

Sprint Hurdles

Overview

The goal for the sprint hurdles is for the athlete to run over the hurdles efficiently, using technique and rhythm in the shortest time possible.

Training Points

Start-as discussed in the start lesson. Important not to lift torso too soon. This can happen in hurdles as the athlete tries to spot the first hurdle as soon as possible.

Limbs in opposition-as in sprinting, especially when moving over the hurdles.

Approaching the hurdle-athlete attempts to run(not jump)over hurdle. The lead leg is extended out in front of athlete,foot leading over hurdles. This is achieved by driving the lead knee up toward to of hurdle the snapping lower leg and foot forward to clear hurdle.

Over the hurdle-as the athlete begins to pass over the hurdle, the upper body from the hips leans forward toward the lead leg thigh. The opposite arm to the lead leg reaches forward then sweeps to the side and back creating a balance. The arm shouldn't move too wide as this could result in a lateral twist to the torso creating the environment for an unbalanced landing. As this is happening,the trail leg flexes sideways going over hurdle as close to horizontal as possible. The toes of the trail leg can pull toward the shin to help maintain height over the hurdle.

Landing- As the trail leg lands, the opposite arm is ready to drive forward in a sprint action again. The lead leg should be slapped down not let float toward track. As this is happening the trail leg will be coming down toward the track ready to drive forward again.

Rhythm-it is important to establish a consistent rhythm between hurdles. Younger athletes will probably want 5 steps. As they gain confidence and speed, they will be better served with 3 steps. Peak acceleration is probably achieved in the first 30-40% of the race. Maintaining maximum speed is hard so deceleration begins thus creating an environment where hurdles can begin to be hit. Rhythm is important throughout the race but especially from the half way point. Athletes should be encouraged to work their rhythm as they try to finish out the race.

Drills

- Side Walk Overs "A"- 4-6 hurdles are set at a height the athlete can comfortably walk over. They are set 3 or 5 steps apart. The athlete walks between hurdles at left side of hurdles using lead leg only to step over hurdle. Trail leg is outside edge of hurdles so it uses a normal walking action. When athlete completes last hurdle they turn around and repeat the drill coming back the other way. This time the opposite leg is used as the lead leg. This drill is 3 time each leg.

-Side Walk Overs "B"-hurdles are set as above. This time athlete walks between hurdles using the trail leg technique. Repeat this as above.

-Full Walk Overs-as above except now athlete is going over middle of hurdle using both legs in the hurdle technique.

-using 5-8 low training hurdles(4-6" tall) set them up to the specifications for that particular gender and age group. Athletes then run over the hurdles using correct technique. At this height there should be very little vertical lift. The emphasis is on running over the hurdles but working on technique. Run through these 5-7 times.

-now repeat above drill with scissor hurdles at a comfortable height. Not necessarily the competition height. Repeat above drill.

-finally move to competition height and reduce number of hurdles to 3-4. have athletes run through 4-6 times.

-"timed Drills"-1. Have athlete on start line. Use ready, set, go instructions. Time athlete from "go" til moment lead leg touches ground after clearing first hurdle. Repeat this 3-4 times encouraging athlete to lower time each repetition.

-2. using same start as above, time athlete from moment lead leg touches ground once cleared of first hurdle until it touches ground after clearing third hurdle. Again, encourage athlete to improve these times.

-3. using same start as above time athlete from "go" till they pass a cone set 10 meters past final(third or fourth) hurdle. Again encourage athlete to continue lowering times. Hopefully this will increase their ability to run over hurdles not stop jump and try to move on again.