

MASTERCLASS

FOR ANY
YOUNG LADS
OUT THERE...



THE BATTING DOCTOR

THE CORRECT SWING

The back swing is your first point of alignment, writes Gary Palmer, and you need to get this right to be able to play the straight-batted shots well. The top of the back swing needs to be high over off stump, so gravity can assist the top hand on the down swing: this helps to minimise your use of the bottom hand. (Short back lifts encourage too much bottom hand and I would advise you against having one).

At the top of the back swing your left forearm should be bent at about 90 degrees pointing towards the bowler with the back arm in alignment. This will make your top hand dominant and also help your enhance your finish position with a high leading elbow on completion of the shot. It is important that the bottom hand is holding the bat with fingers and thumb initially, ready to play a straight-batted shot. This will ensure the top hand takes control throughout the shot.

Batters need to try to pick the bat up towards off-stump so that your bat can get good access to the ball on straight and especially leg stump line deliveries. From this position the bat can swing in a straight line towards the ball with a full face.

After your initial back swing over off stump your shoulders should turn towards

the line of the ball. As the shoulders turn the bat will move in line and with them. So when the ball pitches outside off stump the bat position on the back swing will now be pointing towards leg stump and lined up perfectly to swing in a straight line towards the off side.

COMMON FAULTS

The leading shoulder is pointing too much to the side too sideways: this puts the head too much on the off side and lures you in to tipping over. You end up getting squared up.

Picking the bat up over leg stump means that you are set to play off-side only: it also lures you to tip to the off side and leaves a gap between bat and pad.

Bottom hand too tight with palm holding the handle of the bat too tightly can mean that the bat face closes too quickly on contact with the ball.

Back arm is tucked in and forearms are not in line: this means the bat will not swing in a straight line towards the ball and players can get squared up.

Gary Palmer has coached a roster of Test and county teams. His Academy (www.ccmacademy.co.uk) runs a series of coaching programmes for young players throughout the year.



HAWKEYE MASTERCLASS

ANDREW FLINTOFF T20 DEATH BOWLING

THERE ARE MANY reasons England have been so inconsistent in one-day cricket of late, but there's no doubt that one of the main ones has been the absence of Freddie. Not only can his swashbuckling batting change the course of a game, but he's also England's best bowler both at the start and end of an innings.

At the death he bowls fast and full, with his favoured delivery the inswinging yorker. Here we see him the crucial last over of the West Indies innings at Barbados in the 2007 World Cup. The West Indies were batting first and had rattled along to 297/8 by the time the big fella stepped up for his denouement.

Our graphics show that final over – or five balls as it ended up being – from two angles: (1) from side on and (2) the umpire's view. Both show is Flintoff's attempts to bowl fast inswinging yorkers, interjected with a shorter delivery to ensure the batsmen don't get set. The results were dramatic, with the West Indies batsmen struggling to get three runs, while Flintoff himself affected two run outs as his immaculate lines tied them down and made them attempt two suicide singles.

England went on to win the match – largely thanks to KP's 100 – by one wicket, with only one ball to spare.

Flintoff opened with an 86.6mph yorker on off stump (red) which Ramdin could only squeeze out to mid-on for a single, and followed up with another yorker (white) to Powell – this time 88.3mph – who attempted an ill-fated single only to see Flintoff run him out by kicking the ball into the stumps. **Ball 3** (yellow) was another full ball (at 89.1mph) which Collymore managed to hit into the covers for a single, while **Ball 4** (blue) was a 91.7mph lifter which again Ramdin could only get a single off.

Flintoff wrapped up the innings with another yorker (green), but this time on leg stump and at 87.2mph. Collymore dug it out and tried to scramble a single from it – but Flintoff threw down the stumps.

