

The Start

Overview

The start is important as it is an element present in every race. Over shorter distances the quality of the start can make the difference between a pb or not, a win or fourth place. As we will be working with sprint hurdles, we will work on the sprint start for jds.

Training Points

Solid base-feet shoulder with apart, weight balanced between feet, legs bent for lower centre of gravity.

Limbs in opposition-if the left leg is forward in the stance, the right arm is forward.

Which leg forward-quick leg vs power leg. In the stance the quick leg is the rear leg. To determine the quick leg you can either ask which leg the athlete kicks a soccer ball with(kicking leg quick leg) or perform a simple test. Athlete stands with both feet together, eyes closed. gently push athletes back until a leg moves to save the athlete from falling. This leg is the quick leg. At the gun the quick leg drives forward sweeping past the power leg.

Torso-slight lean forward with head up. The line of the body from the foot of the quick leg through the torso to shoulders should be straight as possible with a lean forwards towards the track, much like the forward slash on a key board.

On your marks-athlete moves up and prepares for positioning body as above points have guided them.

Set-athlete breathes in readies body for a forward explosive drive, eyes looking down lane to finish.

Go-listening for gun, not watching starter, the rear leg drives forward, as it passes front leg front leg begins to push forward. Try to limit vertical rise of body. First 5-8 strides are in the forward leaning position with a gradual rise each stride to the upright sprinting position.

Trying hard vs relaxed style-for the upper body in the sprints, we want the athlete to be using the arms as efficiently as possible. The hands shouldn't be in a tight, tense karate chop position. the fingers and hand should be relaxed. This lack of tension should continue through the arms and into the shoulders and neck. An analogy that can be used is the hands are strong enough to hold a raw egg without it flying from the hands when they are moving but soft enough that they won't break the egg. the relaxed style allows for full chest expansion when breathing and more front to back movement for the arms. relaxed definitely doesn't mean not trying.

Drills

-eyes closed listen for starting signal

-athlete walks forward slowly-second athlete walks behind. At a random point the rear athlete touches front athlete on the back. Front athlete drops into simulate start position the sprints 10-15 meters.

-athletes lie on back at start line. Head is touching start line, torso positioned behind start line. Eyes are closed. Start signal given. Athletes all roll one way(pre determined by coach). Assume start position and the sprint 10-15 m.

athletes walk away from start line and track. Start signal given athletes put one palm on ground, while down turn assume start position then sprint 10-15 m.

Half the athletes line up on start line,upright. Other half 5behind first row. The rear athletes have a tennis ball each. Rear athletes lob tennis ball over front athletes about 5m ahead of them. As soon as front athletes spot tennis ball they run to catch the ball in the least amount of bounces.