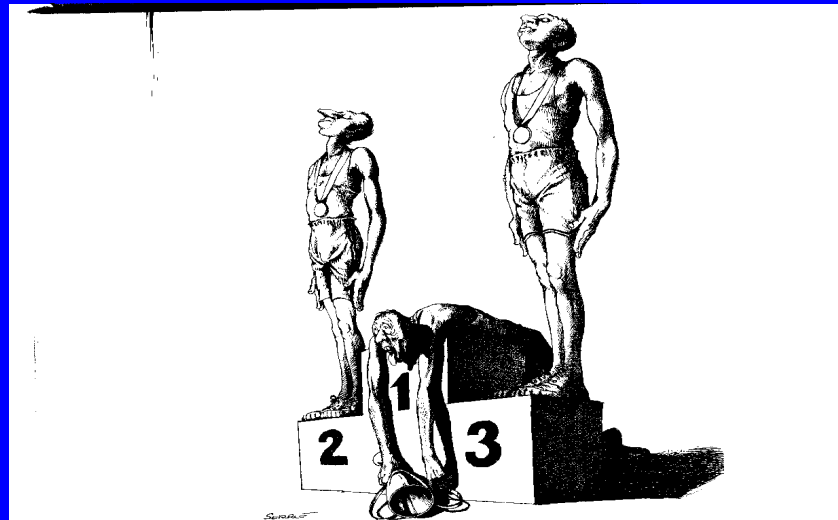


'Mental Skills and Concentration for U16 & 17



Dr. Evelyn Carnegie
Provincial Conference UJ Sept 2002



Athletic Attributes

Elements of Basic Sports

- running
- jumping
- swimming
- throwing

Every modern sport can
be traced back to these
skills

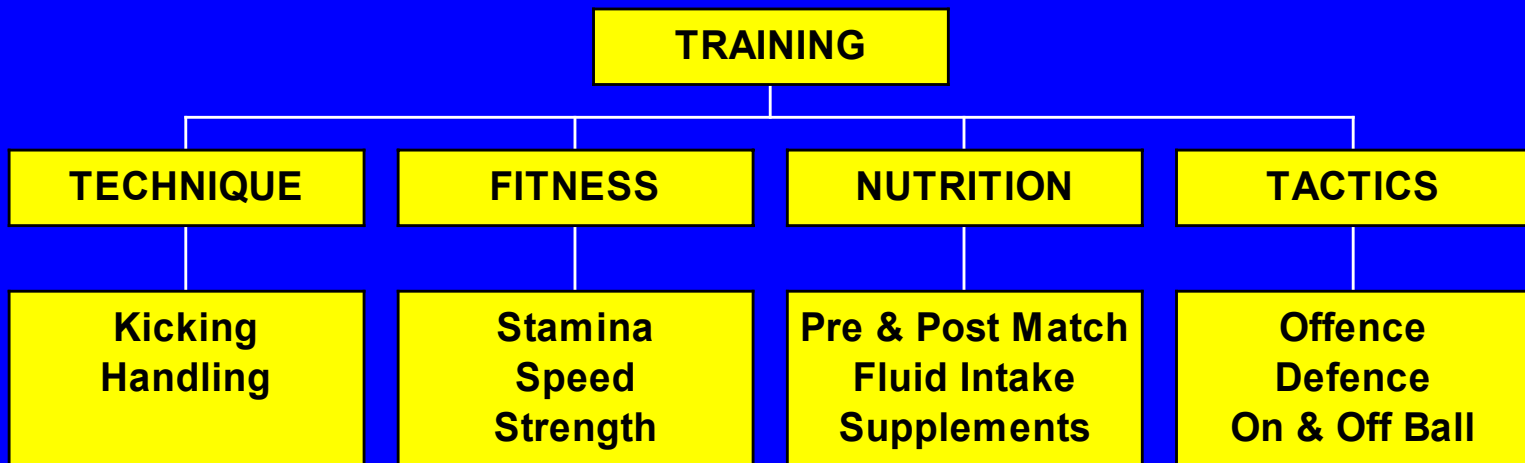
A Champion

- must have these abilities
- physic
- technique
- mental attitude
- technology

To be the best all of these
must come together

Can Science Build a Champion Athlete?

Can Science Help Build a Winning Team?



The Missing Link?

