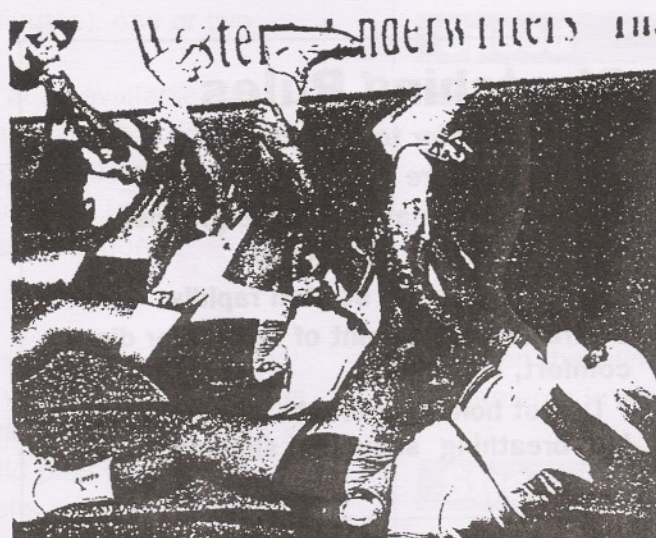


6

FITNESS



Skill and mental application are critical ingredients for every cricketer. Fitness too, makes an important contribution to both individual and team performances. Fitness will encourage

- **Optimum performance**
- **Injury prevention**

Fitness and conditioning is very important pre-season and in-season. There are many fielding

and coaching activities which can incorporate fitness components and maintain enthusiasm and enjoyment. Regular fitness testing is now an important part of the preparation of national, state and many club squads. Results provide the coach with some indication of where weaknesses lie in the various components of fitness and what progress has been made in response to prescribed training programs.



FATIGUE IS YOUR WORST ENEMY

Injury Awareness

The coach must share in the responsibilities associated with the protection and management of cricket injuries.

His role is to ensure continued liaison between the training staff and himself regarding the care and welfare of the players. Coaches and players must take responsibility and be up to date with the latest methods of injury prevention. Access to appropriately qualified health professionals is important, including qualified sports trainers, sports physiotherapists and

sports physicians. Injuries will occur. However the effective coach will take measures to ensure these are kept to a minimum and players are fully recovered before resuming full competition. Even with good training and good coaching, injuries still occur. The golden rule of prevention is better than cure. The following key points will assist you in preventing injuries



Stretching Rules

- 1 Warm-up prior to stretching.**
- 2 Stretch before and after exercise.**
- 3 Stretch alternative muscle groups.**
- 4 Stretch gently and slowly.**
- 5 Never bounce or stretch rapidly.**
- 6 Stretch to the point of tension or discomfort, never pain.**
- 7 Do not hold your breath when stretching; breathing should be slow and easy.**

Warm-up

Warm-up is a vital part of any competition or strenuous exercise session. It results in improved flexibility as well as preparing the mind, the heart, the muscles and the joints for participants, thus reducing the likelihood of injury. The warm-up should involve 5-10 minutes of general activity before the stretching session. A good indication of a sound warm-up is a light sweat.

Stretching

Stretching, before and after activity, is another vital factor in the prevention of injury. Without stretching, muscles lose their flexibility and may fail to respond when being used, and injury could be the result.

Cool-downs

Cool-downs are also important, because they prevent pooling of the blood in the limbs, which could lead to fainting or dizziness, and improves the recovery of the heart, muscles and other tissues after exercise.

An effective cool-down consists of a gradual reduction in activity levels for 5-10 minutes followed by a

comprehensive stretching program.

Fluid Replacement

Players who are unfit or overweight are more susceptible to heat illness. Coaches should be familiar with the symptoms of heat stress such as cramps, headaches, dizziness and uncharacteristic lack of co-ordination. Regular intake of fluid reduces the risk of heat illness and enables better maintenance of physical and mental performance.

