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# CAPTAINCY



Tactics, leadership and captaincy play a major role in Australian cricket at senior and youth levels for both players and coaches. It is the responsibility of the club coach to schedule productive time to develop skill, understanding and effective practical applications of those key elements. There is no single correct way to captain a side. Captains have to respond to all types of situations. What can be helpful is knowing how others have handled situations. The most

important principle to remember when captaining a cricket team is to keep it simple and don't complicate matters.

After that it's a matter of gaining the other players' respect (the most important asset for a captain), playing well yourself, having a little touch of good fortune at the right time, and success will come your way. As in all other walks of life being a successful cricket captain is a nice balance of ability and common sense.



# Strategies

## Before The Game

The team should assemble at least an hour before the scheduled start of play to enable the team to warm-up together and have a brief practice to be prepared to either bat or bowl following the toss.

## Aspects Of The Toss

"Do not be hasty with your decision." It is the first duty of the captain to always inspect the pitch, particularly if its condition is doubtful, before tossing for the choice of batting. For

example, if the pitch has been affected by rain it should be tested so that the captain can determine whether the ball will go straight through, as it will on a "wet" surface, or whether it will grip, as happens on a "sticky", or drying surface. A good method of testing a turf pitch is to press a finger slightly into the surface and run it along in the direction which the ball will take. If the

finger slides straight along the surface the ball will probably do the same, but if the surface heaves, and "heaps up" in front of the finger then the ball will probably grip and the pitch will be difficult for batting.



## Off-field Leadership

**"If the players give you full support on the field you should be prepared to give them full support off the field. As a captain it is well to remember that your team is depending on you and they will float with your emotions whether they be high or low. So try to keep your emotions on a level plane. Certainly don't show your lows because they will be right down there with you if you do. I**

remember a young player telling me that Richie Benaud used to look so calm in the field even though his team, NSW, were in trouble, that the whole team used to think he had some ace up his sleeve. As soon as he made his next move they would think that was the ace and nine times out of ten the move would succeed because the

**team believed in Benaud and believed his move would work."** – Ian Chappell, former Australian captain.



## Motivation – Team Spirit

Try to get your players to take pride in their team, to value their membership of it. This induces the much talked-about, but hard to define, team spirit which is so valuable to any side. Occasionally a captain will find that it is profitable to have conferences with his players on the team's tactics in general.

## Captaincy In The Field

Have your plans well prepared." The Bowling attack is a cricket phrase; stick to it – attack. Use pace men in short spells, use a wrist spinner or a finger spinner as relief. Be ever

thoughtful of your bowler. Fast bowling on present-day wickets is a hard, and a mostly strenuous task. A fast bowler should not be bowled for long periods, and this principle applies particularly to his opening effort.

## Captaincy Of The Batting Side

"Be with your team as much as possible." Make winning your aim. To win you must give yourself time to win. When batting attack should always be the main tactic. Three runs an over, slightly more if you can, should be the aim over the span of the innings.

# GENERAL ASPECTS OF CAPTAINCY

## 1 Sound knowledge of the Laws of Cricket



## 2 Should be able to discuss, advise and assist his teammates on matters of general tactics

## 3 Should strive, by his own good example, both on and off the field, to obtain the respect, loyalty and confidence of his players

