychologically or physically. Bullying may occur by hitting, threatening, intimidating, teasing and taunting, and name-calling, or by more subtle acts such as spreading rumors or encouraging others to reject the person. Bullies generally target individuals whom they perceive as weaker or more vulnerable.

Ragging, on the other hand, is any action or situation created by a group to intentionally produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule among those wishing to join the group. Ragging is essentially a form of bullying, but it differs from it in one key aspect. Bullies often act alone but ragging commonly involves a larger group or team. Ragging may be more prevalent in team sports such as cricket, where the group dynamic is constantly present.

Needless to say, bullying and ragging may both have serious effects on the victim. In case you are subjected to such form of behaviour in a team environment, you should report it to the coach of the team or any other person who is in a position of trust. In more serious cases, a victim may approach law enforcement authorities directly and register a complaint. Depending on the nature of bullying and ragging that the victim has been subject to, the perpetrators could be charged and punished.

Ragging can take many forms, including the following:

- Making victims act in embarrassing or humiliating ways.
- Swearing and screaming insults at victims.
- Depriving individuals of sleep or making them forego personal hygiene.
- Forcing individuals to eat vile or disgusting substances.
- Subjecting individuals to physical violence.
- Forcing victims to indulge in any perverted or sadistic acts.
- Forcing individuals to indulge in alcohol, drugs or narcotics, sometimes in extreme quantities.
- Sexually assaulting individuals.
WHAT CONSTITUTES “SEXUAL HARASSMENT”? WHAT ARE THE REMEDIES AVAILABLE?

Sexual harassment refers to any type of unwelcome behaviour that has a sexual element. It may or may not involve physical contact, may be verbal or non-verbal, and may be explicit or implicit. In essence, it is behaviour with a sexual theme that offends, humiliates or intimidates the person(s) it is directed to. Sexual harassment in the sphere of cricket may include use of offensive stereotypes based on a person’s gender, sexual jokes, threats, intimidation, approaches or actions of a sexual nature, requests for sexual favours, display of offensive material, and facilitating a hostile and uncomfortable environment.

For a cricketer or any sportsperson, being subject to sexual harassment can undermine performance, self-esteem and personal goals. Cricketers can be particularly vulnerable to harassment because the team environment is characterised by close physical and emotional relationships and complex power dynamics. It is important for a cricketer to understand that sexual harassment is not confined to one gender. It can be initiated by a person of any gender against another person of the opposite gender or the same gender.

Most organisations which qualify as work places are legally mandated under specific legislation to have a sexual harassment policy for women. Any form of sexual harassment is illegal under Indian law, and cricketing entities also have a legal obligation to take reasonable steps to prevent it from happening in environments they control.

In the event that one is subject to sexual harassment as professional, one should lodge a complaint and have it resolved in accordance with the applicable sexual harassment policy. In case you are subjected to such form of behaviour in a team environment, you should report it to the coach of the team or any other person who is in a position of trust. If you are not satisfied with the action taken by your organisation subsequent to a complaint, you may approach law enforcement authorities and file a criminal complaint with the police. The Indian Penal Code provides for a number of punishments that may be imposed on a perpetrator based on the nature and degree of the sexual harassment.
### Bullying
An act of aggression by a person of superior strength or position to harm or adversely influence another person, either psychologically or physically.

May occur by hitting, threatening, intimidating, teasing and taunting, and name-calling, or by more subtle acts such as spreading rumours.

### Ragging
Any action or situation created by a group to intentionally produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule among those wishing to join the group.

Commonly involves a larger group or team and may be more prevalent in team sports where the group dynamic is constantly present.

### Sexual Harassment
Any type of unwelcome behaviour that has a sexual element and may or may not involve physical contact, may be verbal or non-verbal, and may be explicit or implicit.

This is not confined to one gender and can be initiated by a person of any gender against another person of any gender.

In case you are subjected to such form of behaviour report it to the coach of the team, the team manager or any other person who is in a position of trust. If you are not satisfied with the action taken, consider filing a criminal complaint with the police.
WHO ARE THE PROFESSIONALS TO APPROACH REGARDING SPORTS INTEGRITY ISSUES?

Cricketers who require awareness about what constitutes doping and what precautions they must take can either approach the 24x7 helpline that the BCCI has set up, or contact the BCCI’s internal doping programme officer. Cricketers may also approach qualified sports nutritionists and experts in sports medicine to get informed advice on challenges relating to age fraud.

For issues relating to match-fixing, spot fixing and corruption, you must try and contact an anti-corruption officer or unit appointed by the team, club, state association or national cricket board or tournament organiser, depending on the context. Players who have been approached to engage in corrupt conduct (like match fixing or spot fixing) must report the matter to the appropriate anti-corruption officer or unit immediately and without delay in order to ensure that the appropriate authorities can take the necessary steps.

