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Roar of the Lions: Strengths-based Consulting with Sri Lanka Cricket

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In

Secrets of Asian Sport Psychology

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Introduction

The Sri Lankan cricket team is the national cricket team of Sri Lanka and is administered by Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC). The team played its first international match in 1926 and, since being awarded Test status in 1981, has become a force in international cricket. Sri Lanka won the Cricket World Cup in 1996, the International Cricket Council (ICC) Champions Trophy in 2002 (co-champions with India), and was runner-up in the ICC World Twenty20 competition in 2009 and in consecutive Cricket World Cups in 2007 and 2011. The team's current (October, 2013) ICC rankings for Test matches, One Day Internationals (ODIs) and Twenty20 competitions is 7th, 4th and 1st, respectively.

At the invitation of head coach, Tom Moody, and upon approval of the SLC board, I designed and conducted six group sessions with the Sri Lanka national team between June 2005 and February 2007 in preparation for the April 2007 Cricket World Cup, held in the West Indies. In what follows, the activities during each session are briefly summarized and collectively illustrate use of a values- and strengths-based approach to both team and individual development.

Consulting Relationship with the Head Coach, Tom Moody

I began consulting in professional cricket in 1987 when I was appointed mental skills coach at the Western Australian Cricket Association (WACA) in Perth, Australia and, at that time, Tom Moody was the youngest team member. In 1998, I was concurrently appointed sport psychologist to the Australian Cricket Board (now Cricket Australia), during which time the national cricket team, which included Tom, was successful in winning the 1999 World Cup. Having completed contractual commitments with Australia in 2001, I worked with the Indian national cricket team (2002-2005) and visited the sub-continent (Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka) several times before joining Tom, who was appointed Sri Lanka cricket head coach, from 2005 to the World Cup in 2007.

The reason I have mentioned my long-standing working relationship with Tom Moody is because he knew me well enough to trust the new approaches I suggested to him, which at the time were quite radical in a traditional and conservative sport such as cricket. I therefore fully acknowledge that without his support for strengths-based approaches and his encouragement to others (e.g. SLC senior management, team captains and senior players) to apply them, my initiatives may not have been as effective, or even possible.

Strengths-Based Approaches in Sport

Recent articles on positive psychology in sport (e.g. Park-Perin, 2010) including my own (Gordon & Gucciardi, 2011) have reported how Martin Seligman (1999, 2011) pointed out that, historically, human endeavors have been characterized by fixing weaknesses. I believe the coaching process in sport is no exception. While a weakness- or deficit-based coaching approach typically focuses on identifying an athlete's or team's problems and fixing them, strengths-based coaching is about spotting and exploiting athletes' and teams' strengths. During strengths-based consulting the focus is on what is already working and because strengths are part of basic human nature - every individual and every team has strengths and deserves respect for having them - our areas of greatest potential are in the areas of our greatest strengths. While individuals and teams *can* develop from working on weaknesses, change and improvement is only possible when you are *also* working on your strengths.

our areas
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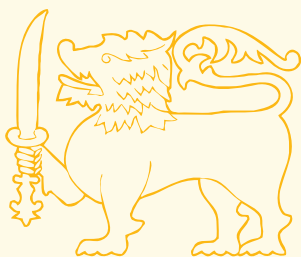
Strengths-based consulting in sport can be regarded as being both an approach to consulting (i.e. strengths are used more effectively in the attainment of goals) and as a value-adding outcome of consulting (i.e. strengths-based consulting is used to enable the realization and development of an individual's strengths) (Linley & Harrington, 2006; Linley, Woolston, & Biswas-Diener, 2009).

Research in non-sport settings has shown that, in addition to being more confident, having higher levels of energy and vitality (Govindji & Linley, 2007), and being more likely to achieve their goals (Linley, Nielsen, Wood, Gillett, & Biswas-Diener, 2010), people who use their strengths are more effective at developing themselves and growing as individuals than people who do not (Sheldon, Kasser, Smith, & Share, 2002).

Research also demonstrates that those individuals who use their strengths more often are happier, have higher self-esteem, experience less stress, are more resilient, perform better at work, and are more engaged at work (Linley et al., 2010). The case *for* using a strengths-based approach, therefore, is quite compelling.

