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Tactical Training

Lecture - 182

CONCEPT OF TACTICS AND STRATEGY AND METHODS OF TACTICAL TRAINING

INTRODUCTION

Sport forms a major part of our lives, we engage in different forms of games and sports either actively or passively, actively when we are directly involved in it and passively as audiences or spectators. It is wondrous to watch awestruck, a gymnast performing a routine on the floor, executing techniques which most of us cannot even imagine ourselves performing in our wildest dreams with such an ease, or an athlete executing a perfect frosbury flop in high jump clearing heights which a few decades back might have seemed impossible to do so. Athletes who appear in the stadiums or in our television screens running, jumping, swimming, vaulting or executing various motor movements, delivering performances that keep billions and billions of eyes fixed on them go through a lengthy, tedious and life long process of sports training preparing for that one moment where they are able to display their top performance during the time of the competition.

As sports training aims at preparing sportsperson for higher performance in sport competitions, which is only possible when all the four components namely the physical component, mental or intellectual component, technical component and tactical component of sports training are developed to the optimum level. Tactical training of an individual can only begin when the technical development has been achieved.

Concept of Tactics and Strategy

Tactics means intelligent or creative application of skills during a competition. It is the art of competing. Tactics is the most important pre-requisite of performing in an event or competition. Despite the importance of tactics it has still not been adequately defined. The

reason may be the complex nature of tactics and also the vastly different nature of competition in different sports.

In several sports the words 'strategy' and 'tactics' are used interchangeably, which is not a correct practice as both the terms not only differ in phonetics but also in its application. Strategy is the over-all plan for successful participation in a competition whereas tactics is the actual realization of strategy in practice. It should also be noted not to confuse tactics with a tactical action which comprises of a single motor action with a definite tactical aim.

Tactics consist of tactical actions as well as other measures which are adopted before or during the competition for successful participation. Tactics is also understood to be the theory of rules, possibilities, means and forms of successful formulation of competition activity in a sport; hence tactics extends much beyond tactical action.

Thus in simple terms, it may be said that tactics may consist of many units of tactical actions which can be used in combination in such a way that it falls under the purview of the rules and regulations or laws of the specific game or sport. Strategy can be general in nature or can be specific for a particular competition. Competition plan in this sense is competition strategy.

In different sports a variety of tactical tasks are to be tackled. Nature and type of tactical tasks is determined by the nature of competition in a sport. It is therefore, essential to study the competition activity before any tactical aim or task can be determined. Harre in 1986 classified sports into three groups according to the nature of competition:

1) Individual Competition

- With opponent's hindrance. Like in cycling, walking, running without lanes, etc.
- With opponent's influence. Like running in lanes, gymnastics, swimming, diving, rowing, etc.

2) Dual Competition

- With opponent's hindrance. Like in boxing, wrestling, judo, fencing, etc.
- With opponent's influence. Like in tennis, table-tennis, badminton, etc.

3) Team Competition

- With opponent's hindrance. Like in basketball, football, hockey, handball, etc.
- With opponent's influence. Like in volleyball, tennis doubles, relays, etc.

In sports, tactics normally, aim at hindering or negatively affecting the opponent through motor actions or other means. Use of certain type of behaviour or actions before or during the competition with the aim of achieving negative psychological effect on the opponent is also part and parcel of tactics. These tactics are mostly used in individual sports, technical sports and combat sports. In professional boxing even use of language, gestures and flamboyant behaviour are well known tactics to demoralize the opponent.

Methods of Tactical Training

Tactical training or tactical preparation aims at enabling the sportsperson to intelligently use the skills and tactical action or single motor movement to effectively organize for the competition, and to compete successfully within the boundaries of the rules and regulations or laws of the game. This is the general aim of tactical training and it can be further divided into the following objectives:

1. Sportsman must be taught to organize for the competition situations prepare competition plan or strategy.
2. He should learn to perceive and analyze the competition situation quickly and effectively and should be able to bring psychological solution.

3. He should be able to quickly select and apply the skills, which he has learnt, for the best tactical results.
4. He should be able to compete in such a manner that he is able to outsmart his opponent.
5. He should be able to implement his competition plan effectively even under most difficult conditions.
6. He should be able to assess and analyze his own tactical behaviour as well as his opponents.

These objectives can be achieved by accomplishing:

- Tactical knowledge
- Tactical skills
- Tactical abilities
- **Tactical Knowledge:** The tactical knowledge forms the basis of tactics. The sportsman must be acquainted about the following things:

Rules and regulations of the game or sport. He should also know in which way and up to what extent these rules can be manipulated or exploited for tactical purposes.

