

MASTERCLASS

FOR ANY
YOUNG LADS
OUT THERE...



THE BATTING DOCTOR

HINTS TO STOP TIPPING TO THE OFF SIDE WHEN DRIVING

You can improve your on-drives by opening the shoulders slightly, writes Gary Palmer, with your front foot pointing up the wicket and positioned down the line of leg stump (no wider) while your back foot is turning in toward the ball. This, coupled with practising against bowling-machine feeds from around the wicket, will minimise tipping to the off-side. When you can play the on-drive well with around the wicket feeds, then progress to alternating between over-the-wicket and round. These alternate angles will help fuse your balance into a more central position, with your head in a neutral position ready to play off, on and straight drives with minimal risk of tipping over.

Common Faults

- Playing straight balls towards the off-side.
- Playing around the front pad, and getting lbw, bowled or caught from a leading edge.
- Not knowing which balls to leave and which to play outside off stump.
- Not being able to play in the 'V' straight up the pitch and therefore only having scoring options square of the wicket.

POINT OF CONTACT (STABLE BASE)

When playing front foot drives, you need to make contact with the ball forward of the front foot: this lengthens your hitting zone. Lean towards the ball with the head forward of the body, allowing the back heel to get off the ground. This will allow you to reach further forward and hit with a dominant top hand and a relaxed bottom hand.

Making contact in front of the front foot will help you get more momentum into the shot, while hitting from a firm base. Concentrate on stroking the ball into the correct areas with good technique – rather than trying to swing the bat too fast. If your back heel is still grounded when playing forward, you are not leaning in enough.

Common Faults

- Too much bottom hand.
- Heel of back foot is still touching the floor.
- Head is not forward of the front foot.
- Head is not in line with the path of the bat towards the ball.

Gary Palmer has coached a roster of county teams. His Academy (ccmacademy.co.uk) runs programmes throughout the year



HAWKEYE MASTERCLASS

BRETT LEE OPENING THE BOWLING IN IN ODIs

There was a time when Brett Lee was all about pace – which made him dangerous to the opposition in Tests and dangerous to his own team in ODIs. But he has now matured into one of the world's finest quick bowlers, equally adept in both forms.

The secret to his maturing success has been a recognition that flat-out pace is not the be-all and end-all. In the graphics Graphics below we look at the CB Series game against India at Brisbane in February – when he returned the highly impressive (and match-winning) figures of 9-2-27-5.

Lee still offers variety as an opening bowler but by reigning in his pace he now has more control of where and how he bowls.

The first graphic shows the beehive of his spell to right-handers, with balls delivered at a variety of lengths (and therefore heights), although the majority are still just back of length. What is noticeable is the lack of width, with his only boundary conceded (yellow) coming from one of his rare lapses – a gift ball that was hittably wide outside off-stump.

The second graphic illustrates how a variety of length, but tight line, can prove restrictive to batsmen: this is his opening over of the match.

Ball one (red) was scrambled for a leg-bye by Virender Sehwag, before Lee bowled the next five to Sachin Tendulkar with further addition to the score: generally, he's getting good bounce from just short of a length. Lee's ability to move the ball both ways is also crucial in keeping the batsman honest, with his increasing pace – from 82.9mph up to 87.1 – ensuring the batsmen do not feel happy taking too many risks.

Most crucially though Lee now has control of where and how he is bowling, a skill which becomes especially crucial in the one-day format when a wayward quick ball is likely to disappear to the rope just as fast (if not faster) than it was sent down at.

