

“Yoga in Sports”



If one thinks that yoga is just for gentle relaxation, think again. Today more athletes are learning the many dimensions of performance that can be improved by adding yoga to their training. Yoga and sport are often seen in opposition, by nature of the quiet approach in yoga in contrast to the competitiveness of sport.

In sporting events viz Athletics, Gymnasts, Rugby, Soccer and others, the successful performance depends upon the perfection with which different phases of the event are performed, On the other hand for successful participation in the various games requires different combinations of fitness physical and mental and skill execution. Yoga like other sports demands tremendous integrity, self-discipline and awareness to take us beyond existing level of physical, motor, skill and other types of qualities related to a particular sport.

Benefits of Yoga in sports:

- Yoga training improves fitness and skill execution, the training cause's enhancement in the endorphin level of the brain, required for neurological functions, leading to an **increase in endurance** and general vigor of an individual, thereby causing improvement in skill execution.
- Yoga Postures improves physical and motor fitness. It involves exercising of various muscle groups at different joints and also provide message to vital organs of the body which effects their functioning in a positive manner.
- The slow stretching and holding methods in **yogic postures** increase the flexibility, a necessary quality to maintain performance and avoid injuries.
- Yoga training may help elite athletes to avoid **over-training syndrome** which a main factor is contributing to the dropout rates in various sports, from beginner to elite athletes.

- Yoga can help to improve **competitive performance**. Archery, rifle, shooting, pistol, shooting, squash, and golf require optimal levels of concentration.
- **Breathing exercise (Pranayama)** and **meditation** lead to better concentration and improved performance by provide **strength** to handle stress and anxiety in various levels of games.

Whatever sport you choose to practice, Yoga can enhance and complement one's ability by improving and increasing:

- ❖ Flexibility
- ❖ Balance
- ❖ Mental Focus
- ❖ Reducing Stress
- ❖ Posture
- ❖ Agility
- ❖ Sportsmanship