Coaches and team managers remain persons of authority who may be contacted with any other concerns related to the team environment or your professional journey.
“We should remember that as cricketers, we are role models and can easily influence the younger generation. Therefore it’s our duty to influence them in the most positive way.

I strongly advocate that counselling about right values form a part of the sports curriculum at school and college level. The values we inculcate in the youngsters at an impressionable age are what they will carry into their adulthood.

It becomes our singular responsibility to offer the right guidance to the younger cricketers – not just on cricketing techniques, but how to conduct oneself in public and how to be able to differentiate right from wrong.”

- VVS Laxman.
# List of Offences Under the BCCI Anti-Corruption Code

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<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Summary</th>
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| 1.    | Corruption                             | • Fixing or influencing the result, conduct or any aspect of a match or tournament.  
• Offering or accepting any bribe or other reward to fix or influence a match or tournament.  
• Failing, in exchange for a reward, to perform to one's abilities.  
• Inducing or instructing any player, player support personnel, umpire, match referee or umpire support personnel to commit any of the offences listed above. |
| 2.    | Betting                                | • Placing or entering into a bet with another party in relation to the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of any match or tournament.  
• Inducing any party to enter into a bet for the direct or indirect benefit of any participant in relation to any match or tournament.  
• Ensuring the occurrence of a particular incident in a match or tournament, which to the participant's knowledge is the subject of a bet and for which he/she expects to receive or has received a reward. |
| 3.    | Misuse of Inside Information           | • Disclosing “inside information” for the purposes of betting or for reward. Such information includes information regarding the competitors in a match or tournament, the conditions or tactical considerations.  
• Soliciting or inducing any Participant to disclose inside information during a match or tournament for the purposes of betting. |
| 4.    | General                                | • Providing or receiving any gifts or payment or other benefit in circumstances that could bring the player or the sport into disrepute.  
• Failing or refusing to disclose to the BCCI’s Anti Corruption Unit, without delay, full details of any approach or invitation received to personally engage in or involve third-party in offences.  
• Failing or refusing to cooperate with any investigation carried out by the Designated Anti-Corruption Official. |
| 5.    | Other Relevant Information             | • Any attempt also constitutes an offence irrespective of the outcome.  
• Authorising, assisting, abetting, covering up an offence under the Code shall be treated as having independently committed the offence.  
• Participant’s honest and reasonable belief that there was a serious threat to his/her life or safety or to the life or safety of any other person if he/she had not committed the offence, shall be a valid defence under the Code. |
LIST OF OFFENCES UNDER THE ICC CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code describes various kinds of conduct that amount to offences and categorises them into different levels of offences depending on the severity of the offence.

The offences include the following:

- Conduct that is contrary to the spirit of the game (e.g., use of an illegal bat or wicket keeping gloves)
- Conduct that brings the game into disrepute (e.g., unruly public behavior)
- Public criticism or inappropriate comment (e.g., criticising a Player or Player Support Personnel or match official in relation to any incident occurring during an international match)
- Using language or a gesture that is obscene, offensive or insulting during an International Match (e.g., excessively audible or repetitious swearing)
- Showing dissent at an umpire's decision during an International Match (e.g., excessive, obvious disappointment with an umpire's decision)
- Excessive appealing during an International Match (e.g., repeated appealing of the same decision/appeal)
- Using language, actions or gestures, which disparage or which could provoke an aggressive reaction from a batter upon his/her dismissal during an International Match (e.g., verbally abusing the dismissed batter)
- Abuse of cricket equipment or clothing, ground equipment or fixtures and fittings during an International Match, (e.g., hitting or kicking the wickets)
- Charging or advancing towards the Umpire in an aggressive manner when appealing during an International Match
- Inappropriate and deliberate physical contact with a Player, Player Support Personnel, umpire, match referee or any other person
- Throwing a ball or any other item of cricket at or near a Player, Player Support Personnel, umpire, match referee or any other third person in an inappropriate and/or dangerous manner during an International Match
- Changing the condition of the ball
- Dangerous or unfair bowling
- Deliberate wasting of time by a Player or team
- Attempt to manipulate an international match for inappropriate strategic or tactical reasons
- Failure by a fielding team participating in an international match to meet the minimum prescribed over rate requirements

Additional Reading:
Book: Twin Ambitions: My Autobiography by Mo Farah
Online: https://www.wada-ama.org/en/resources/science-medicine/prohibited-list-documents
At the core of sport are certain ideals that you should uphold.

Fixing matches damages both your image and that of the sport.

Age-fraud could be tempting but is not useful in the long-run.

Doping is an offence and could result in suspensions and bans.

Knowing TUE rules is essential in case you need medicines.

Check the prohibited list of substances at regular intervals.

Fixing matches damages both your image and that of the sport.

If approached to fix a match, report it immediately.

Bullying and ragging are unacceptable, steer clear of them.

Sexual harassment is unlawful, be aware and stay alert.

