

RECRUIT GREAT ATHLETES, GET THEM EXCITED, AND BUILD SPRINT FOUNDATIONS

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Plainfield North Track & Field Mission Statement

- **We will have a successful team because the fastest guys walking our hallways will WANT to run track and will remain happy, enthusiastic, and energetic. Our best athletes will speak well of our program and will recruit others to join them.**

Practice Philosophy

- ◆ **Sprints should be the central focus of track & field** ... 78% of high school track events are directly related to sprinting ... (aren't the best field event athletes fast, quick, bouncy, and explosive?). Distance events make up only 22% of our events (only if you consider the 800 a distance event). Great distance runners dominate two events ... great sprinters dominate four events. And ... don't forget ... sprinters and jumpers have an advantage at a two-day state meet due to lower volume.
- ◆ **Train with focus and quality** ... do not over-train
- ◆ **Sprinters are cats** ... train them like cats ... cats do not jog
- ◆ **Most track teams regress** due to attrition, negativity, and injury
- ◆ Formal practice from 3 PM – 4 PM on school days
- ◆ If school is not in session:
 - No official practice on non-school days (weekends, spring break, etc.)
 - On days when school is not in session, practice is unofficial and non-mandatory ... we may have throwers, vaulters, and hurdlers practicing but we don't take role ... they are there because they want to be there.
 - Sprinters rest (remember ... sprinters are cats)
- ◆ Flexibility improves performance ... but do NOT stretch before practice
 - No pre-practice stretching ... sprint muscles are strong rubber bands (not stretched-out)
 - Stretching does NOT prevent injury
 - Stretching does NOT relieve muscle soreness
 - Running drills provide adequate warm-up and range-of-motion needed to start workout
 - If you can't give up stretching ... static stretch after practice (not a part of formal practice)

Sprint Philosophy

- ◆ Don't apply distance principles to sprinters ... forget about endurance, volume, mileage, pace, VO2 Max, sit-and-kick, threshold runs, Joe Newton, pasta dinners, cross training, 5Ks, triathlons, race strategy, EPO, drafting, getting "boxed-in", fartlek, intervals, Jack Daniels, junk miles, LSD, negative splits, tempo runs, etc. Forget it all ... sprinters are different.
- ◆ Valeri Borzov (USSR, 1972 Munich Olympics ... 100/200 Gold Medal) ... Borzov smoked cigarettes. Repeating ... world's fastest man in 1972 was a smoker! Sprinters are not milers.
- ◆ Sprint training ... four second reps ... not endurance ... no laps ... no jogging to warm up
- ◆ No stretching ... warm up with ballistic, high-energy, dynamic exercises ... muscles need to be like strong rubber bands
- ◆ Benefits of speed training
 - Warm-up to perform (get blood out of gut and into muscles)
 - Educate and re-educate ... change the brain ... train the nervous system
 - Train neuromuscular system to fire quickly (you don't get fast by running slow)
 - Sprinting is all electrical ... not chemical ... definitely not cardio
 - Train fast-twitch fibers to create bounce & stretch reflex
 - Improve flexibility (without stretching)
 - Jumping improves sprinting ... sprinting improves jumping

- ◆ Total focus ... total concentration ... QUALITY is key ... not quantity ... energy, excitement, & enthusiasm ... your biggest challenge = how do you get sprinters to focus/concentrate?
- ◆ Training pays off in “6 weeks to 6 months to 6 years” ... what we do today will not change us tomorrow ... speed development is slow-growing ... you can't afford to build endurance foundations and develop speed later ... sprint in the off-season, sprint in the pre-season, and sprint during the season. Build a sprint foundation ... sprint, jump, sprint, jump, sprint, jump
- ◆ Sprinters are cats ... cats don't run Cross Country. Cross Country athletes don't make good 4x1 teams ... they've been trained to run slow.
- ◆ Run 40s to measure speed but also for sprint training. It makes sense ... running at top speed is a good thing. Measure 10-meter fly time with automated system (Summit Timing System). If you don't have room ... run timed 20s or 30s ... find a way to get the job done.
- ◆ Make athletes want to come back ... make them like it ... “It's better to light a fire than to fill a pail.”

