

Imperfect Practice Makes Perfect

by Jon Doyle, founder of Baseball Training Secrets 04_03_06

Perfect practice does not make perfect unless the practice is imperfect. Make sure you read that again and let it sink in. Training in a perfect environment for sport is not optimal because that perfect environment never exists. Competition is ALWAYS a reactive environment. Nothing is ever controlled. Who wants to look like Tarzan and play like Jane? Lets look and play like Tarzan!

When an athlete builds their conditioning in a pristine environment they are doing themselves a disservice. Do Navy Seals train in immaculate environments? How about fighter pilots? Would you send a teacher into a classroom of 20 screaming children without putting them through real life situations as student teachers? As silly as those questions may seem I think you get my point.

An athlete needs to be able to adjust their body while making split second decisions. The ability to "slow down" game speed is crucial in the development of a superior athlete. The great ones anticipate what is going to happen next and react to that. Some athletes have the natural ability to do this, but would still benefit from this type of training. Imperfect training has a more profound effect on those that do not have these instincts "built-in." As the old saying goes, "Experience is our best teacher" and the more an athlete trains to adapt to an ever changing environment the better off they are.

You must be asking the question, "How do I incorporate imperfect training into what I am doing already?" There are many ways to do this. Have your training partner tell you what exercise you are doing next. Everything becomes a surprise because you do not know what is coming next. Have that partner nudge you slightly in different directions during a pause squat or Indo Board session. Blindfolded training works wonders. How about not listening to your favorite workout music and see how you perform?

These are just a few of the many ways that imperfect training can be incorporated into your current regime. Become an athlete, not a weight room warrior or a five o'clock hitter.

Jon Doyle MA, RTI, CSCS is a strength and conditioning coach based out of the Northeast. Jon has helped thousands of individuals worldwide achieve their fitness goals. He is a highly-sought after strength and conditioning consultant, working with numerous professional athletes and NCAA Universities. His website, www.baseballtrainingsecrets.com, has garnered national acclaim as the top source for baseball training information.