



The start of the 2019 season for both professionals and college players is upon us. Clearly, this month all players and teams envision championships and MVP awards as the nearly yearlong grind begins.

Everyone is wondering which players will be standing atop the statistical leaderboards by the end of the season, but perhaps the bigger question is how do the great players maintain their edge and what will catapult a top prospect into becoming a household name for years to come.

In other words, which players will be able to maintain the "Double Vision" that few are able to sustain over a long season.

No, it's not about eyesight or prescription contact lenses, and it's not about reading the eye chart from 20 feet away. Yes, of course you need clear eyesight to read and drive a pitch, but that by itself won't allow you to hit a curveball, recognize a changeup or turn around a 100 mph fastball.

Let's keep it simple. Vision is how effective you are at getting the "external picture" through the distractions and negative thoughts sitting in your head—the ones that cloud or delay your ability to interpret and react to the full picture. Vision is also a performance-based factor that allows some people to see more clearly—and in a slower speed—than others.

Quite simply, vision is the personal view-finder that the great ones set to hunt pitches or hit targets.

Make no mistake about it, the great ones pay attention to the outside world differently than the rest of us. They are able to track moving objects more efficiently than their counterparts. Put another way, vision is the individual human software that edits and updates the external world for the brain—the hard drive—to process.

Whether you are always a step slow on ground balls to your left, slow reading fly balls to your right or late seeing the spin of a screwball, your vision is either the problem or the solution. Remember, first-step quickness and reaction time is preceded by the brain getting good, clean intel from the eyes as to where and when to go.

Do negative thoughts impact a player's vision? Or is the way the player is "looking" cause the negative and clouded thoughts? What came first, the chicken or the egg? Let the philosophers figure that one out.



Treating the eyes as part of the brain (actually, it is the only part of the brain we can see) is the best way to improve both mental and visual clarity at the same time. Truly, how and what we are paying attention to at any given moment explains why clarity of thought is tied into our clarity of vision.

Let's examine the high-caliber visual skills in action:

Scan and Hunt

Be aware of how, what and how long you are looking at a target. Open focus, which is the visual strategies of the rich and famous, is the preferred method to improve clarity and reaction time in sports.

The classic line, "when I look at nothing, I see everything" is a repeated description of high-level athletes when performing at their best. This "open focus" definition allows players to see the whole field and have better spatial awareness of their surroundings and ball-flight predictions. Compare this to the target fixation and rigid attention syndrome used by the not-so-rich-and-famous hitters or deployed when good hitters "focus" finely on ball flight.

The Vision to Imagine

Great performers are incredible at creating the actions, movements and mindset they want to use come crunch time in their minds ahead of time. The ability to create, edit and player their own movie as a rehearsal for game-like situations is what allows them to play at the highest level. This vision also allows hitters to better hunt specific pitches or lanes. To be clear, the great ones hit the pitch they want to see.

This visual skill requires a constant commitment, so that the player can access the image anytime in the game or practice. The vision to imagine also applies to the dedicated player that can, "see and plan out" his ideal training and practice schedule. The vision to prepare, combined with the vision to see what is most important at an exact moment, is the ultimate skill set. Go see it for yourself!