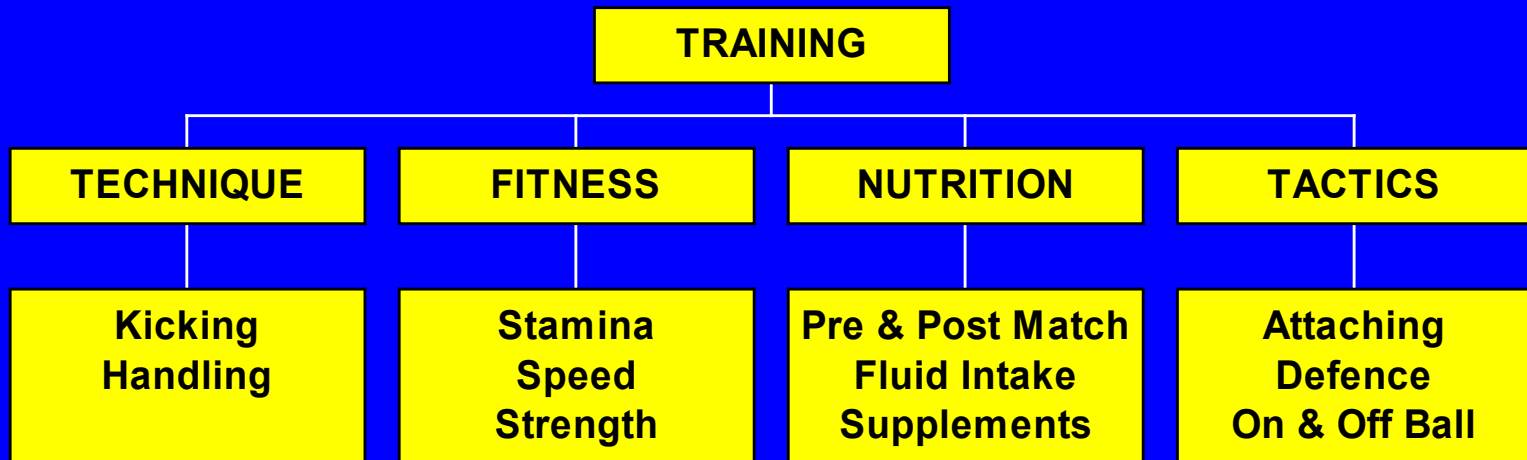
- “Technique alone is no longer enough”
- “Even with the best technology it is **mental attitude that ultimately makes or breaks champions**”
- “**Ability to focus** has repeatedly been the key to championship performance”



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The forgotten Attribute!



Mental Training?

The Coach

- Tactician
- Goal Setting
- Motivator
- Anxiety Manager

‘Coaching Speak’

- Keep you head up
- Concentrate
- Think Positive
- One game at a time

•What emphasise do you place on mental skills?

•How much time have you dedicated to ensuring your team are mentally prepared?

Misplaced Perceptions

- Sports Psychologist = Shrink
- Sports Psychologist = Problem Athlete
- Sport Psychologist = Weakness

Importance of Mental Skills Training

- Performers must be able to
 - remain focused
 - maintain emotional control
 - sustain self-confidence
 - constantly apply themselves
- Coaches typically identify
 - commitment
 - confidence
 - concentration
 - control

*“ANOTHER MONTH
ENDS”*

*All Targets Met,
All Systems Working,
All Customers Satisfied,
All Staff Eager and
Enthusiastic,
All Pigs Fed and Ready to Fly.*

Concentration

Stephanie Cook - Olympic Champion

“In the past, I would have felt down and found it hard to come back from such a mental knocking. But during the break between bouts I focused on what Jeanette had told me. Forget the past and concentrate on the absolute present.”

The Daily Telegraph, Jan 2001

Lack of Concentration

- **Inability to focus on the present**
- **Miss important information - miss tackle**
- **Worry about mistakes**
- **Become tense**
- **Awareness of tension**
- **Inefficient muscle function**
- **Become distracted**
- **TRY HARDER**

Regain concentration

- **“Concentrate on absolute present”**
- **Must remain relaxed**
- **Must be prepared mentally**
 - here and now
 - positive thought control
 - visualising
- **Post event = Return to examine mistakes**



- **An athlete who has lost his concentration may as well be playing for the opposition.**
- **Outcomes in sport are very often decided by a small margin which in many cases can be traced back to a lapse in concentration.**
- **Relaxed/effortless concentration.**
- **As a coach you must empower your athlete**
- **Mental training must have a place in your schedule if true potential is to be achieved.**