International Journal of Physical Education

Research Article

Volume 5 | Issue 2 | October, 2012 | 163-166

Advantage of mental imagery training on skill performance of inter-university football players

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Received : *18.08.2012;* **Revised :** *13.10.2012;* **Accepted :** *18.10.2012*

■ **ABSTRACT**

The aim of the present study was to find out the effects of mental practice on selected football skill. For this purpose of the study, thirty footballer boys studying in B.P.E. 3rd year of L.N.I.P.E., Gwalior, who were attending Yoga class as their instructional class were selected as subjects. The subjects were divided into two groups (experimental group and control group) each group consisted on 15 subjects. The ages of these subjects ranged between 20 to 23 years. The selected soccer skills were juggling, dribbling and wall volley kicking and Start's (1960) technique of mental practice was used for mental imagery training. The technique of mental practice was carried out for six weeks and was performed three days a week. Pre-test and post-test score was taken, to find out the effect of mental practice between experimental and control groups after the training of six week. The data were treated by applying analysis of covariance and level of confidence was chosen at 0.05. The analysis of data using analysis of covariance revealed that post adjusted mean of experimental groups trained by mental imagery practice, showed better efficacy on selected soccer skill mainly juggling (4.75), dribbling(4.46) and wall volley(5.89) which were higher than the F ratio 4.21 needed to be significant.

■ **Key Words :** Mental practice, Juggling, Dribbling, Wall volley kicking

■ **How to cite this paper :** Pawar, Vinay and Bhukar, J.P. (2012). Advantage of mental imagery training on skill performance of inter-university football players. *Internat. J. Phy. Edu.*, **5** (2) : 163-166.

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Mental imagery, also called visualization and mental rehearsal, is defined as experience that resembles perceptual experience, but which occurs in the absence of the appropriate stimuli for the relevant perception (John , 1999). Whenever we imagine ourselves performing an action in the absence of physical practice, we are said to be using imagery. While most discussions of imagery focus on the visual mode, there exists other mode of experience such as auditory and kinaesthetic that is also important Morris (2005); Taylor and Wilson (2005).

Some of very common examples of mental images are in our daily life such as daydreaming and the mental visualization that occurs while reading a book (Oliver, 2007). When a musician hears a song, he or she can sometimes "see" the song notes in their head, as well as hear them with all their tonal qualities (Roeckelein , 2004). This is considered different from an after-effect, such as an after-image. Calling up an image in our minds can be a voluntary act, so it can be characterized as being under various degrees of conscious control.

Many sports such as golf, tennis and skating, not only require physical skills, but a strong mental game as well. Most coaches preach the line that sports are 90 per cent mental and only 10 per cent physical. Especially in sports where hundredths of a second or tenths of an inch separate the champions from the mediocre athletes, an extra edge can be extremely crucial (Sheikh and Korn, 1994). Hence, numerous athletes are turning towards mental imagery to take their game to the next level. Different uses of imagery in sport include: mental practice of specific performance skills, improving confidence and positive thinking, problem solving, controlling arousal and anxiety performance review and analysis,