

## Yoga for ideal and peak performance in sports

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### Abstract

The modern era is the period of competition. Competition in job, competition in education, competition in sports - competition lies in everywhere. To face these competition every individual has to be fit form body, mind and spirit. Sound body, mind and spirit is very essential for ideal and peak performance in games and sports, practicing yoga is the best way for that. Sports as we look today is not confined to mere competition it has taken the shape from amateurism to professionalism and then to take the shape of techno sports. Therefore the preparation of the sports person have been changed drastically than that was followed before. Challenges in the body contact game individual outfits and body language in out the field reflect the personality of the sports persons. From school level competition to the world championships winning a medal has become the only aim of success. Ideal performance is human state of high positive energy marked by a deep calmness, extremely high confidence and deep satisfaction in performing the activity on work in which the athlete is engaged. It is the optimal physiological and psychological level of arousal measured by muscular tensions, heart rate, blood pressure, and brain wave pattern and breathing composure that resulting peak performance. In every games and sports calmness of mind, physical fitness and social development of an athlete is important. Through the practice of yoga an athlete can developed his/her mental health, physical health, emotional status and social acceptability. Research shows that people competing for higher performance require some degree of stress (sprint start, attempting height in high jump or pole vault etc.) for clinching medal or setting of world record. Therefore, different types of exercises are blended with specific yoga exercises in the European countries for ideal and peak performance.

**Keywords:** ideal performance, peak performance, sports

### 1. Introduction

Yoga means union of the individual soul or consciousness with the Universal Consciousness or spirit. It is a 5000 years plus old Indian technique of body culture. Indian seers and saints have been practicing Yoga since ancient times to bring flexibility to the spine and joints, to keep the muscles of the body pliable and youthful, increase circulation in arteries and strengthen internal organs. And yet, yoga is so much more than this. Yoga has been said to help strengthen the power of concentration, to banish constipation, to relieve stomach disorders, improve muscle coordination and reduce excess body fat. It was practised by Indian Sages to strengthen the mind-body connection, bring calmness and relaxation to mind, enhance self-confidence, strengthen self-discipline and self-resolve, reduce stress / anxiety and increase vitality and energy throughout the body.

The modern era is the era of competition. Competition in job, competition in education, competition in sports - competition lies in everywhere. To face these competition every individual has to be fit from body, mind and spirit. Yoga can be applied to enhance the sports performance of the professional athletes. Sound body, mind and spirit is very essential for ideal and peak performance in games and sports, practicing yoga is the best way for that.

History of the Indian civilization reveals that yoga was considered as one of the regular practice in day to day living. We have seen in our holy books and old sculptures that they

also practiced various types of activities like throwing the spear, archery, running, horse riding, wrestling and many other activities.

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The science of Yoga imbibe itself the complete essence of the way of life, including Gyan Yoga or Philosophy, Bhakti Yoga or path of devotional bliss, Karma Yoga or path of blissful action and Raja Yoga or path of mind control. Raja yoga is further divided into eight part and through the practice of various parts of Raja Yoga, sports performance can be develop.

#### 1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is

- To provide the knowledge of Yoga and Sports.
- Share the knowledge about the ideal and peak sports performance through the practice of yoga.

## 1.2 Ideal Performance

An ideal performance is the state of mind that each athlete learn to achieve consistently in competition in such a way that capture the experience in sports with all the physical and psychological, technical and tactical element fit together like a perfect puzzle.

## 1.3 Peak Performance

Peak performance is a state in which the person performs to the maximum of their ability, characterized by subjective feelings of confidence, effortless and total concentration on the task. Ideal performance is human state of high positive energy marked by a deep calmness, extremely high confidence and deep satisfaction in performing the activity on work in which the athlete is engaged. It is the optimal physiological and psychological level of arousal measured by muscular tensions, heart rate, blood pressure, and brain wave pattern and breathing composure that resulting peak performance.

## 2. Role of Yoga

In every games and sports psychological stability, physical fitness and social development of an athlete are important. Through the practice of yoga an athlete can develop his mental health, physical health and empowerment adjustment with the playing situation and develop cooperation and understanding. Likewise stress is a common phenomenon in every games and sports particularly in competitive sports stress is considered to be beneficial up to a certain level. Research shows that people competing for higher performance require some degree of stress (During sprint start, attempting height in high jump or pole vault and so on) for clinching medal or setting of record. Therefore, different types of exercises are blended with specific yoga exercises in the European countries during their off season preparation and particularly during pre-competition and competition season. Which are help them to manage stress in their playing situation. In India the importance of yogic practices are felt for development of flexibility, improvement of lung capacity and used as a process for relaxation.