Use the 24x7 BCCI Anti Doping Helpline before ingesting or applying any new medication.
PART 4

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE
SECTION 10

10 THINGS ABOUT SETTING CAREER AND POST-CAREER GOALS
INTRODUCTION

‘Goals are dreams with deadlines’
– Diana Scharf Hunt

A goal is generally the desired end result of a dedicated effort. It is the outcome that an individual or a group designs, plans and works to achieve. Goals are usually designed in such a way that they can be achieved within a finite period of time.

Some of the advantages of setting goals are that they:

- Give direction and purpose to one’s life
- Help to focus energy of individuals and teams
- Lead to quality performance
- Serve as a plan for achieving one’s ambition

While benefits of goal setting are many, you might wish to understand some basic concepts before going ahead with it. Firstly, you might want to know about various types of goals and goal setting exercises. Some common queries might include “How can I monitor my goals?”, “What role do my beliefs play while achieving goals?” and “What is the ideal end result of a goal?” You might want to know whom you can approach regarding these aspects.

This section has been designed to help you think about goal setting, understand its benefits and go about it in a way that is most likely to yield results. It also has a sample goal sheet that can introduce you to the concept.
WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF GOALS ONE CAN HAVE?

The types of goals depend on the context. Goals can be categorised as individual and team goals depending on whether they involve just one person or a group with a shared objective. In sports, it usually depends on the nature of the game being played. For example, an individual badminton player could have a goal of winning a gold medal at the Olympics but in the case of cricket, a goal of winning a tournament is usually a team goal. Also, people within a team can have individual goals but again, they are more likely to be related to the overall team goal. For example, a batter can have a goal of reaching a specific milestone but it has to be related to overall team strategy.

Based on the timeline required for achievement, goals can be either short term or long term.

Short term goals have a short time frame and are mostly regarding the immediate future. Generally, short-term goals are aligned and grouped together to create one long term goal. The timelines of both these kind of goals depend on the context.

Long term goals have a long-time frame and are mostly regarding broad objectives that one desires to meet in life. For example, a long-term goal could be about winning the World Cup four years later and the short-term goals could be about good performances in the various tournaments leading up to it.

Based on the purpose, goals can be either personal or professional.

Personal goals usually involve the family and friends, health, wealth or hobbies. It could also involve an individual’s skill and development of the personality. For example, being able to send one’s child to a certain school or get fit enough to run a marathon.

Professional goals are related to the education and professional career and involve gaining skills and knowledge that can help advance in career. Personal and professional goals are usually inter-related and influence each other.

Based on nature, goals can be either outcome based or process based.

Outcome based goals are about specific outcomes that one desires to achieve. They provide the big picture but are not entirely in one’s control. For example, winning a world cup or a tournament.

Process goals are about the various small steps involved in achieving the outcome. They are mostly in one’s control and are designed in a realistic way to achieve the outcome step by step. For example, improving body strength to a specific level to be able to bowl faster.
HOW CAN ONE SET SMART GOALS?

One of the most common ways of setting goals is through the SMART way. It stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound. This concept works both for short-term and long-term goals.

1. S-Specific: Clarity is one of the most important aspects of goal-setting. Having specific goals, rather than vague goals, will ensure that one is able to clearly focus the efforts while performing tasks. For example: Vague: I want to run every day Specific: I want to run 5km under 25mins within 6 months

2. M-Measurable: Having goals where one can check progress by measuring certain aspects can help one analyze the process and make timely adjustments. These aspects are generally called as indicators. For example: Month 0: 2km; Month 1: 2.5km; Month 2: 3km; Month 3: 3.5km and so on

3. A-Achievable: Over ambitious goals could serve as a motivator by creating the pressure for putting extra effort but it can also lead to disappointment if they are not realistic. Ideally, goals need to stretch the abilities and be challenging but remain possible at every step. For example: setting a target of running a marathon within 2 months when one has never run 100 m is probably not a realistic goal.

4. R-Relevant: A few things to consider while setting goals to ensure that they are relevant could be the following:
   - Leveraging individual strengths: One should look to play to one's strengths rather than focus on weaknesses
   - Aligned to core values/ethics: Often, it is the means that are more relevant than the end in sports and the means we choose to employ come from our core values or set of ethics.
   - Aligned to team's vision: One's goals as a cricketer would more often than not need to be aligned to the team's vision

5. T-Time-bound: A reasonable amount of time needs to be allotted for each of the goals. If it's too short then it could be unrealistic, if it's too long then one might lose focus or start late. A deadline works as a target date and enables one to focus the efforts to achieve something within that time period.
HOW CAN ONE ENSURE CLARITY WHILE GOING ABOUT ONE’S GOALS?

Even once SMART goals are set, they will be unlikely to be achieved unless complete clarity exists. Clarity can be at a wishful level or at an internalised level. If it’s only at the wishful level, one normally uses words like 'I should', 'I have to', or 'I can't' and is unlikely to achieve the goals. For example, 'I should start running' or 'I have to wake up in the morning' or 'I can't play on a particular pitch'. The language we speak can be a strong indicator of the level of clarity we have and paying attention to these specific words can help you assess where you are on clarity.