Session 1: Colombo, Sri Lanka - June, 2005

Before meeting the Sri Lankan national squad for the first time, Tom and I had discussed with the team captain the importance of conducting a values-based cultural change session. Consequently, using a six-step approach, which I have described in full detail elsewhere (Gordon, 2007; 2013), we began by establishing the squad's core values, and conducting a values enactment exercise. We then set performance and process goals that were aligned with desired results and outcomes and, finally, mission statements were established that provided the means to the end, or vision, which the squad entitled *Roar of the Lions*, to reflect the Sri Lankan national symbol - the Lion.



Using four core values - **pride, enjoyment, commitment, and belief** - players identified appropriate attitudes and behaviours in four team contexts i.e. at training, in the dressing room, on the field, and off the field. These were captured on a large travel-friendly poster, which subsequently travelled the world's cricket venues and appeared in every changing room the national team populated leading up to the World Cup final in 2007. The poster served as an important and symbolic blueprint reminder to management, coaching staff and players, of the core values that drove the national team's process goals.



Credit: Astronomyinertia/Wikimedia Commons/CC-BY-SA3.0

Session 2: Melbourne/Perth, Australia - January, 2006

The purpose of the second session, held in Australia in two locations, was to introduce an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach to understanding the concept of high performing teams. AI is regarded as a positive, strengths-based operational approach to change, learning, and development, which begins by obliging athletes and management to choose 'the positive' as the focus of inquiry, and as the launching point for all that follows. I recently reported an AI case study that featured a cricket operations strategic planning event at the Western Australian Cricket Association (Gordon, 2011). According to Sloan and Canine (2007):

The AI philosophy and practice is in and of itself the ideal process for both enabling people in organizations to become more aware of their own strengths and abilities in ways that increase their effectiveness in all parts of their life and to create robust support for change in the client's social system (p. 1).

The following assumptions about life, people and the change process itself, form the basis of an AI approach (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005):

- In every society, organization, group or individual, something works.
- What people focus on becomes their reality.
- Reality is created in the moment, and there are multiple realities.
- The act of asking questions of an organization, group, or individual, influences the group or individual in some way.
- People are more confident and comfortable in their journey to the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known).
- If people carry parts of the past forward, those parts should be what is best about the past.
- It is important to value differences.
- The language people use creates their reality.



Credit: ultanayan/flickr/CC-BY-NC2.0

Prior to the squad leaving Sri Lanka for their Australian tour, the coach and I asked both management and players to partner up and collect data on high performing teams using the interview guide illustrated in full in Table 1. Upon their arrival in Australia, I facilitated a two-hour meeting focusing on the data collected during interviews that were universally enjoyed by interviewees as well as by both management staff and players. This meeting was concluded with a discussion on goal setting specifically for touring Australia.

pride
enjoyment
commitment
belief

My observation at this time was that, because players and staff knew how to interact more positively with each other and the blueprint for all activities (*Roar of the Lions*) was receiving frequent mention, both group and individual consulting sessions on goal setting became much more effective. For example, team process goals for fielding, bowling, and batting practice became more precise, and included, respectively: “spend time in actual fielding positions on the field”, “own your bowling practice sessions - bowl in partnerships off a full run up”, “bat against high quality bowling as often as possible”. Examples of more precise individual process goals for fielding, bowling and batting, respectively, were: “practice a variety of stops (in-field) and dives (out-field boundary ropes)”, “foot placement half and half on the front line always (to avoid no balls)”, “practice variations of scoring shots to specific areas.”



Table 1. Interview Guide for an Inquiry into High Performing Cricket Teams

You are going to pair with another player and ask each other the questions that follow. As an interviewer, your job is to read the introduction to the topic, then ask the first question. Listen to what your partner tells you and make notes so you can share the information with the larger group.

Question 1: High Performing Teams

- Tell me about a time when you observed or were part of a high performing team. What did it look like, feel like?
- What stands out in your mind about how the team worked with each other?

