

SPORTS VISION TRAINING AMONGST RUGBY PLAYERS

KF Fowler¹, PJ du Toit²
Department of Human Physiology, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Pretoria

INTRODUCTION

Visual performance is an important requirement for excellence in sport (1,2,3). Sporting activities are significantly less successful with poor vision (4).

Sports vision aims to train the athlete's visual coordination and to improve knowledge of one's motor responses. It is claimed that, if athletes can improve their levels of performance through sports vision exercises, they will have great advantage over their rivals (5).

The aim of this research was to determine if sport vision training contributes to improved peripheral vision (awareness), hand-eye coordination, anticipation, and the ability to concentrate.

DOES VISION = EXCELLENCE?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

• **Sample:** 26 Rugby players aged 18-26 years. Each player served as his own control.

• **Pre- and post-tests:** All players were subjected to a Sports Vision Battery of 3 different pre- and post- hand-eye coordination tests

- ⇒ Day 1: Alternative hand-wall toss
- ⇒ Day 2: Passing for accuracy
- ⇒ Day 3: Simultaneous ball throw (see Figures 1, 2 and 3)

• **Intervention:** Between the pre- and post-tests, sports vision exercises were carried out

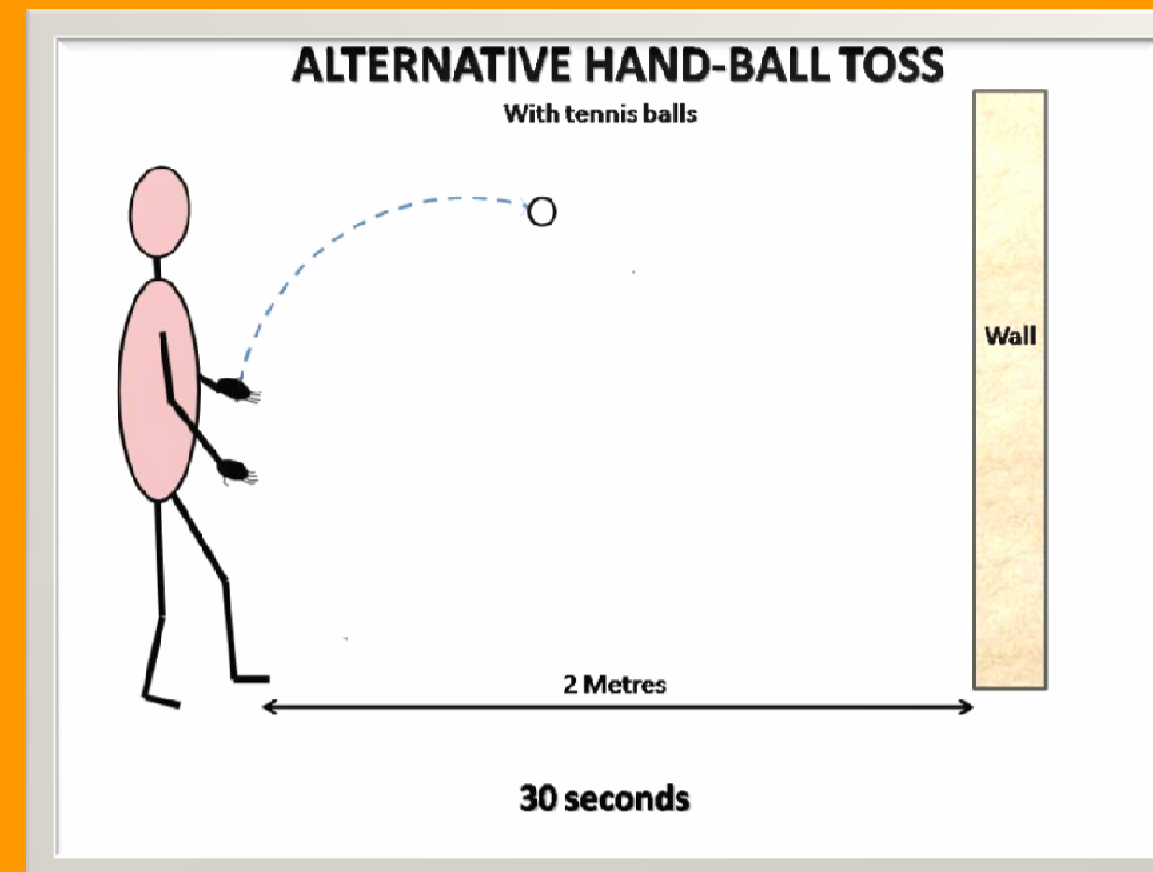


Figure 1: Illustration of the sports vision test: Alternative hand-wall toss (day 1)

