

Sprinting and Sprint Relays with the Cougars

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I. Passion for the Job

II. My Coaching Philosophy

A. Recruit, recruit, recruit

1. Gymnasts make good hurdlers
2. Dancers make good throwers
3. Talk to other coaches in your building
4. Share athletes

B. Work around “club”/aau sports

C. No Specialists (at least initially)

1. “Make” them compete in two or more events
2. Let them try something new

D. Be flexible with workouts

1. Watch them
2. Ask them/heart rates

E. Our most important meets are our last four

1. Early meets; I’m not worried whether we win or lose – just compete
2. Doesn’t mean we blow off duals/triangulars
3. Try different events

F. Ask questions!!!!

G. Have fun!!!!

III. Sprint Training Philosophy – **find one for you**

A. Ken Jakalski, Dr. Peter Wayand, Barry Ross – *Speed increases as you increase the amount of force you apply to the ground*

B. Get Stronger

1. Weight training P.E.
 - a.) trust their abilities or tell them what you want
 - b.) meet day or “peaking” – back off

2. Lifting during practice
 - a.) dead lift (1 to 2 times weekly)
 - b.) hang cleans – with bar or dumbbells
3. Core strength
 - a.) stay away from crunches
 - b.) planks, planks with movement
4. Read, read, read
 - a.) Mike Boyle - strengthcoach.com (most excellent!)
 - b.) Barry Ross
 - c.) Mark Rippetoe
5. Light plyos/jump training
 - a.) 45 min pre-season/open gym
 - b.) dynamic warm-up, including hops and skips
 - c.) mini-hurdles, ladders, jump-ropes
 - d.) 2, then 3 times a week
 - e.) keep hops, skips during in-season warm-up
 - f.) once a week stations (indoor season) with plyos/jumps

C. Run fast to be fast

1. We talk in terms of % effort
2. Less than 1600 meters total distance
3. “Flying” anything – 10 meters to 150 meters
4. 30-30-30’s (sprint-glide-sprint with lead-in and slow-down)
5. Make use of your school layout – “L” workout, hall circuits
6. Crash pad sprints
7. Hall loops with baton exchange, blind and/or open in teams
8. Outdoors use the *Computerized Workout Book* for times
9. Two full speed 200’s with 30 sec rest, 5 – 8 min rest in between 3 or 4 sets
10. 5 x 100 relays or 3 x 200 relays
11. Sprint 100, back 50 x 8 (one lap) 1 to 2 laps
12. Sharks and minnows
13. Anything in the grass, especially barefoot – 130’s on a curve

IV. Hurdles

- A. “A runner runs from sun to sun, but a hurdlers work is never done”
- B. Book – *The Hurdler’s Bible* by Wilbur Ross and Norma Hernandez de Ross
- C. Everyone is a hurdler (for a while, then I fire them)
- D. Very rarely, if at all, practice at full height or distance

V. Sprint Relays

A. Keep it simple – everyone's the same!

B. We take the baton in our left hand AND cross it over to our right

C. No bean bags

1. Count off from the acceleration triangle towards the exchange zone
2. Look over you inside (left) shoulder
3. Squeeze the right side of the track
4. Take off sprinting when the incoming athlete hits the mark
5. The exchange should be made in the middle of the zone
6. If you pass the halfway mark, don't stop, look over your left shoulder.
7. Incoming should chase outgoing out of the zone

D. Time the exchange (approximate)

1. For a 50 sec 4x100, 2.5 sec; 48 sec 4x100, 2.4 sec; 46 sec 4x100, 2.3 – 2.2 sec
2. 45 sec 4x100, 2.1 sec; 43 sec 4x100, 2.1 sec; 41 sec 4x100, 2.0 sec

E. Won't do any more than 5 per exchange in any one practice, often 2 - 3

Youth Sports- Early Specialization

Mike Boyle

There was a great article in the NY times about Elena Delle Donna,
http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/19/sports/ncaabasketball/19athlete.html?_r=1&oref=slogin
It prompted me to post an old article I wrote.

PS- Youth sports is a mess we may never be able to clean up, kind of like the economy.

Early Specialization

I'm not sure when the phenomenon of early specialization was born. At some point a parent decided "why not just fast-track our kids right past Little League and Pop Warner and right into the Pros". Parents in all sports felt they could follow the lead of Earl Woods (Tiger's dad) or Richard Williams (Venus and Serena's dad) and just concentrate on one sport. I love to tell parent groups that I speak to that for every Tiger Woods or Venus Williams there are probably 5000 kids who hate sports and resent their parents for all the pressure. As a parent, ask yourself this question. Have you ever told anyone "I don't push _(insert your child's name)_____ he/she really wants to do this?" The latest one to fuel the early specialization fire is tennis star Maria Sharapova. The TV folks couldn't wait to tell us at Wimbledon that she had been holed up in Fla since age 7.

Check out this quote from LA Lakers Coach Phil Jackson:
"40 million kids play sports, and most of them are between 7 and 12. By the time they are 13 more than 70 percent of them have stopped playing because it's not fun anymore. All of a sudden when kids get into junior high, we feel this need to have them become professionals, and the coaches become professionals... The message I'd like to get out to them is to honor the game. The goal, or the victory is important, but team sportsmanship, the athletic endeavor itself is just as important."

One of the problems is that most team sports are what are called late specialization sports. This means that early concentration/ specialization has actually been shown to slow development rather than speed it up. Historically the great players in team sports seem to hone their competitive instincts and develop their athleticism in a number of sports and then begin to specialize in their teens. In addition early specialization often leads to dysfunctional parent/ child relationships. The early search for the Holy Grail places undue pressure on a young athlete who should be learning that sports are actually fun, not just about winning. Believe it or not, kids play for fun and, will actually attempt to make the teams fair and encourage competition when left to their own devices. Remember when you were a kid and the teams were uneven. You made trades to create a competitive game. The thrill was competition, not winning. For many youth sport parents the idea of fair teams is an anomaly. Stack the team. Get the best players. Annihilate the competition. Get a scholarship. Make money.

Let's look at the following examples:

Nomar Garciaparra (Boston Red Sox) - played football, soccer and baseball in high school. He actually attempted to play football as a kicker while on a baseball scholarship at Georgia Tech

Mia Hamm (All Time Leading scorer in US soccer history) - multi-sport star in high school

Kristine Lilly (Leads the World in International Soccer Appearances)- captained three sports at Wilton, Conn. H.S.

Brendan Shanhan (Detroit Red Wings) outstanding Box Lacrosse player prior to entering the NHL.

Katie King- (US Women's Ice Hockey, two time Olympian, current Boston College Women's Hockey head Coach) played both Ice Hockey and Softball at Brown University in Providence, R.I..

And the list could go on forever. Early specialization is a phenomenon created by self-interested and financially motivated adults. It has little basis in fact and, the data seem to support the opposite. This is just some parental food for thought. There is no evidence to support the theory that early specialization leads to long-term success. In fact, there is evidence to the contrary as stated above. If you want your child to be a great athlete, don't focus on one sport, play a different sport each season. The people who encourage early specialization are all people with a financial interest in your child playing one sport year round. Those encouraging early specialization usually run the leagues, camps and skill sessions and they fill the parents full of ideas that have no basis in fact. None of the players mentioned above left home at 14 to go to prep school, or just played one sport from age 6. The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting the result to change.

Maybe we should just try the way that worked in the first place?