The sports, imbalance between physical and mental health are mostly observed. Depending on one event, an athlete become stronger in the particular area and weak in other. Due to this lacking the athlete often gets injuries causing decrease in sports performance or at a times he or she has to leave the sports arena permanently. Besides the practice of particular games and sports, the regular practice of yoga may cure the side effects and injuries which are occurred from the particular event. During peak and competitive training periods, yoga should be toned down significantly. Focus becomes the intention of the yoga practice. Yoga should include gentle modifications and restorative poses during this time. This is also a great training period to incorporate meditation, visualization, and breathing practices at least every other day. (Roundtree, 2008)

It is very difficult to get true yogic experience for an athlete, but they can gather lot of experience from the discipline of yoga. Through the regular practice of yoga an athlete can get the knowledge of their different level of their body and mind. They will be able to control their emotions, stress, arousal etc. in the field of play and that can push up toward the goal.

To become an athlete is not an easy task. Some athletes are God gifted which are already exist in them by birth and some athletes has to be earn by the practice as per their body types. By the practicing of yoga from the very beginning of childhood, brain functioning, development of muscular system, coordination, motor skills, social skills and adjustment, environmental adjustment, emotions and imagination improves. That way we can build up a new era where a child can chose their perfect sports event.

## 3. National and International Concept

Yoga exercises have even been included into everyday training in semi-professional football too. The German Football Association (DFB) recorded several video sequences with Broome so that youth players could learn how to stretch the back of their thighs and take care of themselves from a young age in order to make sure their muscles do not stiffen. It was thanks to Oliver Bierhoff that Broome's collaboration with the DFB started in 2005. The former Germany striker, who scored the Golden Goal in the 1996 European Championship final, took up yoga after retiring and got to know Broome. When Bierhoff became general manager of the national team he brought him into the Germany set-up. "A lot of the exercises are toned down and geared towards football; in concrete terms that means I don't do anything that could risk a player getting injured," Broome said. "Everything flows from physiotherapy. It's yoga that's tailor-made for professional athletes."

The Indian Cricket Team which was under the training programme of Anil Kumble at National Cricket Academy, Bangalore has a long term training programme with special emphasis on yoga.

Yoga has slowly become more and more popular in America. Yoga comes from India and it was always laughed at by other countries. But slowly as more and more athletes use yoga for cross-training and showing massive improvements, it is becoming very common with all types of athletes. Now, entire sports teams practice yoga in their training programs.

Boston Bruins goalie, and MVP of the 2011 Stanley Cup Playoffs, Tim Thomas is probably the best example of how yoga has transformed an average player into a Superstar. Tim was a below average goalie that never played in the NHL during his 20s, but after discovering yoga, his game improved so much that the Bruins brought him into the NHL in 2005 when he was 32 years old. By 2008, he was an all-star, and in 2011, he won the Stanley Cup, and Tim definitely credits a lot of his success to yoga.

## 4. Recommendation

- Tennis can be taxing. With each stroke of the racquet, a player put great force on their shoulder, arm, and wrist and the quick, multidimensional movements like zigzag across the court impact on their legs, hips, and spine. A yoga practice can be an important recovery tool to stretch tight muscles, encourage tissue resiliency
- Different poses in acrobatic, artistic and floor gymnastics including synchronised swimming, diving and many other sports activities resembles to different posture of yoga. Perfection towards ideal and peak performance will

definitely agree to the point that yoga is an essential part for sports performance.

- Corrects and improves muscle imbalances in the injury prone zones: hips, thigh, pelvis, hamstrings, and knees. Stretching and strengthening the muscles in the heat is extremely effective.
- Improves the mobility / flexibility of the overall skeletal system; tendons ligaments and joints. Particularly effective in correcting inefficient or unhealthy running styles which in turn helps prevent injuries and improves performance.
- Many of the postures help to correctly align the knee, strengthen the arches to provide better shock absorbers and maintain healthy connective tissue in the foot and shin.
- Stretches, strengthens and improves the mobility of the spine. Having a healthy spine has a profound effect on the body and in most sports the spine suffers greatly.
- The passive nature of yoga cultivates awareness of body resistance, promoting release of tension to avoid injury.
- Improves circulation in connective tissue to help you recover and rejuvenate after sports.
- Bone density increases and hormones rebalance. This is particularly important to females who undertake endurance exercise such as long distanced running.
- Increases stamina and lung capacity.
- Improves breath control and concentration gaining a better awareness of the body which results in an increase in performance combined with a more relaxed and more efficient style.
- Increases stride length.
- Lowers resting heart rate and increases VO2 max.
- Develops awareness in, Breath, Balance, Concentration, Control, Efficiency, Flow, and Precision.
- Yoga can relieve performance anxiety and stress, and frees athletes from mental distractions.
- Yoga helps to develop determination and self-discipline.
- It helps to an athlete to challenge themselves and go outside of their comfort zone.

## 5. Conclusion

Now a day's yoga has become very popular all over the world. It shows that the regular practice of yoga improves the athlete in every dimensions. Therefore in the field of games and sports yoga has become an accepted area of training and systematization. This not only helps a young star to grow in sports but also prepare him/her physically, psychologically and cognitively to prepare him to attain ideal and peak performance.

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