To get clarity at an internalised level, one must be clear about the following three things:

• **What** one intends to achieve (SMART goal)
• **Why** it is important for one to achieve it
• What the **prices** one needs to, and is willing to pay are

If one is clear on the above three things, then one can make a choice to say 'I will' or 'I won’t' after carefully weighing the benefits and prices. In such a scenario, one is more likely to achieve the goals chosen. It is always better not to rush into a goal and invest sufficient time in convincing oneself of the need to achieve it.
WHAT ARE SOME GOOD PRACTICES FOR ACHIEVING BIG AMBITIOUS GOALS?

When you set ambitious goals, it can feel intimidating as well as inspiring. The following steps can help one move from feeling overwhelmed to actually achieving the goals:

**Chunking:** Breaking down the main goal into many smaller steps that will eventually lead to the big goal can help you focus on the more achievable steps. If it’s the World Cup, smaller steps could be building your stamina, focusing on the technique, playing practice matches, etc.

**Timeframe:** Remembering that there is a reasonable amount of time to achieve the big goal and it will not happen overnight can relieve one of the pressures. Instead of the end result of the goal, you could rather focus on the end result of each step on the way.

**Building timelines:** Once you have the basic timeframe available, planning backward for each smaller step and arranging them in a chronological order can give you a sense of order and direction.

**Enjoying:** While achieving big ambitious goals, one could feel stressed and pressured, especially in a game like cricket where the expectations of oneself, family and the country can play a big role. Remembering to enjoy the process and have fun can help you feel relaxed, focus better and stand a better chance of achieving the target.

**Feedback from others:** Feedback from coaches, friends and family can help one get a sense of whether the goals one has set are realistic, especially in the short term. Otherwise, one might end up giving up on a goal which was actually achievable in the long term.
Goals can be categorised as individual and team goals depending on whether it involves just one person or a group with a shared objective. Also, people within a team can have individual goals but again, they are more likely to be related to the overall team goal. For example, a batter can have a goal of reaching a specific milestone but it has to be related to overall team strategy.
Since a lot of effort goes into achieving your goals, you should celebrate when you produce the desired results. It is also important that you do not let the results define you as a person. You produce certain results but you are not your results. That means that if you succeed at achieving your goals, it doesn’t mean you are a success. And if you fail, it doesn’t mean you are a failure. If you can separate results from the belief that you have about yourself, you will always be able to celebrate the efforts that you have put in.
WHAT ARE THE SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES THAT CAN HELP ONE TO STAY ON TRACK?

While working on one’s goals, creating systems and processes to stay on track can be one of the factors that can help in achieving the goal. Some examples are:

- Creating a **time-table** or using a calendar so that you can receive reminders for the actionable items.

- Creating a **basic tracker** based on your timetable where one can put a tick mark against each actionable after it is accomplished can serve as a visual motivator. At the end of each week, you can celebrate if the weekly actionable items are met or tweak them if they could not be.

- **Daily alarms** work well in order to imbibe new skills or behaviour traits. For example, if you want to become more aware of how you react under pressure, you could have a daily alarm which goes off once at the end of the day. When it does, you can reflect for one minute on how calm you were under pressure that day.

- Identifying people in one’s life from family, friends and colleagues who can **support and inspire** you towards meeting goals is an important mechanism. They will be able to hold you accountable and regularly share feedback.

These include:

- **Role Models/ Mentors**: Reaching out to people who have achieved similar goals like you have set and learning more about what worked for them is beneficial.

- **Coach**: Coaches usually serve as a great support system as well as provide regular feedback for improvement. Reaching out to them and scheduling regular sessions with them to give you feedback on specific areas you are trying to improve on or achieve could help you focus better.

“It was my father’s dream to play cricket when he was younger, but he wasn’t able to pursue it. When he saw that I was interested in cricket, he encouraged me to play. He motivates me a great deal. My entire family is very supportive, but I feel my father supports me so much that there is often no need for anyone else. I have played for the country because of him. I am living his dream.”

- Punam Raut
HOW CAN ONE MONITOR AND EVALUATE PROGRESS TOWARDS GOALS?

Monitoring and evaluating the progress of the ongoing activities can be an important tool to understand whether one is on track with respect to the goals set and the reasons behind the delays if any. This can help one in making timely adjustments, if required.

Certain indicators, which are specific and measurable, can be decided upon while setting goals and that can be used to judge the progress. For example, if you are pursuing a goal to be able to bowl faster, then the speeds that you are able to achieve at regular intervals can serve as indicators. If you do not achieve the desired timing, then the reasons for the same needs to be evaluated. Such an evaluation, considering all the internal and external factors, can help to make the necessary changes going forward.

