

MENTAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN TRAINING

Intensity Skill Training

This is how I view Intensity. It is:

- Not tuning out for a second when it is time to be tuned in. Not screaming out encouragement to fellow teammates 3 rinks across the green from you.
- Not watching the result of a delivery on the adjacent rink.
- Not keeping stony cold silent in case talking might be construed as lapse in concentration.
- Restricted to the brief period of time covering pre delivery routine,
- Visualization of the shot to be delivered, delivery movement and conclusion of the follow through.
- All up that may take 30 seconds.
- All other time in the game is allocated to a lowered intensity of focus through to total relaxation of mind and body to energize yourself for the next bowl you are required to deliver.
- Not altered from delivery to delivery due to pressure of the score. The process of delivery should be automatic and the same each time – a reflection of the process of delivery not an indication of the score or result.
- Also reflected in the commitment by a player, you, to winning, regardless of the situation.

I have two interesting examples of that last dot point.

First was a Malaysian fours skip, while already winning convincingly 22-6 and with one bowl in the game to play and that bowler still walks to the head to see how she can maximize the win for this final end. I saw in this bowler the element of warrior desperation necessary to succeed on the international stage.

The second example occurred in late 2003 with ‘the Bear’ Chris O’Meagher down 11-17 at a club, one end to play, last team out on the green.

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He enabled the game to extend for five dead ends so as to give his team the slim opportunity to secure a 6+ to win the game, regardless of the views of all others concerned.

I gave a talk later at this club and mentioned this episode. The club members recalled the episode and stated that as organizers they were peeved at the time for the delay in the tournament.

I questioned their understanding of what mindset is required to excel at any sport, bowls included. I am not altogether convinced the members generally understand that mindset, though a few of the really good bowlers knew what I was conveying as an elite level approach.

Might I say since then, the best bowlers from this club have opted to develop a better approach over all these years and have shared many of their new approaches with me.

Lachlan Tighe, 2018