

LEVEL-O CERTIFICATE COURSE IN CRICKET COACHING

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Lecture 65: Chucking in cricket

Hello everyone. Today, let's talk about chucking in cricket. It is very important for a coach to fully understand what chucking is and how to detect it, especially when working with young cricketers. A coach must know how to modify an illegal bowling action and guide it towards a proper, legal technique. It is important to begin by recognising that no bowler deliberately chucks. Nobody wants to bowl illegally, and most players are unaware if they do. However, particularly among young or inexperienced bowlers, chucking can happen unintentionally. Unlike most technical errors in cricket, throwing the ball, or "chucking," is illegal under the Laws of Cricket and carries a stigma that can damage a bowler's career. If a bowler is found guilty of chucking, it can jeopardise their entire future in the game. Therefore, coaches must monitor bowlers' actions closely and intervene early when necessary.

Before modifying a bowling action, we must understand what chucking truly is. Like many cricketing skills, bowling with a perfectly straight arm is somewhat unnatural. A small degree of flexion (bending) and extension (straightening) at the elbow is natural and necessary for delivering the ball. It is easier to generate speed by throwing, bending and then straightening the elbow, which is illegal. According to Law 24.3 of the Laws of Cricket, for a ball to be legal, the bowler's elbow must not be straightened partially or completely during the delivery stride. Thanks to modern video analysis technology, we now know that all bowlers exhibit a slight amount of elbow extension. This is considered legal if the straightening does not exceed 15 degrees. Although the human eye cannot accurately detect this 15-degree limit, technology such as high-speed cameras and analysis software makes it possible to measure elbow angles precisely.

To illustrate this concept, imagine a bowler during their delivery stride. If the bowler's arm remains straight (180 degrees at the elbow) as it moves horizontally at shoulder height, this is legal. However, if the arm bends and straightens more than 15 degrees during release, it would be considered chucking. Using video analysis software allows coaches to capture footage and measure the degree of straightening to ensure compliance with the rules.

If a young bowler is found to have an illegal action, rebuilding the action early is much easier because they have not yet developed deep muscle memory for the faulty technique. Regardless of the bowler's age, a good coach must strip the action back to its basics and rebuild it correctly. This process is known as kinesthetic chaining—breaking down the movement and slowly building it back up to establish the right "feel" for a legal action.

The process begins by stripping down the bowler's technique. Remove all distractions—no ball, no run-up, no net—and have the bowler focus only on the action, starting from the moment the back foot lands during the delivery stride. The bowler should deliver the ball from a standing start, emphasizing a straight arm. It is essential at this stage not to change too much of the bowler's natural action but to focus on establishing the feeling of bowling with a straight arm. Attention must be given to head position, foot placement, hip drive, and shoulder rotation, all while ensuring the arm remains legal.

Once the bowler is comfortable delivering with a straight arm from a stationary position, the next step is to introduce a short jog into the action—still without using a ball. Gradually, when the movement feels natural and consistent, the ball can be reintroduced. At this stage, it is important not to worry about line and length. The priority is simply to help the bowler regain confidence and maintain a straight arm during delivery. Starting again from a standing position, the bowler can slowly progress to walking, and eventually jogging, through the delivery stride with the ball.

After establishing control over the action with the ball, the run-up can be gradually reintroduced. Initially, use a short run-up and build it up over time as the bowler's confidence grows. As the run-up returns, focus should then shift back to line, length, and accuracy. A coach should set targets for the bowler to aim at, helping them rebuild not only their action but also their control over deliveries. If the bowler is seeking to generate more pace, the coach should emphasize driving the hips and chest through the action, which also helps prevent a relapse into chucking.

Finally, once the bowler is consistently delivering legal balls with full action and run-up, they can return to regular practice in nets and matches. However, at any sign of relapse into illegal action, the coach must not hesitate to go back to earlier drills—starting again from stationary deliveries if necessary. Rebuilding a bowler's action is a gradual process and requires patience, encouragement, and consistent monitoring.

In conclusion, chucking is a serious issue that can have a lasting impact on a player's cricketing career. It is the coach's responsibility to identify illegal actions early, intervene

with correct techniques, and guide the bowler through a systematic process to correct and rebuild their action. By doing so, we can protect the spirit of the game and ensure that young players develop into skilled, fair cricketers. Thank you.