Question 2: Trust

- Think of a time when there was high trust in a team or partnership. What factors were present to make trust possible?
- Think of a leader you trusted. Why did you trust him or her? What did they do that made trust possible?
- When have you worked in a team or organization that operates under the assumption that people can be trusted? What did they do differently from a team or organization that operates under the assumption that people can't be trusted?

Question 3: Relationships

- When you have been a part of, or observed this type of team, how did the team manage relationships?
- How did this team handle conflict - how did they manage it?

Question 4: Expect and Respect Differences

- How did the team show respect and appreciation for the diversity within the team?
- When the team had differences, how did they deal with those differences?

Question 5: Results

- What was the process the team used to set their goals and divide the roles and responsibilities necessary to achieve those results?
- Who or what was the team? What was the situation? What did the team do to gain clarity? How did this clarity help the team achieve top performance?

Question 6: Leadership

- Describe the qualities, characteristics, behaviours, activities, and/or practices of the team that foster a 'leaderful' environment.
- Think of a leader who demonstrates leadership that supports a leaderful environment. Specifically, what does he/she do?

Question 7: Learning/Mistakes/Celebration

- Tell me about a time you were a part of a team that demonstrated they could learn together. Specifically how did they do it?
- If there was an 'after-action' review or an apology, who initiated it? How did the team react?
- How did the team put the lessons to use?
- How did this team celebrate success?

Session 3: London, England - April, 2006

Two months later, prior to the first warm-up game of the Sri Lankan tour of England, during which Sri Lanka drew the three Test series 1-1 and whitewashed England 5-0 in the ODI series, I conducted a squad session that I have described in greater detail as a case study in a special issue on performance psychology in the Australian Psychological Society's *InPsych* magazine (Gordon, 2008). The focus of the meeting was "Discovering What Gives Life To SLC When It Is At Its Best", which featured a combination of facilitation techniques, including Naming Elephants (Hammond & Mayfield, 2004) and Open Space Technology (Owen, 1997), as well as Appreciative Inquiry (AI).



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Naming Elephants is a metaphor for bringing undiscussable issues into the open and making implicit 'difficult' conversations explicit. The main 'elephant' identified by all players was intimidation, negative and pessimistic communication to junior players by senior players, which had a negative behavioural impact on the team such as lowered morale among junior players, who switched off emotionally during both team meetings and games and suppressed ideas and thoughts of voicing contributions.

Open Space Technology is a group facilitation method comprised of four principles and one 'law' that allows small (or large) teams of players to say and do what they want in the time available and have self-organized discussions on anything that is important to them in a short time. Subsequently, coaches and players created a meeting agenda around the theme "What Gives Life To Sri Lankan Batting, Bowling and Fielding When It Is At Its Best?" During a five hour session (three hours over schedule) they had mapped out their England tour preferences for both training priorities and match tactics.

The session witnessed players and staff speaking to each other freely and in a solution-focused manner. One additional important outcome was a record of on-field, off-field and dressing room habits associated with best performances. This list, entitled *Habits SLC Has When At Its Best*, was finalized at the conclusion of the England tour and became an agenda item to re-visit during each of the subsequent three meetings that I facilitated.

Core habits and attitudes associated with managing tournaments included "leadership from within the team", "team goals always trump individual goals", "no excuses to lose (e.g. weather, travel, food)", "respect weaker opposition (e.g. English County sides)", and "focus on fundamentals."

Session 4: Colombo, Sri Lanka - July, 2006

When the team returned home from England, the first group session with both the SLC national squad and management staff began with an inspirational audio-visual review of Test and ODI performances and achievements in the preceding 12 months. Prior to the successful England tour, Sri Lanka had defeated Bangladesh 2-0 and 2-1, respectively, in Test and ODI series in Bangladesh, and had lost at home to Pakistan 1-0 in two Test matches (one Test drawn) and 3-0 in a four game ODI series (one ODI drawn).

Everyone at this meeting was reminded of the values driving SLC (*Roar of the Lions*) and the processes of achieving self- and team improvement. Copies of the *Habits SLC Has When At Its Best* (April, 2006) document were also reviewed in detail and I noted considerable progress in the culture of the team and among both senior and junior players, compared to June 2005. For example, from what was previously a hierarchical top-down communication environment, characterised by expectations that senior players would tell younger players what to do and the latter would just follow, marked changes were observed. Younger players spoke up more often during team meetings and also looked to take more initiative during training.