Long term goals can be very beneficial for athletes and help in making the best use of resources and opportunities available. But at the same time, individuals run the risk of not being able to stick with them because they lose track of the progress or get de-motivated by short term results. Proper monitoring and evaluation done at regular intervals can address this problem and ensure that the desired result is successfully achieved.
Goal: Bowl faster by 30 kph (from 100 kph to 130 kph) in 6 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>EE</th>
<th>ME</th>
<th>BE</th>
<th>Reasons for deviation</th>
<th>Action plan for next month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Month 1</td>
<td>&gt;5 kmph</td>
<td>5 kmph</td>
<td>&lt;5 kmph</td>
<td>On Track</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month 2</td>
<td>&gt;10 kmph</td>
<td>10 kmph</td>
<td>&lt;10 kmph</td>
<td>Less by 3 kmph. Did not follow routine properly.</td>
<td>Make a Timetable and track progress. Take feedback more regularly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month 3</td>
<td>&gt;15 kmph</td>
<td>15 kmph</td>
<td>&lt;15 kmph</td>
<td>Less by 5 kmph. Need to work more on fitness.</td>
<td>Work with a fitness coach to create a plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month 4</td>
<td>&gt;20 kmph</td>
<td>20 kmph</td>
<td>&lt;20 kmph</td>
<td>On Track</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month 5</td>
<td>&gt;25 kmph</td>
<td>25 kmph</td>
<td>&lt;25 kmph</td>
<td>Low improvement. Run-up and wrist position could be hindering progress.</td>
<td>Work with bowling coach to modify technique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month 6</td>
<td>&gt;30 kmph</td>
<td>30 kmph</td>
<td>&lt;30 kmph</td>
<td>Target almost achieved! Happy with the result.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this table, EE=Exceeds Expectation, ME=Meets Expectation, BE=Below Expectation and CS = Current Status. The person has set a SMART goal and defined how they are going to monitor and evaluate the progress. This helps them course correct, stay on track and finally achieve the goal.
WHAT IS THE ROLE OF ONE’S BELIEFS WHILE ACHIEVING GOALS?

Beliefs can be helpful (I am hardworking, I am confident, etc.) or unhelpful (I don’t have it in me to win the match, I am not good enough etc). Helpful beliefs help us reach our goals whereas unhelpful ones could get in the way.

For example, if one’s belief is ‘I’m not an aggressive player’, one will be more likely to play defensively and feel afraid to face an aggressive bowler.

While reality cannot be changed, beliefs can be. And once you identify the beliefs that could be getting in the way, you can adopt a more empowering belief. In the above example, it could be that ‘if I practice, I can play both defensively and aggressively. I can do whatever it takes.’

To identify if a limiting belief is getting in the way, the following act as indicators:

**Negative emotions:** if you are consistently feeling negative emotions – helpless, angry, sad, etc.

**Feedback:** if you are getting feedback from other people that your actions are not effective.

**Results:** if you have not been producing the results that you desire on a consistent basis.

It might be helpful to write down all the limiting beliefs that you think are getting in your way and write the empowering beliefs next to them so you can start practicing them. These empowering beliefs can then be used to create a positive self-talk which in turn can improve performance.

We form beliefs from our past experiences and interpret reality through the lens of these beliefs. These interpretations have an effect on our thoughts, emotions and body sensations, which in turn impact our actions and conversations, which finally impact our results and relationships. We think that the reality causes the results we produce, but our beliefs also contribute to them. And therefore, it is important to become aware of the beliefs that drive us.

There are 3 ways in which one could internalise some empowering beliefs:

**Creating new experiences:** New beliefs get internalised over a period of time. For example, if one has the following belief – “I’m a poor player of spin bowling”, in order to internalise the empowering belief “I can play spin really well”, one option is to schedule practice sessions especially focused on building skills in the area and over a period of time, the new belief is likely to get internalised.

**Reading:** You could seek information which challenges your existing beliefs. Reading books or articles about people who have overcome similar challenges could be useful.

**Finding a role model:** Conversations with individuals whom you believe are your role models or watching their interviews of role models might help build new beliefs.
“In the last 24 years, there were many good moments as well as difficult ones. But the expectations of the people were always there and, in fact, they increased with the passage of time. I found a way to deal with it. I started focusing on my own goals. I decided to set my own targets and achieve them. If I am setting my own targets and achieving them, I am doing something good for my country. I kept my focus only on the ball and targets were achieved automatically.”

– Sachin Tendulkar
HOW CAN ONE MAKE USE OF ONE’S STRENGTHS TO ACHIEVE GOALS?

Everyone has strengths that they bring to the game – whether it’s discipline, perseverance, staying calm under pressure, humour or the energy that you bring to the team. Identifying the strengths you bring, apart from the technical skills, and using them to achieve goals can be highly effective.

There are many ways of identifying one’s strengths:

• **Introspecting:** Asking yourself the achievement that you are most proud of and the strengths you displayed while achieving that.

• **Feedback:** Asking family, friends, team, coaches etc for feedback on your strengths. You might hear of some strengths that you already knew you had and may be surprised to hear of a few others.