Fluid replacement is very important. Coaches should be aware of the points in the following

Cold

Cold weather can cause injuries by cooling warm muscles. Long breaks will cause the



- **Thirst is a poor indicator of fluid replacement – therefore drink before you are thirsty**

- **Plain water is the best fluid replacement**
The following quantities of water are advisable:

- **Before event** (45 minutes), one or two glasses of water
- **During event**, drink at all available opportunities during play and practice
- **After event**, water should be consumed regularly to replace fluid loss (amounts will depend on the weather conditions).

body to cool down; players should be encouraged to wear adequate warm clothing such as tracksuits at practice and jumpers in match situations. Coaches should plan practice sessions to avoid long breaks. Another warm-up period may need to be considered if long rest periods cannot be avoided.

Manage Existing Injuries Properly

Returning to play too early after injury can make the player susceptible to further injury. The coach should ensure that the risk of recurrence of injury is reduced. Concentration on muscle stretching and a strengthening exercise routine before play will assist in preventing injury.

Illness and Participation

During times of illness, the player's body is particularly vulnerable, with the risk of damage to tissues or organs being very high. When ill or feverish, the player should not participate.

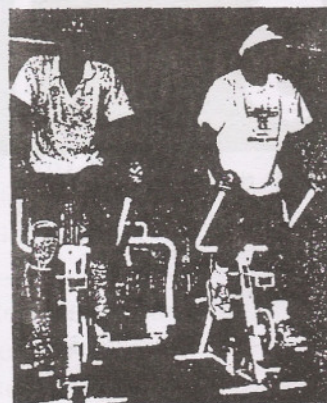
FITNESS GUIDELINES

Cricket requires a combination of

• **ENDURANCE** • **SPEED** • **STRENGTH**

Endurance

Poor endurance will delay recovery between the repeated efforts required in cricket, hasten the onset of fatigue and lead to lapses in concentration.



Speed

The speed of chasing in the field requires good technique and co-ordination to give maximum straight line speed.

Speed and acceleration are important to enable players to run between wickets and change direction in the field.

Agility and balance are vital to faster running between the wickets and in short sharp movements in close catching positions.

Strength



The abdominals are vital to good posture and to providing a sound support structure for many movements required by cricket. Weak abdominals can lead to injury problems, particularly in the lower back in bowlers.