Indicators of self-leadership were emerging, such as players taking much more responsibility for both their personal and professional development and relying much less on others, such as coaches or senior players. For example, 'training buddy' arrangements emerged among squad members and both senior and junior players were observed spending discretionary time supporting each other at the nets, in the weights room, and in the swimming pool. In addition, strengths-based conversations were overheard as players and coaches discussed ways forward both for the team and also for individual team members.





Credit: Hashir Milhan/Wikimedia Commons/CC BY2.0

Session 5: Wellington, New Zealand - December, 2006

I arrived in New Zealand for this session in Wellington just in time to see the last wicket fall on Day 4 of the 2nd Test, won by Sri Lanka. Later that day I met with the coach and staff to discuss the agenda for a breakfast meeting next morning, which included the team manager, captain and vice-captain. The purpose of the meeting was to design a strengths-based team session later that day and to develop a metaphor that would characterize the team's focus and efforts for the next six months. Subsequently, the full playing schedule leading up to the World Cup in June 2007 was presented and players were asked to decide on a theme that would express process goals for all games, beginning with the imminent ODI series against New Zealand.

Specifically, players were asked to determine both performance and process goals as well as outcome goals for fielding, bowling and batting based on what was already working. Both performance targets and process

goals were identified to drive training and practice habits and in-house rewards/recognition. The purpose of this session was to keep players focused on improving both team and individual performances (controllable factors), which in turn would deliver the outcome goals (not directly controllable factors) that were challenging yet achievable.

To facilitate this three hour session, I began by reminding everyone of the strengths-based Appreciative Inquiry (AI) process used in England that resulted in *Habits SLC Has When At Its Best*.

However, since strategic planning specifically for the forthcoming six months was required, I introduced the SOAR technique, which stands for Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results (Stavros & Hinrichs, 2009). SOAR incorporates AI principles and players were simply asked to pair up and discuss responses to each of the questions illustrated in Table 2.

strengths
opportunities
aspirations
results

Table 2. The SOAR Process

<i>Element</i>	<i>Questions</i>
<i>Strengths</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can we build on - what are our strengths in fielding, bowling and batting? • What is already happening that works? • What do we already do that is world class?
<i>Opportunities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From our existing strengths, what other opportunities are provided that we should focus our efforts on? • What new skills do we need to move forwards?
<i>Aspirations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflecting on our strengths and opportunities, who are we, who should we become? • What innovations or initiatives (i.e. tactics) would support our aspirations?
<i>Results</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will we know we are succeeding? • Considering our strengths, opportunities, and aspirations, what meaningful measures would indicate that we are on track to achieving our goals? • What indicators would create a score card that addresses our process goals? • What are the best rewards to support those who achieve our process goals?

A final document prepared by the players, entitled *Api Wenuwen Api* (God Bless Sri Lanka), was sent to the coach, who prepared a formal template for everyone to refer to and apply immediately.



Summary to December 2006

I observed that both management and players seemed to have embraced the process of change that was necessary for SLC to achieve its outcome goals in 2007. The players' shared choice and commitment was significantly tested in New Zealand. However, by re-visiting the values set in June 2005 - pride, enjoyment, commitment and belief - their collective confidence in closing their talent-achievement gap was evident. For example, younger talented players in particular had come to realise that being gifted or having potential was not enough and that to achieve the next level, and move from good to great, required a lot more personal effort and desire. The next session was scheduled for February, a session that would specifically focus on both individual and team game plans for the 2007 World Cup.



Session 6: Colombo, Sri Lanka - February, 2007

The team had just returned from a successful series in India when I arrived on Wednesday 21st February for my last session prior to the forthcoming World Cup in April, 2007. I presented the contents of a document, entitled *World Cup 2007 Preparations*, and spent time going through four exercises, illustrated in Table 3, that focused on the ideal performance state, mental toughness, dealing with pressure, and professionalism.