• **Personality tests:** There are many personality tests online that you can take for free. These tests ask you certain questions and preferences and then give you a report that enlists your strengths.

While identifying strengths is important, they can also be limiting if one starts defining themselves with that. If you identify your strength as passion, you might feel it is hindering your ability to think logically. Or if your strength is being a good listener, you might use it to justify not speaking up. One can feel ‘I am like this only’ and feel that they cannot develop other strengths.

Behaviour strengths can be developed just as one develops technical strengths. When a young cricketer first starts learning how to bat, they are not good at it and it requires many hours of practice, failing, learning and becoming better over a period of time. Similarly, if you want to learn how to manage time, or be disciplined or deal with pressure, etc, it’s possible but it will require practice, failing, learning and eventually becoming better.
WHAT IS THE IDEAL END RESULT OF A GOAL?

Setting goals, planning and monitoring goals as laid out above increases the chances of achieving a goal but do not guarantee it. When you take actions to achieve a goal, you produce a result and that result can be of two types: success or failure. Irrespective of the results, these are points to consider following the pursuit of a goal:

Separate results from the person: It’s important to understand the difference between results and oneself. You produce certain results but you are not your results. That means that if you succeed at achieving your goals, it doesn’t mean you are a success. And if you fail at achieving your goals, it doesn’t mean you are a failure.

Celebrate: Since a lot of effort goes into achieving goals, it’s important to celebrate the effort one’s put in. If you can separate results from the person, you can celebrate irrespective of whether you have succeeded or failed.

Acknowledge the emotions: It is okay to feel disappointed or sad if one doesn’t achieve one’s goals. In fact, it’s important to give yourself permission to express, and acknowledge your emotions. It’s an important part of moving forward.

Learn: Whether it’s a success or a failure, there are always things to learn from one’s endeavor. You can identify your strengths, areas of development, what you’ve been effective at, what you need to practice going forward etc.

Move forward: Whether you have failed or succeeded, once you have taken stock of your learnings and emotions, formulating the next steps will help you achieve more.
“I started it simply because of this indelible, indescribable passion and that has brought me here. I indulged in it purely for love and happiness – and there was ONLY one other thing – that if given a chance – I wanted to be good, to give my all, no matter how harrowing or gruelling. When we walk with a strong motive – milestones will automatically come but we don’t rest and bask in it, do we? We may take a breather but we walk on because we have to walk on – there is no point in stopping. My journey started 15 years back but honestly it feels just like yesterday.”

- Jhulan Goswami
WHO CAN BE APPROACHED TO HELP PLAN CAREER AND POST-CAREER GOALS?

The people to approach might be different during and post one's career. During the career, it is usually the team coach, captain or the manager who can serve as mentors. Former players can be useful to gain knowledge about the right kind of people to approach for post career goals. There are many career coaches and mentors who can help you. Consulting executive coaches is especially useful in planning, monitoring and executing one's long term goals.

The career of an athlete can be short-lived and uncertain. However post retirement, there are many options to choose from and if planned in advance, one can excel at what one chooses. There are several examples of cricketers who may not have had long careers but have done very well for themselves post it. Some of the options that retired cricketers have taken up are umpiring, match referees, board members, cricket coaches, motivational speakers and entrepreneurs.

While playing sport, one develops a lot of life skills like leadership, decision making, team work, critical thinking and problem solving which can all help post-career. Based on these individual skills and interests, a suitable post career can be chosen based on what suits your strengths.
Setting ambitious goals can feel inspiring but intimidating at the same time. But there are certain good practices that can help you move from feeling overwhelmed to actually achieving the goals.
# SAMPLE ATHLETE GOAL SHEET

**Goal Sheet**

- What are the tangible goal(s) that can be achieved? (SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time bound)

  - Short-term (3 months / 6 months / 1 year)

  - Medium term (3-5 years)

  - Long term (> 5 years)

- Why are these goals meaningful for you? What prices are you willing to pay to achieve them?

- What are the existing strengths that you will rely on to achieve your goals?

- What are the new strengths that you will develop through pursuing these goals?

- What are the limiting beliefs that could get in your way? What empowering beliefs will you replace them with?

- What are your action plans to achieve the goal(s)?

- Who are the people who will help you as you work towards achieving your goals?

- What are the systems and processes that you will use? (alarm, outlook, weekly goal checks, etc)

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**Additional Reading:**
- **Book:** A Shot at History – Abhinav Bindra
- **Online:** [http://www.pitchvision.com/the-secret-of-cricket-goal-setting/#/](http://www.pitchvision.com/the-secret-of-cricket-goal-setting/#/)
There are different types of goals - short-term or long term, personal or professional and outcome or process based.

Setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time bound) goals helps achieve results better.

Check to see if your clarity is internalised or just wishful.

Big goals could intimidate but certain methods can help.

Time-tables and alarms help you stay on track.


