

Organizing and Teaching the Glide Technique

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Introduction

As a new throws coach, I struggled with keeping my thoughts and teaching progression organized and consistent. I read everything I could and while the glide technique fundamentals were the same throughout the articles, the terminology changed and the finer points were many and varied. While I learned much from this material, it was hard for me to organize a progression that included everything to teach my throwers. What I found out was I am terrible at memorizing someone else's progression and their words, but it came easy when I put it in my words.

What follows is the result of breaking down the technique of one of the best gliders of all time, Al Feuerbach. I spent time looking at his technique and putting the progression into my words and then narrowing it down to one "catch-word" to indicate each step of the progression to teach my athletes. I use this during the first 4 weeks of practice, and then combine steps to eliminate any "choppiness" in their technique. I will usually combine the eleven steps down to 4 by the end of the indoor season.

I have found this to be very successful in teaching the basics to all of my throwers simultaneously and it also has eliminated a number of basic mistakes made by young throwers. Once they have the basics down, I will tweek this progression and the technique involved to suit individual throwers' strengths and weaknesses. However, I feel this gives all the throwers in our program a very solid foundation. All movement teaching requires a strong foundation in the beginning, and then you can add individual variations to suit the student and improve his/her technique.

I hope this organization or progression will help you in some way. While it would be flattering that you use this step by step in your teaching, I encourage you to use this as only a base or an idea to develop your own progression that makes sense to you and your throwers.

The Viking Eleven Step Progression

- i. SHOT UP
 1. Shot is placed tightly in the neck
 2. Throwing elbow up
 3. Block arm is up-fingers relaxed
 4. Non-throwing leg is positioned a foot or two behind the throwing leg
- ii. DOWN
 1. Throwing leg flexed (around 55 degrees), toes at 6 o'clock
 2. Non-throwing leg extended
 3. 99% of weight on drive leg
 4. Eyes focused 3-6 feet behind the ring
 5. Block arm relaxed below shoulder, hanging position
 6. Shoulders square
- iii. COIL
 1. Bring non-throwing leg up to throwing leg
 2. Non-throwing big toe next inside of throwing heel
- iv. FALL
 1. Transfer weight from the ball to the heel of the throwing foot
 2. Hips begin to fall towards center of the ring
- v. SHOOT
 1. Shoot the post leg across the ring, landing with the foot up as tight against the toe board as possible, toes pointing towards 3 o'clock
 2. Snap the drive leg under the hip, rotate drive leg counterclockwise from 6 o'clock to 3 o'clock (rotate at hip)
 3. Keep shoulders as low as lower body/core strength will allow, square to the back of the ring
- vi. TORQUE
 1. Rotate drive knee towards the front of the circle and somewhat down
 2. Drive foot will also rotate from 3 o'clock to 1 o'clock
 3. Post hip should also begin to open slightly
- vii. OPEN
 1. Hips open towards the front of the ring
 2. Shoulders begin to open towards the front and elevate

3. Eyes – which have been focusing on the back of the ring, now focus on the shot

viii. CEEEE

1. Now hit the inverted C position
2. Shoulders elevated, facing 1 o'clock and behind hips
3. Eyes still focused on the shot
4. Hips fully open
5. Feet beginning to pivot with toes pointing towards the front of the ring

ix. BLOCK

1. Extend block arm to the sky – “grab the sun”
2. Drive blocking elbow downward at 45 degree angle
3. Chest now square to the toeboard, gaining elevation
4. Body weight will now be transferring from the drive leg to the post leg
5. Post leg will be extending, lifting body upward

x. THRELL

1. Throwing arm extended fully at approx. 45 degree angle
2. Snap the wrist downward, achieving backward rotation of the shot
3. Elbow behind shot
4. Body weight is driven upward of off post leg, gaining full extension
5. As shot leaves the hand, toes should be slightly off of the ground

xi. SWITCH (if taught at all, taught only if the thrower has problems staying in)

1. Drive leg is brought to the front of the ring
2. Post leg is put to center of the ring
3. Throwing arm is forced to the back of the ring
4. All body weight and momentum is forced to the back of the ring