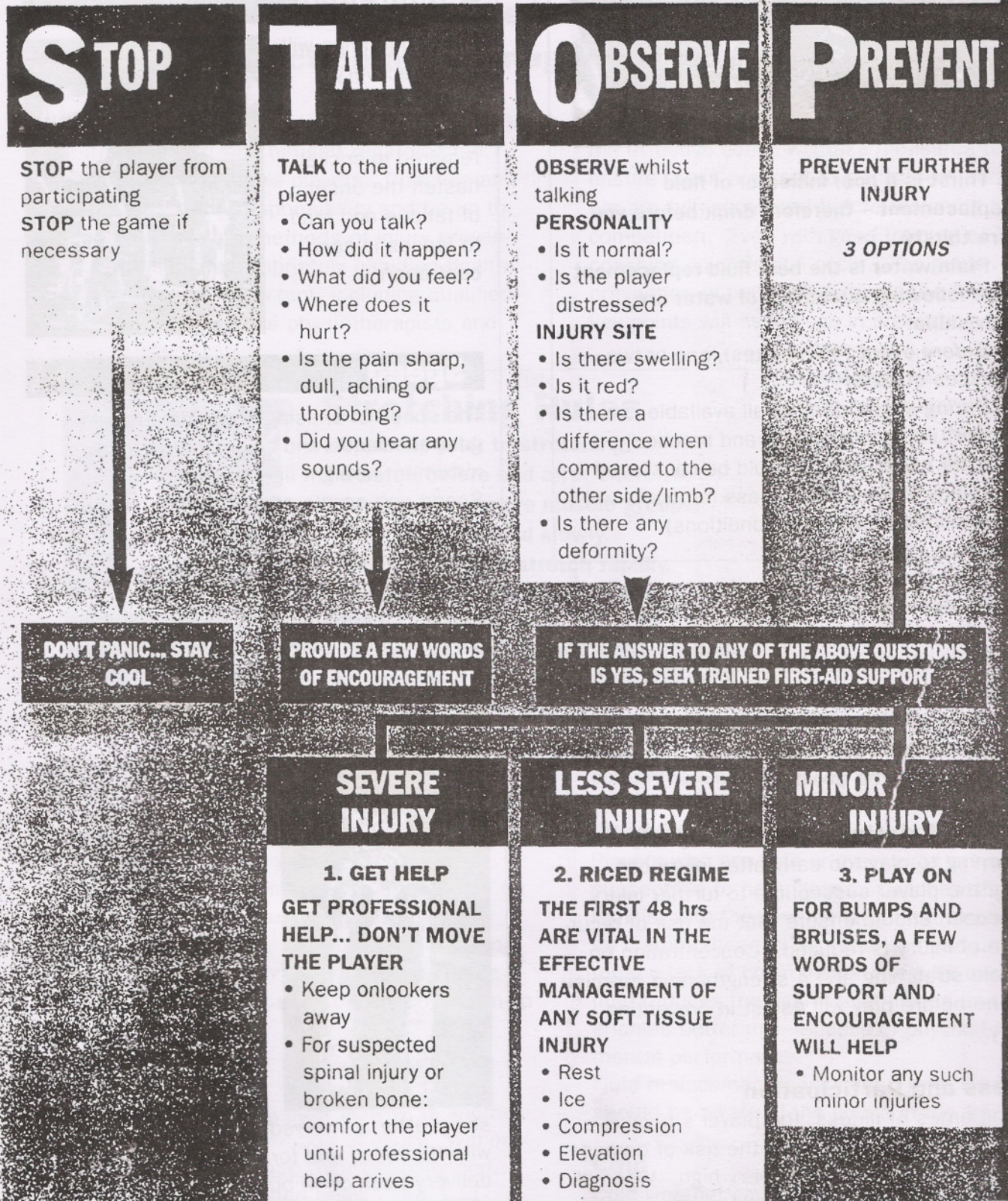
Leg power is important for the short

sharp efforts involved in batting, fielding and wicketkeeping and for maintaining a strong delivery position in bowling.

INJURY

While the coach can't expect to be a medical specialist, an understanding of fundamental first aid is seen as a part of a good coach's responsibility. The following summaries provide procedural guidelines in the assessment of immediate management of injuries.

INITIAL ACTION



PRIMARY MANAGEMENT OF THE INJURY

The first 48 hours are vital in the effective management of any soft tissue injury. Injuries managed effectively in the first 48 hours can reduce the time spent on the sidelines by up to 6 weeks.

The immediate management should follow the **RICED** regime.

This regime is used for all ligament sprains, muscle strains and muscle haematomas (corks, etc); in fact any bumps and bruises which occur in sport.

Rest the injured part

Ice

Compression

Elevation

Diagnosis

HOW

WHY

Movement of injured part only when pain is absent

Activity would promote bleeding by increasing blood flow

The conventional methods are:

- Crushed ice in a wet towelling bag
- Immersion in icy water
- Cold water from the tap is better than nothing
- **Apply for 20 minutes every 2 - 3 hours for the first 48 hours**

- Reduces inflammatory response
- Reduces pain
- Reduces muscle spasm

CAUTION:

- Do not apply ice directly to skin as ice burns can occur
- Do not apply to people with circulatory problems
- **Children have a lower tolerance to ice**

Apply a firm wide bandage over a large area covering the injured part

- Reduces bleeding and swelling
- Provides support for the injured part

Raise injured area above the level of the heart at all possible times

- Reduces bleeding and swelling
- Reduces pain

Refer to a suitably qualified professional such as a Doctor or Physiotherapist

- To ascertain the extent of the injury
- To gain other expert advice on the rehabilitation program required