Table 3. World Cup 2007 Preparations

1. Creating Your Ideal Performance State (IPS)																																											
Pre-Game <i>(day/night before; morning/afternoon before)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What essential activities or behaviours do you engage in prior to games that you associate with your IPS. What do you feel you need to do? When? • Which feelings or emotions do you associate with your IPS prior to games? How do you want to feel pre-game? How do you achieve this? 																																										
During Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What essential activities or behaviours do you engage in during games that you associate with your IPS? What do you feel you need to do? • Which feelings or emotions do you associate with your IPS during games? How do you want feel during games? How do you achieve this? 																																										
2. Mental Toughness: Task Awareness - Checklist																																											
<p>“When (batting, bowling, WK/fielding) what I need to <i>do</i> to play well is...”</p> <p>Batting <input type="checkbox"/> Bowling <input type="checkbox"/> WK/Fielding <input type="checkbox"/></p>																																											
3. Dealing with Pressure and Adversity																																											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify pressure or anxiety-laden situations and remedy them. <p>“So, when/if (this happens)...” “I will do and say this...”</p>																																											
4. Professionalism																																											
GAME vs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Game Performance Goal(s) (batting, bowling, WK/fielding) 																																										
After EACH Game:	<p>3 R's (review, retain, refocus)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement of Performance Goal(s)? (Yes or No) 																																										
REVIEW	Stay with the day and the experiences - what happened?																																										
RETAIN	What did you learn from your performance, opposition, team mates?																																										
<p>Rate yourself on the following: (1 = very poor; 5 = excellent)</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Execution of personal game plan</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Execution of team game plan</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Creating IPS</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Maintaining IPS</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ability to energise</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Body language/communication</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>My professionalism</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Execution of personal game plan	1	2	3	4	5	Execution of team game plan	1	2	3	4	5	Creating IPS	1	2	3	4	5	Maintaining IPS	1	2	3	4	5	Ability to energise	1	2	3	4	5	Body language/communication	1	2	3	4	5	My professionalism	1	2	3	4	5
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REFOCUS	Anything you or the team need to change for the next game?																																										

Note. WK = wicket-keeping (see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cricket> for details of the sport)

I also asked players to complete exercises on managing energy, managing their outlook, confidence, and individual goal setting for the World Cup, which were to be reviewed during the tournament. For example, three means of managing energy and reducing stress effectively included physical activity, healthy nutrition, and relaxation. While other support staff facilitated the former two, I provided a simple 10/10 deep relaxation routine/script (10 steps in 10 minutes), illustrated in Table 4, that all players appeared to embrace immediately.

Table 4. 10/10 Deep Relaxation Routine (adapted from Bull, 2006, p. 92-93)

Step 1	Find a place where you can sit or lie down comfortably, preferably with your head supported and where you will not be interrupted. It helps to try and relax your fingertips and your toes. Switch off your phone so that no one can contact you for the next 10 minutes.
Step 2	Put on some music which you find really relaxing - a personal music player is a useful accessory.
Step 3	Close your eyes and then spend a couple of minutes getting really comfortable and tuning into your body whilst switching off from the outside world.
Step 4	Now focus on your breathing rhythm. Count ten deep breaths to establish a slow, steady breathing rhythm. Each time you breathe out, feel more relaxed and feel some tension drain away. Inhale through your nose: count IN, TWO, THREE, FOUR. Exhale through your mouth: count OUT, TWO, THREE, FOUR.
Step 5	When you feel ready, focus on your right arm. Clench your fist tightly, hold while you count to five, and then slowly open out your fingers and relax your hand and arm completely. Feel your arm go heavy and sink into the floor or chair. Repeat this process for your left arm.
Step 6	Now focus on your right leg. Tighten the muscles in your leg, hold while you count to five, and then relax all the muscles completely. Concentrate on a heavy feeling throughout the length of your leg. Repeat the process for your left leg.
Step 7	Turn your attention to your face, neck and shoulders. Relax all the muscles in this area and in particular focus on smoothing out the muscles in your forehead. Relax your cheeks, your neck and the back of your shoulders.
Step 8	Focus on relaxing your whole body by concentrating on a relaxed feeling in your fingertips, toes and forehead.
Step 9	Spend a couple of minutes listening to your music, enjoying this relaxed feeling and imagining yourself in a place where you can feel completely relaxed and at ease. This may be on the beach, by a swimming pool, on a boat, in a forest, up a mountain, etc.
Step 10	Count down silently, and slowly, from 10 to 1. As you do, bend and stretch your arms, move your head from side to side and gradually bring yourself back. As you get to number one, open your eyes and tell yourself that you feel relaxed, rested and refreshed.