Your beliefs should empower you, not limit your abilities.

Identify and leverage your strengths in your pursuit of goals.

You are not your result! You only produce results.

Thought of post-retirement goals yet?
CONCLUSION

This handbook has been prepared with the principal objective of providing a professional cricketer with useful information about various topics that could be relevant. We believe that the resulting awareness has many advantages and can help with:

- Increasing knowledge about matters that affect you and your career.
- Developing deeper awareness of your own performance and confidence in dealing with any issues.
- Receiving greater appreciation from members in your community and the public.
- Achieving greater control of your decisions - both personal and professional.
- Having the ability to identify the right people to associate with and build relationships.
- Increasing the avenues to network and multiplying opportunities to grow.
- Knowing the relevant things to share and therefore, inspire others.
- Identifying the aspects that serve the larger interests of the sport and of society.

We hope that the handbook not only provides guidance at key moments in your life but also enables you to excel in all that you do. Cricket is the most popular sport in India. There are millions of people who are ardent followers of the sport and look up to you. You, therefore, have the capacity to influence and inspire others. Being knowledgeable and respected is the beginning of such a process.

Sport in India is full of challenges. However, it is up to you to either view this reality as a drawback or as an opportunity to excel. You have all the means to be the change that you want to see. We hope that the handbook can guide you on this journey.

- GoSports Foundation
EDITORIAL BOARD - PROFILES

Nandan Kamath

Nandan Kamath is a graduate of the Harvard Law School, the University of Oxford (on a Rhodes scholarship) and the National Law School of India. He was an avid cricketer at the junior level, representing the India Under-16’s and captaining the Karnataka state team.

He runs a boutique sports and intellectual property law practice in Bengaluru advising the country's top athletes, governing bodies, teams, sponsors and brands. He is the Managing Trustee of GoSports Foundation.

Sharda Ugra

In her long career as a sports journalist, Sharda Ugra has worked with the Mumbai tabloid Mid-Day, national daily The Hindu, national weekly magazine India Today and cricket website ESPNcricinfo and ESPN's new multi-sport website, ESPN.in . She was also India stringer for Radio Australia, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's overseas service.

As a cricket writer, she has covered the Indian team's exploits in eight countries and has written on the sport for several academic and popular publications in India and abroad. She has also written about non-cricket sports and has covered Indian football extensively over the last few months. Moving beyond the conventional reportage of the sport, Sharda Ugra believes in delving into the cultural context surrounding it.

She was adjudged the Indian sports writer of the year 2005-06 by the Sports Journalists Federation of India (SJFI). She has also worked with former India coach John Wright for his memoir - John Wright’s Indian Summers and Yuvraj Singh on his account of his comeback from cancer, Test of My Life. She is currently a senior editor at ESPN India.

John Gloster

John Gloster is an Australian sports physiotherapist of 24 years' experience, working with both elite athletes and the general sporting population.

He has worked extensively with international cricket for the last 19 years, most notably as physiotherapist to the Indian cricket Team for 3.5 years as well as Surrey County Cricket in England (1998-2001), Bangladesh National Team from 2001-2004 and Rajasthan Royals (IPL Franchise team) for 8 years.

John has been involved in nearly 55 international cricket tours/series as head physiotherapist. He has had
many years of private practice experience both in Australia and the UK, including stints with the Australian Institute of Sport and other national and international sporting teams during that period. He currently sits actively on 3 advisory boards for school and health related projects in Mumbai and across India. He currently is Head of Sports Sciences/Medicine for the GoSports Foundation as well as the Board Advisor of KOOH Sports.

**Ryan Fernando**

Ryan Fernando is an Award winning celebrity Sports Nutritionist to a host of athletes. Ryan’s clients include two Guinness World Record Holders in feats of human endurance, Olympic medal winning wrestler Sushil Kumar, cricketers Robin Uthappa, Shikhar Dhawan, Harbhajan Singh, Pragyan Ojha, Golfer Sharmila Nicollet, film stars Aamir Khan and Abhishek Bachchan. He recently was selected by an international jury at the ATP Sports & Fitness Convention 2015 for the award of "Best Practicing Nutritionist". A British Commonwealth Scholar, he holds two Masters Degrees – in Food Biotechnology from the University of Strathclyde in Scotland and in Clinical Biochemistry from the Goa Medical College. He is currently pursuing his Doctorate in Medicine in Alternative Medicine.

Ryan is the Co- founder of Qua Nutrition - Signature Nutrition Clinics with over 7 branches and 45 Dietitians. He has shared his experience in the field through lectures on Nutrition and Nutritional Supplements. He has also been a guest speaker at various forums on Sports and Fitness Nutrition. A lecturer for ISSA (International Society of Sports Association), Ryan is a Life Member with the Nutrition Society of India. Ryan is also the Nutrition RJ on the International Radio Station Indigo 91.9 with a daily show called the fitness hour. He is also a columnist for THE SPORTSTAR Magazine.

