

[Psychology]

MIKEL ARTETA'S GUIDE TO MENTAL TOUGHNESS

Everton's midfield magician on staying resolute during the game's biggest challenges – with InnerDrive's mental skills coach Brad Busch providing the psychological commentary

PREPARING FOR A CUP FINAL

Mikel: The most important thing is to get out there with the mentality you're going to win it. You can't control the pressure. You can only control yourself and what's going to happen in the game. If you have belief in yourself, you know your talent will come through.

Brad: You can't control the result, so don't waste time and energy thinking about that. Refocus on what you can control, such as movement and communication.

STAYING FOCUSED AFTER REPEATEDLY BEING FOULED

Mikel: Make sure he gets booked early so he's conscious of not getting another yellow card. To do this, take him to places where you want to be fouled, in and around the box. Enjoy the one-on-one battle as it's a challenge.

Brad: Players who repeatedly foul rely on scaring you into not wanting the ball – so keep getting on the ball. This will put all the pressure back on to him.

TAKING A PENALTY WITH FIVE MINUTES TO GO

Mikel: You've got all the advantage when you take a penalty. Leave all external things out of your mind and be focused on the ball: how you're going to kick it, where you're going to put it, and the ball hitting the net.

Brad: Research has shown that people who rush their penalties do worse than those who take their time. Decide where you are going to put it, don't change your mind, take a deep breath and fully commit to your shot.

AS THE PLAYMAKER, STAYING CALM WHEN YOU NEED A GOAL

Mikel: The worst thing to do is start forcing it. Play your natural game; don't put pressure on yourself to make that final pass. Other players in the team can do it too.

Brad: Don't panic: most deciding goals are scored in the last 10 minutes. You have plenty of time, so don't rush. Play the passes you know are most likely to succeed.

COPING WITH A POOR START AND A MOUTHY OPPONENT

Mikel: He's nothing to do with you: your strength and ability is in your head. You can't change your mistakes, so it's important to concentrate on the next moment. Don't be afraid to keep trying things.

Brad: If you are concentrating on what your opponent is saying, you're taking your eye off the ball. This is what he wants. Respond by letting your game do the talking.

Mikel Arteta wears the Puma King Finale.
For more details, visit www.facebook.com/Puma



DID YOU KNOW?
Rushing a penalty can be fatal: in major tournaments Germany take a spot-kick on average 0.64 seconds after the whistle, while England take 0.28 seconds
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"If you have belief in yourself, you know your talent will come through"

Interviews Ben Welch