

Personal Portfolio on Gaelic Football

My Sport

The sport I have chosen for my portfolio is Gaelic Football. I am going to name the abilities that I need to be able to play football to a reasonable standard and justify them. Also I am going to explain what the particular skills are that are needed to play Gaelic Football and give my strengths and weaknesses as a player of the sport.

What abilities do I need to be a Gaelic Footballer?

Playing at centre half forward which is one of the most important on the pitch (number 11 on the above diagram), I have to have several different abilities to play well in Gaelic Football. There are various gross motor abilities and perceptual abilities that are essential to be a good Gaelic Footballer, and many more that help to make a good player. These are the needed gross motor abilities -:

- *Dynamic strength* - muscular force is needed to compete for any sort of challenge in the game.
- *Static Strength* – this is required when competing for the ball in situations where not a lot of movement can be made i.e. defending a free close to the goal that drops into a congested goalmouth.
- *Explosive strength* – this is needed to jump up to catch the ball and to quickly accelerate when running to rise a ball or to get away from opposition players.
- *Stamina* – to last the full 70 minutes stamina is essential.
- *Extent flexibility* – when making an attempt to catch a high ball, muscles in the back have to be used to get up to the ball .
- *Dynamic flexibility* – this is needed when a player needs to evade other players by shimmying around them or wrong footing them and then accelerating past them.
- *Gross body co-ordination* – this is essential for Gaelic Footballers, a lot of the time they have to be on the move to get into a position that they can have the ball passed to them, for example, make a running receiver which involves co-ordination of the head, feet and hands..
- *Dynamic balance* – this is very important, as Gaelic footballers have to ensure they stay on their feet when travelling at speeds with or without the ball.
- *Eye-foot and eye-hand co-ordination* – this is perhaps the most important of all the gross motor abilities for gaelic footballers as the game of football revolves around kicking the ball, passing the ball, receiving balls on the move and whilst static and solo-ing the ball and eye-foot and eye-hand co-ordination are essential when carrying out these skills

These are the essential perceptual motor abilities for Gaelic Footballers:

- *Multi-limb co-ordination* – this is an important ability for many situations, e.g. if the ball is dropping down to the side of a player, the player has to change the position of his legs so his arms can reach the ball to gain possession.
- *Response orientation* – this is essential when the ball comes goes towards a player, as they have to quickly decide how to react and how to carry out the action they think will be best.
- *Reaction time* – again this is essential, especially for backs and forwards when the ball comes to them unexpectedly, they have to be able to react to the ball to gain possession and carry out an appropriate action.
- *Speed of movement* – every player has to have some speed, even if it is over 5 metres as this would gain them the ball in tight situations, however it is not essential to be able to sprint at a high speed over 100 metres.
- *Rate control* – a player has to be able to control the pace at which he runs and in which direction he runs.
- *Aiming* – this is of huge importance in Gaelic Football, as to be successful in a match situation, players have to be able to shoot and pass which all require a player to aim.

Skills specific to Gaelic Football

There are many different skills and types of skills specific to football. The types of skills are as follows:

- *Cognitive skills* – these are the tactics side of Gaelic Football. They are worked out before each game by the manager or his assistants and pre-determine the players that will play and in what positions and the way the team will play (i.e. playing high or low balls to forwards and man marking). Such decisions are made based upon the players available for selection and the opponent's ability and style. As well as the manager deciding upon the tactics beforehand the captain will help implement them on the pitch if they are doing their job correctly. Also tactics can be changed depending on the venue of the game and also weather conditions on the day of the game.
- *Perceptual skills* – these of great importance in a match situation, as many decisions have to be made at speed. For example, if a ball is played forward by a back, the forward who is in the most likely position to receive the ball has to make a decision whether he will let it bounce before catching it, passing it once he receives it or shooting once he receives it.
- *Motor skills* – these are fundamental skills for Gaelic Footballers. Running is of high importance and players need to be able to carry out controlled muscular movements with targets in mind, i.e. a player sees the ball loose on the ground and runs towards it to rise it and progress with the ball towards the oppositions goal.
- *Psychomotor skills* – These skills, which combine all of the three above, are vital for Gaelic Footballers. An example could be when a back sees

the ball being played forward by the opposition towards his marker. The back will use cognitive and perceptual skills to judge whether they can safely attack the ball without leaving his marker in a dangerous position or leave his fellow backs open to attack. If they then decide it is best to go to the ball they will use motor skills to put their body into the correct position.

My strengths and weaknesses as a Gaelic Footballer

When I play in Gaelic Football matches I play in the forwards. Predominantly my position is centre half forward (number 11 on the diagram), however I have the ability to play in any of the other forwards positions. Centre half forward is an extremely important position for anyone to play and so in any match I have to be entirely focused on the game ahead.

My strengths

In Gaelic football, it is essential you have upper body strength to win aerial challenges and to hold off opposition players when you have possession of the ball. I believe I have good upper body strength, however it could be improved which would make me a better player. I am good at judging situations and know where players on my team are when I am in possession of the ball. I also have brilliant accuracy when it comes to shooting and I also take frees (free kicks) for my club which shows they believe I have great accuracy too. I also am able to make a wide range of passes, short and long using both my hands and feet.

My weaknesses

Although I have good upper body strength, I still feel it could be improved to make me an even better player. I also have average stamina, but maybe increasing stamina levels could improve me as a whole giving me the ability to get into better positions and more quickly for the whole 70 minutes instead of just 60 for instance.