THIS was batting, but not as we know it, even in a game that isn't cricket as we know it. In the space of 43 breathtaking deliveries, yielding 89 runs, wunderkind David Warner redefined power-hitting at the MCG on Sunday night.

The ground has been witness to power-hitting before but has not seen shots played like this, for many of Warner's towering hits in the Twenty20 match against South Africa owed as much to baseball as to cricket.

There is a good reason for that — it is how he has been training and how the new generation of young players have been instructed to play.

"It is a new way of batting to develop power-hitting for this game," said Cricket NSW high performance manager Alan Campbell, who has been monitoring Warner since he was a promising 12-year-old. "The advent of Twenty20 cricket has meant that our model is to teach our players to power-hit to all parts of the ground in a non-traditional manner.

"With David it is identifying the place on the wicket he can get a solid foot base and by rotating the hips with high hands he can hit the ball over mid-wicket, which is very much a baseball shot.

"He is a guy with wonderful balance, and with that balance he has a good base of support with his feet — you will notice there is very limited footwork happening — and he is then able to hold the bat high and open, almost like a baseballer when he gets into the hitting position ... his head is very stable and the weight transference through the hips gives the rapid arm and hand movement and all the power."

Twenty20 has challenged cricket's thinking and traditions and it is now challenging the orthodoxies of batting.

"The way that coaches traditionally teach people to hit a ball is you step towards it and hit it with an open face. But the modern game is all about power-hitting and if the ball is coming to you in less time than it takes to complete the stroke then you have to get the power some way and it is by this type of baseball shot," Campbell said. "Adam
Gilchrist was no different to that — his striking position was similar for most shots, his footwork was limited.

Where players were historically told to play each ball on merit, they are now trained in hitting nominated balls to a predetermined part of the field no matter where the ball is pitched.

"In the old days it might be considered slogging but I don't think you could call what David Warner did slogging. It was controlled power-hitting," Campbell said. "He made a century recently for his club side against Manly and he hit nine sixes. Balls were landing on roofs, car alarms were going off, people walking to the shops were getting injured. They had to chase balls down the road almost to the beach."

"Not everybody can do what David can do but it will open the door for other young players to experiment and to go to the nets and say, well how am I going to hit this ball on a good length over mid-wicket," Campbell said.