

## The Backlift Technique among South African Cricket Players

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**Abstract :** This study primarily aimed to investigate the batting backlift technique (BBT) among semi-professional, professional and current international cricket players. A key question was to investigate if the lateral batting backlift technique (LBBT) is more common at the highest levels of the game. The participants in this study sample (n = 130) were South African semi-professional players (SP) (n = 69) and professional players (P) (n = 49) and South African international professional players (SAI) (n = 12). Biomechanical and video analysis were performed on all participant groups. Classifiers were utilised to identify the batting backlift technique type (BBTT) employed by all batsmen. All statistics and wagon wheels (scoring areas of the batsmen on a cricket field) were sourced online. This study found that a LBBT is more common at the highest levels of cricket batsmanship with batsmen at the various levels of cricket having percentages of the LBBT as follows: SP = 37.7%; P = 38.8%; SAI = 75%;  $p = 0.001$ . This study also found that SAI batsmen who used the LBBT were more proficient at scoring runs in various areas around the cricket field (according to the wagon wheel analysis). This study found that a LBBT is more common at the highest levels of cricket batsmanship. Cricket coaches should also pay attention to the direction of the backlift with players, especially when correlating the backlift to various scoring areas on the cricket field. Further in-depth research is required to fully investigate the change in batting backlift techniques among cricket players over a long-term period.

**Keywords :** cricket batting, biomechanical analysis, backlift, performance

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