

# PITCHVISION ACADEMY

*This article was originally posted on [pitchvision.com](http://pitchvision.com)*

## KEVIN PIETERSEN VS. VIV RICHARDS

*Gary Palmer, the [PitchVision Academy](http://PitchVision Academy) batting coach, continues his series on the techniques of some of the England team. He has some ideas for positive changes that will benefit Kevin Pietersen's performance. If you would like coaching from Gary, check out [CCM Academy](http://CCM Academy).*

Kevin Pietersen is already a very successful International batsman. What technical changes would he need to become to step up a further level and gain the reputation that Sir Vivian Richards has?

The Great West Indian batsman had the perfect technique and was probably the most destructive batsman the world has ever seen. He was well balanced, well aligned and on completion of shot his finished positions were excellent. When he wanted to improvise there was nobody better at doing this than Sir Vivian Richards.

He attached his individual flare on to a sound basic technique. Even when he hit a straight ball through mid wicket; he did it by swinging the bat in a straight line towards the ball with a high leading elbow. All he did was to close the face on impact with the ball which is a low risk shot.

Viv had the perfect defence and was the master of milking the bowling with minimum risk of getting out. Viv always looked comfortable and in total control when he was batting.

Viv batted at no 3 and played in an era abundant with world-class fast bowlers and had the ultimate technique to deal with them. The better the bowler the better the batting technique needs to become to combat the bowler. Viv had that technique and minimised the bowlers options of getting him out or tying him down.

He made batting look easy because he was biomechanically sound.

How does this compare to Kevin Pietersen?

### Richards vs. Pietersen

Kevin has a good eye. He is very good at improvising, has plenty of self-belief and he is not afraid to take on challenging run chase situations or take risks. These are similarities he has with Viv Richards.

Unlike Sir Viv, his Initial trigger move causes him to be closed off as illustrated here:



This causes his backswing to go back over leg stump and from that position it difficult to hit the ball towards mid off and straight extra cover without compromising a straight bat path to the ball and target area. From the initial position he gets in to after his trigger he is well aligned to hit through the covers but to hit through mid on he has to hit across the line of the ball giving the bowler a chance of getting him out.

His preferred scoring areas are generally squarer rather than straighter in the v. These are higher risk options because he is playing across the line with half a bat. When he does hit the ball through mid on he hits it from on or outside off-stump by it hitting across his front pad and the line of the ball, this makes him vulnerable of being LBW or bowled. As you can see here:



This also inhibits his scoring areas when he is trying to milk the bowling especially against spin bowling.

He is out of alignment and so the law of averages are not in his favour. All his options are high risk ones.

On flat pitches against lesser bowlers he will get away with it. Against world class bowling in more difficult conditions it is difficult and risky because the bat does not swing in a straight line from backswing to target area for long enough.

### **How Pietersen can improve his consistency**

Kevin would be able to occupy the crease longer and work the ball around better if his bat swings in a straight line to the target area and he is perfectly aligned and balanced.

#### **1. Work on his trigger move**

Kevin moves to early and is static before the ball is bowled. Instead he could go back and across which will automatically open him up slightly. This will give him access to hit in the v and delay planting his front foot until he has slighted the line of the ball. This movement will give him more

rhythm and will get him back up in to the shot well balanced and aligned rather than tipping across to the off side. The movement looks like this:



## 2. Correct his alignment

The alignment of his feet and shoulders need to be in line so the bat can swing in a straight line to the ball with the full face for the maximum amount of time thus lengthening his hitting zone. This would also put him in a great position to improvise from. You can see a more open alignment with this on drive:



### 3. Open his stance

If Kevin stood with his shoulders slightly more open his head would be up the wicket and directly above his body. This will help him with the alignment of his feet and pick the ball up over off stump more consistently. These points will allow him to hit better on drives, straight and off drives because he would be swinging the bat in a straight line to the target area without hitting around his front pad. He will also find hitting on the up much easier when driving in the v:



#### 4. Complete his shots

Finishing his drives with exaggerated high hand and leading elbow and fully completing the correct shapes will add to his consistency of shot by lengthening his hitting zone and also he could steer the ball into gaps with more precision.



Kevin is a talented batsman choosing to bat in a complicated fashion.

Just imagine how much better he could be if he adopted a more simple and easier way of going about it. Batting at 3 could challenge him and make him raise his game by fine-tuning his technique. This is something he could do that may bring him closer to being as good as Sir Vivian Richards.



*If you want to learn everything there is to know about technique, check out [Gary Palmer's interactive coaching courses](#). Gary is a coach with over 20 years experience teaching players to become first class cricketers. For the first time he has put his drills online, only at PitchVision Academy.*

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