Knowledge about the tactical conception of the game or sports. Tactical conception is mainly the manner in which the competitions are carried out by top level sportsperson or team.

A sportsman must master the special tactical rules or fundamentals of his game or sport. Each sport has its own set of tactical rules which cannot be ignored in competition.

Sportsman should also know when and where a particular technique should be used to get the best tactical advantage.

It is important for the sportsman to fully understand the interrelationship among fitness, skill, tactics and psychic factors for successful participation in a competition. He should also know the means and possibilities of disturbing his opponents psychologically.

He should also know in which way and up to what extent the judges or umpires, spectators etc. can influence his performance and in which way he should tackle these influences for best results.

A sportsman must learn to observe and analyze his own tactical behaviour as well as the behaviour of the opponent. He must learn it as a mental skill and should form a mental practice of observing and analyzing his own tactical behaviour as well as that of the opponents or other sportsperson.

Last, but not the least, the sportsman must know how to organize for the competition effectively that is collection of various information's which will have a direct as well as indirect bearing on the competition. Furthermore he should also know how to interpret and analyze this information for preparing the competition plan or strategy.

- **Tactical Skills:** Tactical skill is an automated motor action aimed at a tactical task. Acquisition of tactical skill is important to enable the sportsman to do the required motor actions during competition without concentrating on the

movement execution. This is a necessary prerequisite for effective observation and perception of rapidly changing situations during the competition. Tactical skills, depending on the degree of automation are of three types:

Basic tactical skills: In sports only the basic tactical actions should be acquired as a highly automatized skill.

Variations of tactical skills: These are the variations of a basic tactical skill. These are only semi-automatized, thereby enabling their variable applicability according to the competition situation.

Creative tactical skills: In sports quite frequently the situations demand that the tactical action should be done in an entirely new manner. These are called creative tactical actions as these are the product of creative tactical thinking. Creative tactical actions are the hallmark of outstanding sportsperson.

The tactical skills have to be learnt in a systematic manner. To start with the technique should be learnt from tactical aspect that is the techno-tactical training. Once the basic variation of technique has been learnt, stress should be laid on its variable applicability under constantly changing conditions. The degree of difficulty should be progressively increased for example to start without any opponent, then with passive opponent, followed by active opponent progressing to more than one opponent which can be followed by a combination of tactical actions and so on.

Finally, the tactical skill should be mastered under competition conditions in combination with other elements of competition. The stress should be laid on creating new and unaccustomed conditions under which the sportsman should try to tackle the task in a new and novel manner also known as creative tactical action. The sportsman should learn to apply the tactical skill after proper perception and analysis of the situation. Competitions under different and more difficult conditions; against different opponents is another necessary prerequisite for mastering a tactical skill.

- **Tactical abilities:** Tactical ability is the capacity of the sportsmen to apply his physical and psychic abilities, technical and tactical skills according to the competing situation for effectively tackling a tactical task. As yet, there are no specific pointers on what these tactical abilities are. It is, therefore, not possible to name these abilities.

Barth in 1980, divided these abilities into three groups depending on the three important psychic aspects of tactical action:

Special abilities of perception: These are the abilities which enable the sportsman to have good orientation, differentiation of sensory input and perception of the situation.

Special intellectual abilities: These abilities enable the sportsman to correctly anticipate the situation and to think and decide quickly. These are cognitive processes and are difficult to train. But by posing new and new problem situations, these abilities can be significantly improved. For better results the sportsman, with the help of audiovisual aids or actual situations, should be presented tactical problems which he should solve within given time.

Special volitional and emotional abilities: The first two types of tactical abilities cannot be fully utilized without special volitional (e.g. motivation, interest) and emotional abilities (temperament, ability to control one's emotional state). It is a well-known fact that volitional and emotional factors are decisive for attention, concentration (thereby perception) and thinking and decision making.

Motivation and interest can be positively affected through training and psychological means. But emotional abilities seem to be less trainable.

Conclusion

Tactics and strategies are dependent on the intellectual capacity of the sportsperson as it is him or her who has to implement the tactical plan on the field intelligently so as to achieve best performance in an event or a competition. Tactics are very important and no competitions can be won if a sportsperson does not have tactical efficiency. The coach has to make sure that the transition of the sportsperson from technical perfection to tactical efficiency is done during the training process. It is clear that top performance can only be achieved when an individual is physically, intellectually, technically and tactically developed. Hence tactical training is a very important aspect for the achievement of top level of performance which is the very core of sports training around which the whole team of sports scientists and the athlete revolve.