

Basketball: The conscious and sub-conscious thoughts of an almost perfect Free Throw shooter

Most of you may know that the stock market deals in futures, commodities and options on all kinds of goods and products. Millions of people bet daily on these things with the hope of generating income. Of course on the flip side these millions of people can and do lose not only millions and billions but even a trillion as seen in the stock crash in late 2008.

Well many of you may concur with me that it is a safer bet to trade on the stock market than to bet on a basketball player making a free throw. Especially NBA players where the expectation is so much higher. With the commodity being 'free throw shooting' and if you decide to take an 'option' on the 'future' of free throw shooting then that future really looks bleak. The puns are intended for creativity and thought impact.

Usually those that make a lot of money on the stock market have good information or there are those that are lucky as well. But like any business knowledge is power and this goes for shooting free throws just as well. In free throw shooting it is better to be good than lucky, although that does help as well. Like they say "the harder you work the luckier you get". My philosophy is "the smarter you work the luckier you get".

This excerpt may be shedding a unique perspective but it is one of 3 dimensions including the mental, physical and spatial. The average free throw shooting percentage in the United States amongst all Professional players, College and High School basketball players is around 66% or roughly two thirds of the shots attempted are made. That's not a very good grade for doing something for over a century.

One of the main reasons for this mediocrity is that not only is the proof in the pudding (statistics don't lie) but the information that is being taught has been sub par and continues to this day. You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. The players have the capacity, desire and motivation to be great shooters but they lack the scientific principles necessary to be superior shooters.

How can it be that millions of players over decades fit into the mediocre mold? The only answer is not more practice but practicing more perfect principles. I personally know an individual who has been shooting at around 99% from the free throw line for over 25 years. This is almost robotic or sub human. Impossible for a human being to shoot almost perfect for so long. In fact this person has only missed 3 free throws in shooting competitions in 18 years with a number of 1572/1575.

My thinking was that this person is a freak of nature. But not so. Just as normal as the next person. This person was not gifted with any freakish size, super IQ,

or laser vision. As I learned more about what makes this person a phenomenal shooter it was all sitting in a neat little ball in the cranial region. His success was strictly a result of knowing the scientific principles or natural laws and he changed his natural imperfect body movements to fit the more perfect laws of nature.

This intrigued me so naturally I asked him to elaborate. He said while "holding his thumb and index finger about 2 inches apart, "the difference between greatness and mediocrity may be about this much. Since shooting a basketball is accuracy engineering just like golf and certain parameters must be taken into account. Once these parameters or shooting principles are understood, they become a part of you forever. Remember these words, " Science Rules". "God is in the details". Perfection is attainable but very difficult to maintain. This is what life is all about. Overcoming the weakness of man. Self Mastery. Becoming like Christ. Perfect. Staying on the straight and narrow path. A free throw is no different.

All you have to do is ask the everyday basketball player this question. "What are you thinking about the moment you release the ball". The percentage of responses that were completely useless was about 99.99999 %. The normal response was that all the shooters were thinking of making the basket, or hoping they don't miss. Depending on the confidence level of the player. It was extremely rare that someone would answer that they would concentrate on their form. But even that is a nebulous answer. There is no specificity or commonality in the reasons for mediocre shooting.

Shooting starts with the mind and ends with the mind. The shooting form or technique is the physical manifestation which creates the feedback of success or failure. Since the mind can not think of two thoughts at the same time, it better be focused on the mechanics at 'hand'. Pun intended. If a player is thinking or hoping the ball goes in, his mind is already at the basket ahead of the ball. The mind must be focused on the worst problem area that the shooter is aware of. Obviously if the shooter has no idea of any mechanical flaws then naturally the mind is hoping for instant gratification. Something for which we are all guilty as charged.

The key then is to understand all the potential shooting flaws and make sure none of these crop up in our own shooting mechanics. Remember that "for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction" as Isaac Newton stated. By this he means that each missed shot was caused by some miscalculation of the shooting mechanism. Also when shooting free throws, less is more which means that the less movement you have in the shot the cleaner and less action on the ball as far as speed, rotation, softness, etc is concerned.

Another thought you may want to accommodate is that great shooters don't just shoot in the gym, they shoot while they daydream or during any spare time they have. Shooting starts from the information fed through the conscious to the

subconscious where it brews and gathers energy and eventual substance. If your mind is not dedicated to correcting physical flaws then your shot is doomed to constant irregularity and inefficiency. With this comes loss of confidence, frustration, stress to perform and a whole lot of other potential problems. So it is recommended by the author that making all your baskets makes life so much easier for all concerned.

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