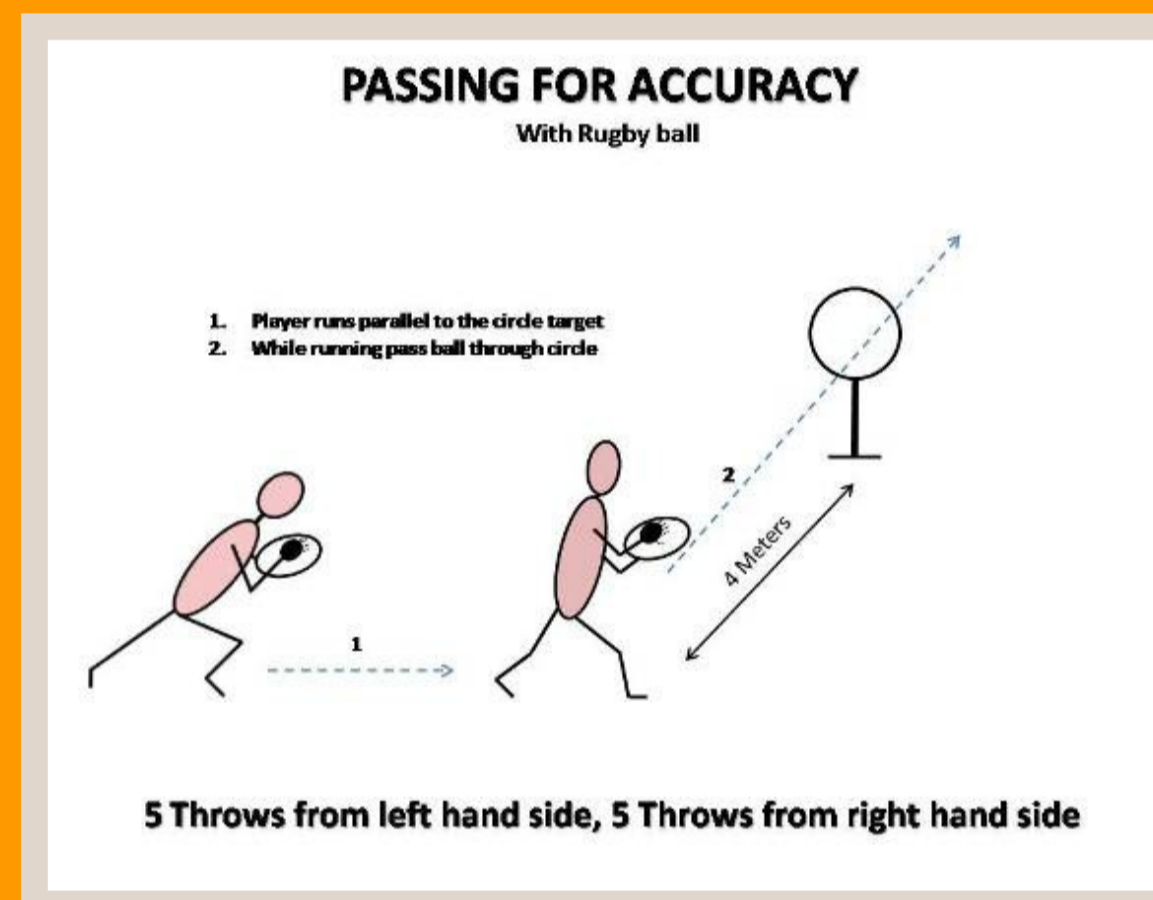


Figure 2: Illustration of the sports vision test: Passing for accuracy (day 2)