**Ajay Srinivasan**

Ajay Srinivasan is Chief Executive — Financial Services at the Aditya Birla Group since July 2007. Before joining the Aditya Birla Group, Mr. Srinivasan was based in Hong Kong as Chief Executive — Fund Management, Prudential Corporation Asia.

Prior to joining Prudential, Mr. Srinivasan was managing the India operations of Threadneedle Asset Management as the company’s Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Chief Investment Officer. He is also engaged with several bodies, including the Financial Planning Standards Board, the CII Committee on Financial Sector Reforms, the CII Committee on Insurance and Pensions and the FICCI Committee on Insurance, the CII Committee on Financial Inclusion. He is also a member of the Advisory Board of the City of London. He holds a BA honours in Economics from St Stephens College, Delhi, and an MBA from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad.
Avantika Sinha

Avantika is a Partner, Trainer and Executive Coach at Stillwater. She is a graduate of the Results Coaching System, the Neuroleadership Group, which draws its learnings from neuroscience.

Avantika has trained and coached high potentials from Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL), the Aditya Birla Group, Tata Communications, BNP Paribas, J&J, Nestle, HDFC Life, Teach for India and more recently, the Indian Women’s Cricket Team. Before joining Stillwater, Avantika has also worked with the nonprofit organisation Akanksha Foundation and as a lawyer at the Mumbai affiliate of the American law firm Kelly, Drye and Warren LLP.

She has degrees in Commerce and Law from Delhi University and in software programming from the National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT). She has studied Human Development from the Harvard Extension School.

Vaibhav Agashe

Vaibhav Agashe is a Sport Psychologist / Mental trainer working with Olympian athletes in India and has over 11 years of experience in this field. He is a certified Sport Psychology consultant with the American Board of Sport Psychology. A number of international and national level players from various disciplines such as shooting, archery, chess, golf, tennis, badminton, squash and athletics train with him directly or through sponsoring organisations.

He has also worked as a consultant with the Sports Authority of India & National Rifle Association of India and helps in preparing the Indian shooting team for important competitions. He has been associated with the Indian Airforce shooting team & Army Marksmanship Unit, Mhow. He has travelled extensively with the shooters for training camps and competitions abroad. Two of his trainees have won Olympic medals in London Olympics 2012.

Jeremy Snape

Jeremy Snape is a former International Cricketer, an international Coach and the Founder and Managing Director of Sporting Edge, a performance consultancy that keeps people ahead of the game in sport, business and education. Jeremy’s career started as a professional cricketer at Northants aged 16 after which, he went on to make his England debut in 2001.

Studying an MSc in Sports Psychology at Loughborough University allowed Jeremy to make the transition from playing to coaching. He has played roles in the Rajasthan Royals at the Indian Premier League and the South African cricket team who became the no.1 ranked test team in the world in 2009. He was recruited by Alan Pardew at Crystal Palace in 2015 and the England Rugby Team in 2016, a combination that delivered the
Dr. Shyam Bhat

Dr. Shyam Bhat is a Trustee at The Live Love Laugh Foundation. He is a psychiatrist and physician, with postgraduate training and Board certifications in Psychiatry, Internal Medicine, and Psychosomatic Medicine. He has over 20 years of experience and has a special interest in an integration of eastern and western methods of healing.

Nanaki J. Chadha

Nanaki J Chadha is a Sport & Performance Psychologist. She completed her masters from Loughborough University in 2016. She is currently pursing a doctoral degree at Staffordshire University, United Kingdom, along with training to be a Chartered Sport Psychologist under the British Psychological Society (BPS). She is also a primary certified practitioner in Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy (REBT), and applies it into sport settings with athletes to help them deal with adversities. She has previously represented India in the sport of Golf.

Deepthi Bopaiah

Deepthi Bopaiah has been with the GoSports Foundation for six years and serves as the Executive Director. Formerly a wealth advisor and a trainer during her stint of 6 years with HSBC, she decided to pursue a longstanding interest in sport. A sportswoman herself, she has previously represented her University and Karnataka State in tennis and basketball. Deepthi holds a Business degree in Finance and Marketing from Symbiosis, Pune and a Masters in Economics from Pune University.

Anna Chandy

Anna Chandy is the Chairperson of The Live Love Laugh Foundation. She has more than 18 years of experience in development work, counselling, coaching and mentoring. Anna is the first Certified Transactional Analyst from Asia accredited by the International Transactional Analysis Association with a specialisation in counselling. She is also certified in Neuro Linguistic Programming and Art Therapy. She runs a private practice and works with organisations too.

unique opportunity to work in the Wembley dressing room for the FA Cup Final and then the Twickenham dressing room for an England international on consecutive weekends. Jeremy is a regular contributor to the BBC, Sky Sports, City AM and the FT. You can follow Jeremy on Twitter - @thesportingedge.
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“What is the role of nutrition in performance?”
“What is rehab and why is it important?”
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