Foundations

- ◆ Form Drills... easy skips, butt kicks, high knees, B-skips, butt-kick & reach, run in place & cycle forward ...
- ◆ Bounce ... 5-bounds, 5-box jump, single leg box jumps, squat bounces, jump rope (without rope), Russian Lunge (bounce in lunge position 3 times, jump and stick landing in opposite lunge position), etc.
- ◆ Lunges (3)... pop-ups, rocket, long
- ◆ Strength ... short prime times, sprint prime times, isometrics (squat), rear squats (lower leg straight, squat without knee coming forward), single-leg wall squats, star jumps, plyo pushups, pull-ups, rope climbs
- ◆ Drops ... squat landing, lunge landing, 360s ... to generate force, you must train the body to ABSORB FORCE ... whatever you can absorb, you can generate
- ◆ Wall Swings ... hamstring drills (frequency and range of motion), straight-straight, bent-straight, bent-bend (cycle), 1-10 wall claw
- ◆ Hurdle Drills ... over/under, over/over, 1-2/1-2
- ◆ Starts (3) ... 2-point falling start, 3-point with lean, 4-point hop & go
- ◆ Measure speed as often as possible ... 40 yard dash, 30 meter starts from blocks (FAT), 10 meter fly (FAT). Measure standing bound (5 bounds) and standing triple jump efforts. Record, rank, post and/or publish the rankings.

Buzz Words ... Points of Emphasis

- ◆ “Fast and Easy” ... great runners “MAKE IT LOOK EASY” ... practice this!
- ◆ “Run Tall” ... great runners run with perfect posture (shoulders back, abs tight, hips forward) ... demand this!
- ◆ “Fast Hands” ... hands and feet are synchronized and FAST
- ◆ “Hammer Back” ... short levers = fast levers ... arms at 90 degrees ... lengthen on back stroke ... hands to the pocket ... palms next to hip ... don't “punch forward” ... hammer back
- ◆ “Don't Reach” ... foot strike under hips
- ◆ “Hit it Hard” ... soft landing = slow ... hard landing = fast
- ◆ “Heel Up – Knee Up – Toe Up” (dorsi-flexed foot is imperative)
- ◆ “Chin to the Chest” (starts)
- ◆ “See the track” ... drive phase

YOU MUST ATTRACT GOOD ATHLETES TO YOUR PROGRAM

- ◆ Before I became a good track coach, I had good track teams.
- ◆ Bulletin Boards
- ◆ Website ... **pntrack.com** ... my modern bulletin board, a scrapbook for my kids, a communicator, and most of all ... a motivator. Over 1000 hits per week during 2009 season.
- ◆ Annual T-Shirt #1 ... Varsity and Fresh-Soph Records on the back
- ◆ Annual T-Shirt #2 ... Varsity and Fresh-Soph Indoor Records on the back (at end on indoor season)
- ◆ Trips:
 - Harrisburg travel ... Glenbard West, St. Joe-Ogden, Monticello, Springfield, Sterling, Chicago Heights Bloom, EIU, U of I, University of Indiana, and the RCA Dome (Indianapolis)
 - Franklin (TN) travel ... Atlanta, Memphis, Knoxville, Collinsville, Paducah and SIU
 - Plainfield North travel ... SIU, EIU, Bloomington, Champaign
- ◆ Email: Can we ever promote enough? (parents, athletes, teaching staff, media, and alumni)
- ◆ HAPPY ATHLETES ARE YOUR BEST RECRUITERS
- ◆ Most important class ... freshmen ... teach older kids how to treat freshmen ... this is essential to a great track program! ... "Big Brother"
- ◆ Athletes reflect YOU ... are you excited and having fun or are you frustrated, tired, agitated, and generally overwhelmed?
- ◆ Math for track coaches: (no football players) + (no basketball players) = poor track team

WHAT TO DO ... WHAT NOT TO DO

Encourage (give courage)	Don't discourage
Workouts: "Shock and Adapt"	What we grow accustomed to no longer changes us
Repeat skill & fundamental work	You don't form habits by talking about them
Keep your sprinters "bouncy" and mentally positive	No one runs well "broken down" and depressed
Keep track of PRs for all kids (Personal Records)	Practice is short ... don't be lazy in record keeping
Promote successful endings to workouts	Don't allow failure ... leave some gas in their tank
Be patient ... improvements come slow	Practice is over-rated
Keep sprinters happy and healthy	Don't cause misery and injury
Develop young track athletes ... schedule fresh-soph meets	Don't be obsessed with varsity success
Record results ... rank, publish, post, promote	Otherwise ... your kids are just running in circles
Sprinters are cats	Don't treat them like dogs
Sprint & jump to get fast	Can't get fast by running slow
Adjust to weather conditions and team climate	Don't have a rigid practice plan
Light a fire (motivate)	Don't fill a pail (workouts are over-rated)
Quality	Not quantity

Teach Sprint
Fundamentals Using
John Wooden's Eight
Laws of Learning

1. Explanation
2. Demonstration
3. Imitation
4. Repetition
5. Repetition
6. Repetition
7. Repetition
8. Repetition

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence.
Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent.
Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb.
Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts.
Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.
- Calvin Coolidge

Education is not the filling of a
pail, but the lighting of a fire.
-William Butler Yeats