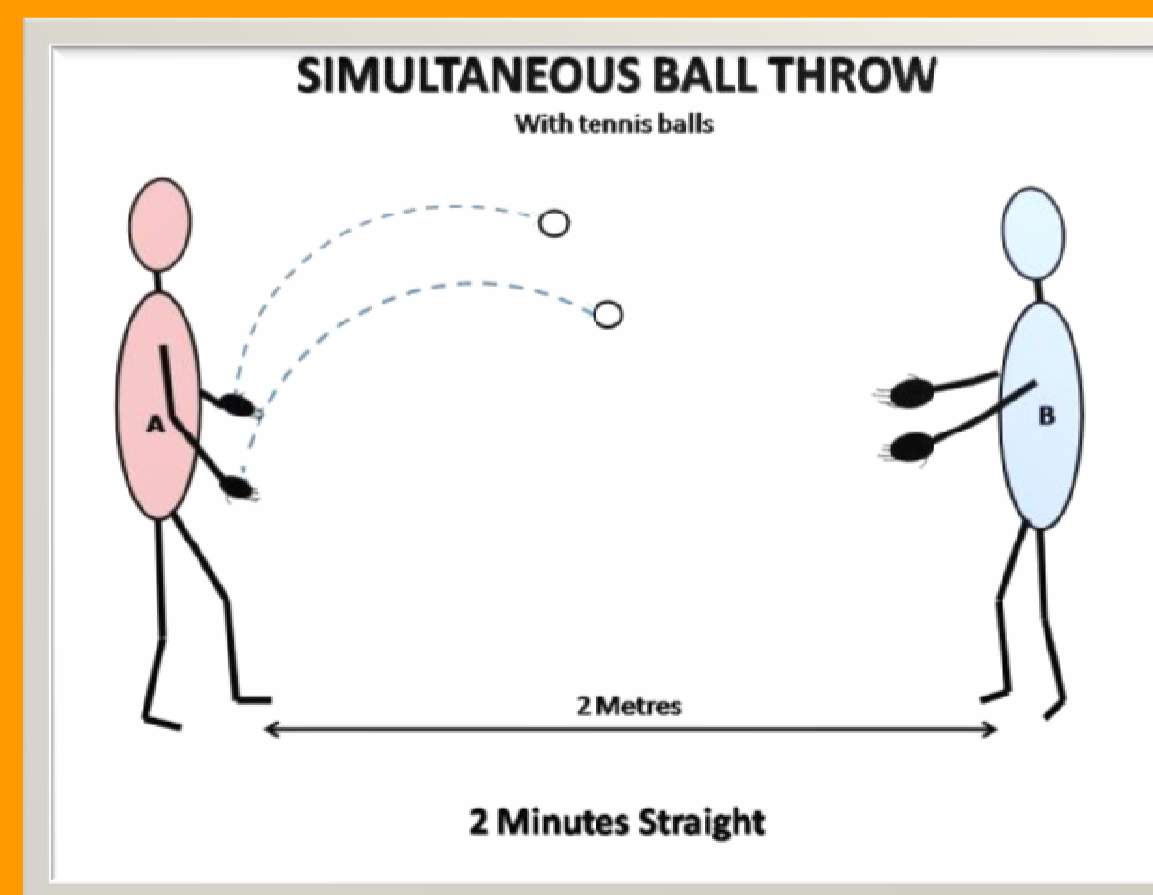


Figure 3: Illustration of the sports vision test: Simultaneous ball throw (day 3)

RESULTS

Table 1: Pre- and post-exercise group average values of the different Sports Vision Tests and percentage improvement of each.

Sports Vision Tests	Group Results		% Improvement
	Pre-exercise	Post-exercise	
Day 1: Coordination test	31	35	12
Day 2: Accurate passing			
Left	3.13	3.37	8
Right	2.81	2.87	3
Day 3: Simultaneous ball throw	70	86	22

There was improvement in performance after the exercises.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

With the improvements in performance after specific sports vision exercises, it can be said that these exercises enhance visual coordination in areas such as peripheral vision, hand-eye coordination, anticipation and concentration (5). Applying this knowledge to training programs for athletes could see sportsmen of tomorrow achieving even greater potentials.



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