## 4 Must inspire optimism in his team

## 5 Encouragement given to his players will create confidence and much enthusiasm

## 6 Should observe the character and temperament of his players

## 7 Unselfishness must be an outstanding characteristic

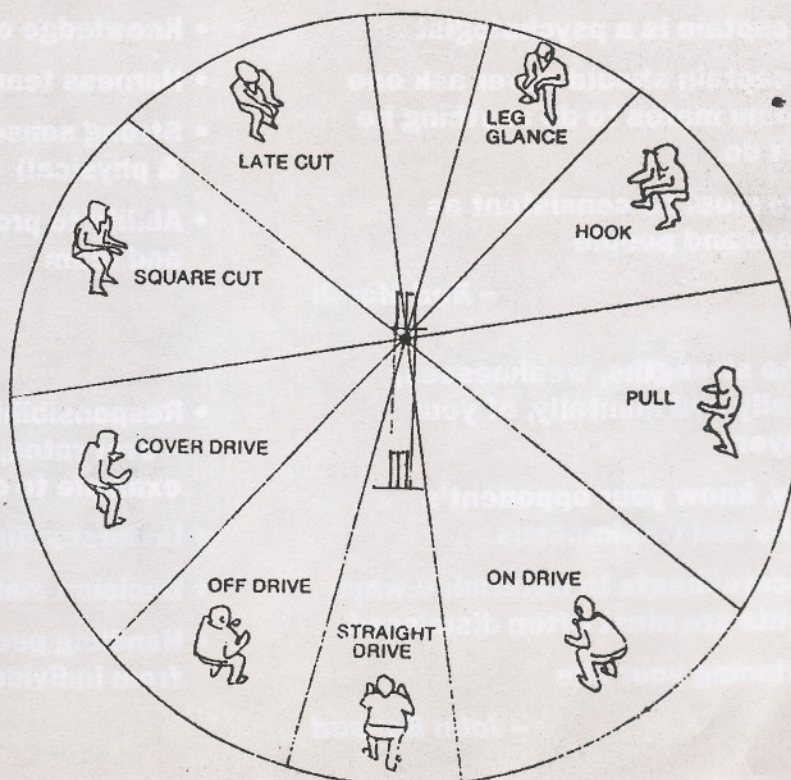
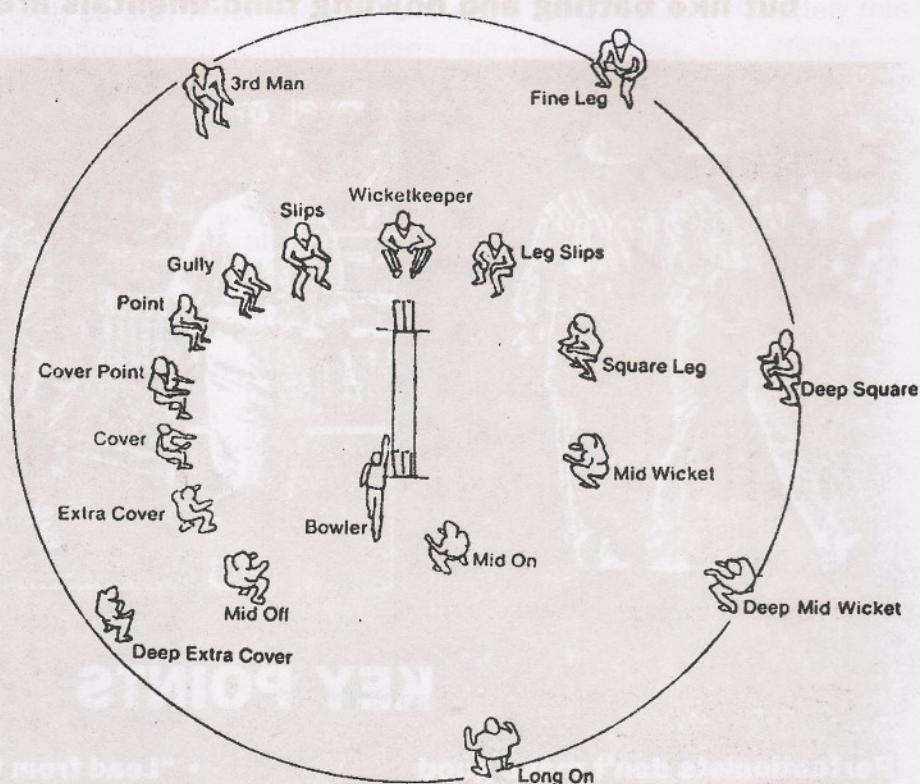


# In The Field

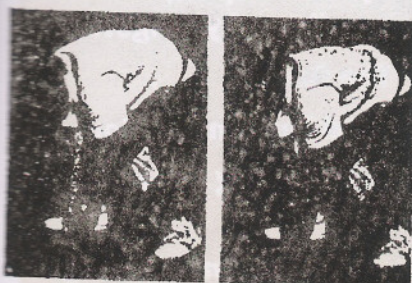
Coaches must pay attention to the subtleties of team tactics in the field and gradually develop these with their teams. Players must become confident in attacking the ball, and competent in intercepting and returning to the "keeper."

Run outs and match-winning catches don't "just happen": each batsman is different and must receive special attention from the fielding team. The most obvious tactic is field placements; fieldsmen may be positioned to cut off a batter's favourite shot, or a position left open to invite a rash shot.

A speedy fielder may be positioned with the aim of making a stop and returning the ball quickly to the stumps; whatever, fielding can be great fun as well as a challenging tactical exercise.



## REMEMBER TO 'ATTACK'





# Images

Captaincy can often be instinctive, a tactic at a particular moment in a match, but like batting and bowling fundamentals are valuable allies.



## KEY POINTS

**Perfectionists don't make good captains**

**A good captain is a psychologist**

**A good captain should never ask one of his team mates to do anything he wouldn't do**

**Captains must be consistent as cricketers and people**

**– Rod Marsh**

**Know the strengths, weaknesses, technically and mentally, of your own players**

**Similarly, know your opponent's strengths and weaknesses**

**Study scoresheets to determine ways opponents are most often dismissed**

**Make winning your aim**

**– John Benaud**

• **“Lead from the front”, and create rapport with players**

• **Knowledge of abilities, conditions**

• **Harness team spirit**

• **Strong sense of self-discipline (mental & physical)**

• **Ability to project confidence in self and team**

**– Barry Richards**

• **Responsibility to the game and beyond – over rates, competitive spirit, example to community and youngsters**

• **Understanding “The Game”**

• **Decision making and implementation**

• **Handling people and getting the best from individuals**

**– John Inverarity**



# Umpiring & The Laws

The Umpires' primary responsibility is to ensure that the conduct of the game proceeds strictly in accordance with the Laws, and to do so they must interpret and apply those Laws. Ultimately this responsibility has to be actively shared by all of us – umpires, players, coaches and officials.

