

## PERIPHERAL VISION IN SPORTS

### Words

Look for the following words as you read the passage. Match each word with its correct definition.

#### Words

1. anticipate
2. athlete
3. blur
4. boundary
5. complicate
6. coordinate
7. demonstrate
8. detect
9. distracting
10. focus
11. indiscernibly
12. indistinct
13. maneuver<sup>1</sup>
14. performance
15. peripheral
16. range
17. scan
18. tolerate
19. unconsciously
20. vision

#### Definitions

- A. n., area
- B. n., a movement
- C. n., how well a person or machine does something
- D. v., to expect, be ready for something to happen
- E. v., to notice, become aware of
- F. adv., in a way that is impossible to see or notice
- G. adj., unclear
- H. adv., without thinking, automatically
- I. n., a person who plays sports<sup>2</sup>
- J. n., an edge, border
- K. adj., at the edge
- L. v., to look over
- M. v., to accept, allow
- N. v., to organize<sup>3</sup>; make work together
- O. n., something not seen clearly
- P. n., the ability to see; sight
- Q. v., to cause to be more difficult
- R. v., to center attention on one object; concentrate
- S. adj., taking attention away from something
- T. v., to show; model

<sup>1</sup>BrE: manoeuvre

<sup>2</sup>BrE: sport

<sup>3</sup>BrE: organise

## Reading

### Peripheral Vision in Sports

Focus in on something as small as a pin. Notice that everything else that fills your whole area of possible sight is **indistinct**, lacking in detail. We **tolerate** this large outlying field of **blur**, this **peripheral view**, without taking note. We **unconsciously** accept it. Sometimes we take charge of how we process all that **blur** surrounding the tiny **center<sup>1</sup>** that our **vision** is focused on. Athletes best **demonstrate** just how much we can use the entire range of our **vision**, fanning out to the **periphery**.

An athlete's **performance**, necessitating high levels of coordination and reaction time, depends on training visual abilities, not just tuning muscles. **Detecting** and keeping track of as much motion as possible while performing physical **maneuvers** is quite a feat. **Peripheral** visual information is processed quickly. The office worker might notice the tiny **distracting** insect moving beside the computer, but the fast-moving athlete must **detect** all kinds of motion from every angle and never lose concentration. Each peripherally viewed movement must be immediately processed as more and varied movements from different sources and directions keep coming rapidly. Good footwork and body positioning will help the athlete gain viewing time in this intense environment, improving the opportunity to **anticipate** what will happen next.

The athlete's view, full of movement, requires rapid **scanning** with visual focus changing rapidly among various distances. Tracking fast objects is often **complicated** by the need for the athlete's body to move in response to other aspects of the activity, and head motion must **coordinate** with eye movement to assist in balance. A volleyball player, for example, must pay attention to body positioning in relation to the speed and angle of the moving ball as well as to the court **boundaries**, all the while scanning the movement of the other players. Athletes need as much **peripheral range** as possible.

The environment contributes to athletes' visual sharpness. Contrasting court backgrounds, adequate lighting, nonconfusing uniform color combinations, and less off-court motion all help the athlete's **peripheral concentration**. It seems odd that visiting baseball teams are allowed to dress in gray uniforms when bright colors would help the home team keep a better eye on them.

Everything that catches the athlete's attention causes the eyes to pause almost **indiscernibly** as they gather a quick view of focused detail. As the eyes move in and out of focus, there is a momentary blur between each pause. This is when visual tracking errors can occur. Even the act of **blinking**, usually at a rate of twenty-five blinks per minute, or one-tenth

<sup>1</sup>BrE: centre

of a second per blink, interferes with the athlete's vision. Normal, natural blinking means the eyes are closed for two and half seconds out of every minute, and more than that if the athlete is anxious. This is added to the rapid blurs that occur as the athlete's eyes move in and out of focus on specific objects. These nonvisual moments can be somewhat compensated for if the athlete thoroughly tunes in to the game. Anticipation, a learned and practiced<sup>2</sup> art, can serve the athlete well in many ways.

Answer the questions about **Peripheral Vision in Sports**.

### Questions 1–7

Do the following statements agree with the information in the reading passage?

Write

**TRUE** if the statement agrees with the information.

**FALSE** if the statement contradicts the information.

**NOT GIVEN** if there is no information on this in the passage.

- Peripheral vision refers to what we see near the boundaries of our visual range.
- Focusing our eyes on one object only will cause that object to look indistinct.
- In addition to physical abilities, athletes need to be skilled at detecting movements all around them.
- Office workers tend to find that certain kinds of movements are more distracting than others.
- A volleyball player does not need to focus on the movements of the other players on the court.
- Poor lighting and confusing color combinations on uniforms can have a negative effect on an athlete's performance.
- Athletes blink more often when they are feeling anxious.

<sup>2</sup>BrE: practised

**My Words**

*Write the words that are new to you. Look them up in the dictionary and write their definitions.*

Words

Definitions

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