To manage their outlook during the World Cup I asked players to list people whose feedback they would want and trust, when and how they preferred the feedback (written, verbal, or CD) and in what areas they wanted feedback.

To create and sustain their own ‘personal winning environment’, I also asked players to write responses to “I should stop, start, or continue doing what..?” This linked to a ‘confidence account’ exercise I introduced to the team, during which players wrote responses to the prompt, “Prior to the World Cup, list ...

- Your accomplishments and achievements as a Sri Lankan cricketer.
- Your natural talents and strengths as an International player.
- The extra value you add to the current side in terms of your professionalism, commitment, and attitude.”

During the World Cup, they were asked to “Read the above responses daily and ‘make deposits here’ i.e. add all the small and large successes achieved in each World Cup game”.

strengths
opportunities
aspirations
results

My final team session focused on key mental areas; namely, unshakeable self-belief, preparation prior to games, and focus during games.

The meeting concluded with a discussion on “Team Goal Setting for the World Cup” which identified the outcome goal (winning the World Cup), performance goals for batting, bowling, fielding and mental game, and respective process goals. This turned out to be an excellent experience for every player who participated in creating a template for winning the World Cup.

I also arranged a final meeting with team management staff - team manager, head coach (Tom Moody), assistant coach, physiotherapist, trainer, and analyst - to summarise details of the strengths approach we had introduced. These reminders, illustrated in Table 5, needed to be applied consistently during the World Cup by all concerned.

Table 5. Summary of Team Management Strengths-Based Approach

<i>An Appreciative Perspective</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is working in our ‘team’ (i.e. team management)? • What gives life to the relationships we have? What seems right? • How are we successful because of our dynamics? • How can we achieve our greatest dreams together at the World Cup? 		
<i>Great Expectations - The Anticipatory Principle</i>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What you focus on, believe, think, imagine, and act upon informs your relationships and what you can create, together. • When we act from an expectation, we move towards what we anticipate. Individual anticipation affects our relationships. • Collective anticipation impacts the direction in which a relationship and team (organization) moves. • When we collectively create the anticipation of a mutual goal or vision, we tend to act and support one another in achieving that goal. • Generating shared anticipation is a critical element in the success of any team undertaking. 		
<i>Signature Strengths</i>		
Focus on what each player is good at. Help him exploit what he does best.		
Player’s name	His strengths include	How will I nurture these effectively during the World Cup?



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Summary to February 2007

All players in the national squad appeared ready for the World Cup and its myriad challenges, including pre-departure distractions such as last minute changes in squad selection, which (only) in Sri Lanka, has to be approved by the Government Minister for Sport. Team management impressed me in terms of their professionalism and consistency in supporting and challenging both senior and junior players. Such was the level of preparation and readiness of this strong and experienced squad that I was fully confident of a competitive performance in the West Indies.

Although the goal of winning the 2007 World Cup was certainly realistic, in the final it was Australia, who had dominated the whole tournament, who secured their fourth title, and their third in a row since 1999. The final of the ICC World Cup 2007 in Bridgetown, Barbados, however, will long be remembered for the farcical final overs of a broken contest due to rain delays played out in near-darkness. Good-naturedly, the Sri Lankans accepted the umpires' verdict, returned home as heroes, and were left to reflect on what might have been had they learned how to play in twilight darkness!



Team captains, Ricky Ponting (Australia) and Mahela Jayawardene (Sri Lanka) with the ICC World Cup trophy prior to the 2007 final

Overall Summary

The processes and activities I have described above were made possible by a coach who believed in the transformative capacity of strengths-based approaches to individual and team performance consulting. While I have since witnessed similar transformations occur in non-sport settings (schools, public service departments, private companies) only time will tell if other sport coaches, teams, and individuals will embrace the potential that applied positive psychology undoubtedly offers.

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ISBN 978-0-9924576-1-7

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