Good coaches ensure play is conducted within the spirit of the game as well within the Laws; they should also maintain a good knowledge of the Laws and local playing conditions. It is always handy to have a current copy of the Laws of Cricket and the local playing rules.

*"Throughout my career I have been conscious of the need for players, as well as umpires, to have a comprehensive knowledge of the Laws, so much so that early in my first class career I studied the Laws and passed an umpires' exam under the auspices of the NSW Cricket Umpires' Association."*

*My umpiring knowledge served me well in later years (especially when I was made captain), and I would counsel all players to widen their understanding of the Laws so that they may **co-operate with umpires** in the smooth running and interpretation of what is a very complex game.*

*An umpire's decision to give a batsman out or not out in a game of cricket can be so critical. In that regard I believe cricket to be unique amongst all games and it is for that reason players have a duty to assist umpires make correct judgments not take part in mass intimidatory appeals."*

– Sir Donald Bradman

(extracts from his foreword for the ACB's Umpires Manual, "What's Your Decision")

The coach who is well versed in the Laws and local playing conditions is not only ensuring his team(s) will have every possible advantage, but also playing an important role in ensuring the proper traditions, values and spirit of the game are continued.

Captains and coaches would be aware of the many attributes required by cricket umpires. There is one above all others, which is also an expectation from umpires of captains and coaches – commonsense! This is often referred to as "the unwritten Law 43".

Coaches can improve their knowledge of the Laws, and their players', by:

- Attending training seminars on the Laws
  - Studying the Laws and Rules
  - Inviting umpires to attend and participate in club practice
  - Having players "stand" at practice i.e. play out the role of an umpire
  - Random quiz at practice, or in newsletters
- While some umpires are paid for their Saturday afternoons, everyone is essentially involved because they love the game. Often fellow players, managers/coaches (particularly in junior teams), mums and dads also stand in the middle.

The need for both a knowledge of the Laws and an understanding of the role of umpiring is important for players and coaches in ensuring that the game is always played competitively, keenly and in the right spirit.

## **Law 42.1: Responsibility of Captains**

**The Captains are responsible at all times for ensuring that play is conducted within the spirit of the game as well within the Laws.**



# THE NO BALL RULE

**Bowling a no ball is criminal in cricket. It gives easy runs to the opposition and indicates poor discipline and attention to detail by bowlers.**

Stand-in umpires such as the next batter in should be used at practice, and no balls eliminated through appropriate awareness and training.

To assist coaches the current no ball rule has been included. As with the laws of cricket, players should be educated and made aware of practical examples and ramifications of not adhering to the law. At present the no ball law reads as follows:

**NO BALL – a no ball shall be called if the bowler:**

- i) Throws the ball, or;
- ii) Does not have part of his front foot, either grounded or raised, behind the popping crease, or;
- iii) Does not ground his back foot within (and not touching) the return crease.

The ball does not become "dead" on the call of "no ball". The striker may hit a no ball and whatever runs result shall be added to his score; but runs made otherwise from a no ball (e.g. runs normally scored as wides, byes etc.) shall be scored no balls, and if no runs be



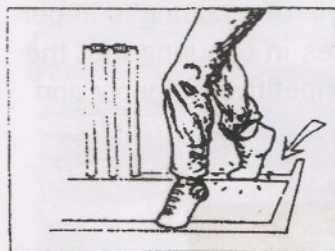
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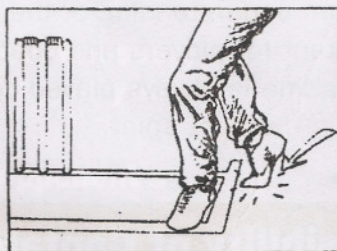
**ILLEGAL**

made one run (i.e. no ball) shall be scored. The striker may be out from a no ball for hit the ball twice and either batsman may be out, obstructing the field, handed the ball or run out.

**NOTE:** To ensure that bowlers do not bowl no balls, bowlers should aim only to break the popping crease with their front toe.

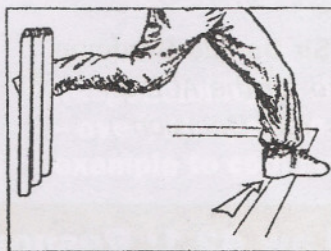


**FAIR DELIVERY**

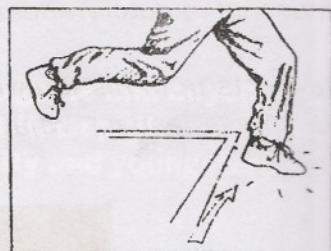


**NO BALL**

The bowler's back foot touches or lands on or outside the return crease.



**FAIR DELIVERY**



**NO BALL**

The bowler in the delivery stride has no part of the front foot behind the popping crease.