



## COACHING CORNER

### SKILLS ANALYSIS

This article looks at analysing the techniques of Pétanque to improve player performance consistency. Unlike mental skills training which is continuous, technique training is done **only** when there is a dip in performance or consistency. It is no different from an experienced golfer having to analyse his/her swing following a dip in form which has been attributed to poor technique.

A competent coach must undertake the observation of players throwing a boule.

The observation will be divided into three stages:

1. Watch the player throw the boule, be repeated at least ten times
2. Analyse the technique, boule hold, and motion and compare this to a reference (good technique – video, peers etc.)
3. Set a programme to improve poor technique- so many throws at 6 metres, or using equipment etc.

As coach, you will be dividing the mechanics of a player's motion into three phases. These are typically as follows:

#### **The set up phase**

This involves the body position and alignment to the target; it also involves the grip, position of the hand at commencement of the motion and the motion of the backswing.

#### **The execution phase**

This phase is divided into two parts:

1. The forward motion of the swing. Timing and direction are the key components to an efficient forward motion. Your observer will be looking at the straightness of your arm and alignment to the target along with the force applied and the speed of motion
2. The release of the boule. This is the critical moment of the skill and will determine how successful the motion has been. The arm position on release in terms of alignment to target and height relative to body position and

position of the hand on release are all factors that will be considered and observed

The execution of the skill will be observed from both sides of the player front and rear to consider each of these factors.

### **The follow through phase**

This is the phase that considers the body position and arm and hand position after the execution phase and looks at the deceleration of the movement. It is typical that poor technique in this phase can be a cause of the effects of a poor technique in the execution phase.

It is always advisable to record the observation. A simple way of doing this is to first determine the throw to be observed. A basic template matrix with phase headings followed by the observational points for consideration and a box for comment on each observational point is enough.

For more advanced skills analysis and in addition to recording the observation on a template matrix I recommend recording your technique on video. Both player and coach can later observe and discuss the skills motion. The player is likely to better understand the comments made by the coach on the template matrix having observed their action on video.

Working with your coach you can plan a training programme to correct poor technique, but remember it is now down to you, practice makes perfect as long as you don't practice your mistakes!

If you have any questions on the above article or wish to receive further advice on skills analysis, please e-mail: [david@integratedpm.co.nz](mailto:david@integratedpm.co.nz) .