

Warm-Up

There was USA Bowling Silver Level Coach, Lyle Jurgensen. He was teaching a warm-up routine at the recent series of Bowler Educational Clinics (BEC) held in Iowa. I watched as he took the attendees (students) through the routine I taught him. I was proud. What more could the head of the BEC ask for? He was leading by example.

Diagram 1

Warm-up for bowling: such a carefree idea. Coaches now a days use warm-up for players to practice their game skills. Athletes loosen up with warm-up. Trainers use it to prevent acute or immediate injuries. Spectators use it as part of the show. Ever watch Sammy Sosa and Mark McGuire take batting practice? It's a spectacle in itself. Of course, I'd rather watch Jim Thome take batting practice, but that's only because I'm a Tribe fan.

Specific warm-up patterns have been devised for various sports. Thrower, jumpers, sprinters, tennis, racquetball, football, baseball etc. all have warm-up routines. They all tend to start with the same general components and then progress into event or sport specific drills specially formulated to rehearse the movements unique to that sport.

A well-devised warm-up gives equal consideration to activities that incorporate the physical, psychological and neurological skills needed for optimal performance. The warm-up should provide gradually increasing stress so that, upon completion, the athlete is capable of dealing with and exerting a high degree of stress in a positive manner.

So, what exactly is the warm-up? The very term "warm-up" has been defined in many ways. As previously shown, the meaning is subject to the individual. Pre-activity warm-up has not been studied enough to truly understand its overall importance. In spite of a lack of overwhelming scientific support for the practice of warming, there is a great amount of broad support in the medical and coaching communities.

I have reviewed the bowling literature of late and have found virtually no information on warm-up other than my own writings. That's not good. Other sport studies have shown improvements in various physiological functions due to

Lyle Micheli, M.D. author of The Sports Medicine Bible explains how a structured workout before sport and activity helps prevent injuries. Micheli describes a proper warm-up is systematically and comprehensively balanced covering three important areas: physiological, psychological, and neurological. These components should be performed in a sequence that progresses from general activity to more highly sport specific skills. The movement from general activity to more physically and technically demanding skills gradually narrows the athlete's focus until a deep sense of concentration on the skill exists. Once an athlete has elevated their physiological, psychological, and neurological capabilities, they are more likely to focus on the training objective (practice) or a competitive situation (league or tournament) in a more physically efficient and relaxed manner.

warming, but little work has been done for bowling. Why is that? I simply don't know...or at least don't want to admit what I think.

A case for warming is

clearly an example of common practice and common sense. The consensus among those of us in the sport science community is that warming the body is very important to reducing potential injury. So why has our sport with some 110 million global participants been so lackadaisical to research such a primary component to safe and successful engagement?

My favorite warm-up activity is arm circles and walking lunges. Even the sport science people at the USOC Training Center this past National Coaches Convention endorsed the walking lunge. Do you hear that coaches? The USOC people think the LUNGE, of all things, is something bowlers should be doing. And how long have I been preaching the lunge to people.

Diagram 2

Anyway, I want to hear about some of your warming techniques. I think arm circles and walking lunges, as shown in the diagram above, are great starters for your own personalized warm-up routine. But I bet many of you already have a warm-up routine, so I want to hear about it. Over the next month or so, after you have read this article, I encourage you to contact me at Briggs Consulting WWW.BriggsConsulting.Com, because I want to hear about your warm-up for bowling. It's one thing for me to look at current and past literature, but it's another to speak with you directly about what is actually being done. So, over the next month or so, I want to hear from you, our readership as to your warm-up routine. You never know, it might make the next issue of BTM. Lyle lead by example, I hope you are too.