

## Commentary for Hockey

### Performance Analysis

#### Physiological

**Three important components** of hockey are identified and justified through reference to movement analysis and supporting comments from a qualified coach. Some aspects here needed a little more consideration, especially as hockey is multi-directional, stop-start sport with an increasing focus on power in strength and conditioning programmes at elite levels.

**The fitness tests** selected and performed for each component of fitness are appropriate and the results are compared to normative data and players from his club, which provides a range of evidence to analyse. It would have been helpful to see the sources for the normative data.

**Issues of reliability and validity** of the testing are explained in good detail, especially those relating to reliability. The candidate refers to factors such as measuring the test course, warming up, ensuring accurate timing. It was encouraging to see a reference to motivation levels but how this might apply in his own testing needed exploring a little more carefully; how, for example, might he have sought to ensure parity for levels of motivation across the testing? Although there are worthwhile comments on validity other options to the T test might have been explored.

The **interpretation of the quantitative data** collated is accurate and demonstrates a good understanding of the key issues and the identification of strengths and weaknesses.

**Future priorities** for training are identified but this aspect of the work needed a little more depth. Explaining more clearly the importance of agility to the modern game in the attacking third, given his position and his specific role, would have added another layer of depth here.

Overall the work is of a very good standard with an excellent range of supporting evidence.

More marks would have been achieved had the candidate:

- Provided the source for the norm referenced data
- Provided a little more detail as to how a focus on enhancing agility would make a positive impact on his performance as a centre forward, the justification seems a little too general

Mark band 4: 8/10

## Tactical

An **appropriate tactic**, attacking penalty corners, has been correctly identified.

The candidate offers a series of detailed explanations of the tactic and these are supported by annotated images and descriptions, together with by quantitative data and comments from a level 2 coach.

There is effective use of technical language and there is clear evidence of an in-depth knowledge of this important aspect of performance.

Despite the high quality of the work in this section there are no images of the club team referred to, which would have provided additional evidence for analytical purposes, providing more evidence of the strengths and weaknesses of the options considered.

However, the candidate offers a structured analysis of how and why alternatives might be applied in and this is, again, supported by data and input from the coach.

This work is of a high standard and demonstrates an advanced understanding of a key tactic. There is a very good level of evidence and although images of his club in an attacking corner setting would have added another layer of analysis the impressive quality of this work allows a high mark to be awarded.

Mark band 5: 9/10

## Performance Development Plan

### Planning

An **appropriate component of fitness**, agility, is correctly identified on the basis of the analysis work. The candidate has used the data correctly to identify this component for improvement.

**SMARTER targets** have been explained and linked to the training programme outlined together with its potential benefits, which have been linked to specific aspects of performance.

Overall, **principles and methods of training** have been correctly described, applied and accurately used, although greater application of the principles of training would be welcome.

SAQ and agility training are appropriate methods of training and there are numerous supporting evidence-based references to justify their inclusion, although the candidate is rather too liberal with the use of quotes to support his work.

A little more detail about the training is needed in some areas. For example, the candidate identifies 'standard' exercises without explaining why.

**The selection of tests** is explained in very good detail. In addition to the T Test, the 505 Agility Test is cited by a number of Hockey authorities, as well as the 32m shuttle test which is hockey-specific. These tests enhance the triangulation of results.

More marks would have been awarded had the candidate:

- Provided more detail about the selection of exercises and the framework of intensity levels

The work is mark band 4: 8/10

### **Review and evaluation**

The **qualitative and quantitative data** supports a well-developed critical evaluation of the impact of the programme.

Quantitative data across multiple tests indicate an improvement in performance and the qualitative information, including evidence from his coach, provides additional evidence about the positive impact on performance in a competitive situation.

There is a reference to some match data in the narrative although the detail of this seems to be missing from the material offered in the appendix, which is a pity given the wide range of evidence provided.

**Changes in the test scores** are considered and include references to potential physiological changes, such as improvements in neuromuscular transmission and muscle hypertrophy.

The candidate gives a considerable amount of space to the recording of heart rate and recovery. More is needed to explain this focus.

The candidate might have considered monitoring intensity for agility around work to rest ratios rather than heart rate data as this can also be used to monitor work within the anaerobic zone, as recovery rates and the use of the Borg scale relate more to monitoring of aerobic endurance.

The candidate offers a summary of the plan and **recommendations for future development** include adapting the training programme undertaken. The candidate might also have suggested additional research into improving agility through multi-directional strength training, to supplement the SAQ and agility training undertaken here, as well as ground contact and ground reaction forces that influences the quality of change of direction ability. Possible adaptations should also be researched to support comments and data.

More marks would have been awarded had the candidate:

Given the nature of the programme explained his focus on recording heart and recovery rates.

Mark band 4: 7/10

**Overall**, the candidate has produced an impressive piece of work which is very well researched and is underpinned by coach comments. There is a tendency for the candidate to over-rely on the supporting quotes of the coach, especially as details of the coach are missing from the references. The work has many strengths but, on balance, is not quite of the quality which warrants a top band mark.

**Total mark: 32/40**

