

Are We Fully Challenging Our Athletes? (Russell Parsons, DFK Program Coach)

Talent Identification .. Program Leaders: Phil King / Debbie Flintoff-King / Russell Parsons

Background:

In January 1993, 1994 and 1995, the Debbie Flintoff-King Olympic Gold Camps Program conducted three Australian Institute of Sport 8-day camps, each the culmination of the program of the previous year.

Nearly 2000 athletes, aged 12-18 years, were involved in a series of clinics and camps from which the AIS nominees were selected.

Selection Criteria:

Athletes were recommended by event group coaches after each camp.

In general, 25 athletes were nominated for consideration each year.

A series of fitness challenges were set for each squad, each year, not so much to develop physical traits, but to identify the level of commitment the athletes were **expected** to offer in pursuit of the (all expenses paid) AIS experience.

Athletes were instructed in the details for all tests, and provided with appropriate support materials and opportunities, e.g. videos, specific testing days.



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Potential
is what you may be capable of doing
Motivation
directs what you do
Attitude
determines how well you do

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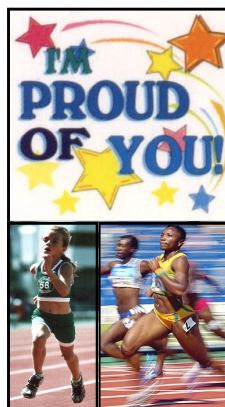


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Multiple AIS Athletes included

Sharelle McMahon
Lisa Bruty
Lauren Hewitt
Jarrod Monaghan
Eugene Bernaudo
Scott Thom
Ian Prendergast
Kylie Turton
Joel Hocking
Kylee Ziino
Jenny Marshall
Bree Spasojevic
Melanie Bradley
Sonya Bradley
Paul Jamison
Steven Hand

Follow Your Dream



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Specific Tests: Full Push-Ups: Males (80); Females (50)
Bent Knee Sit-Ups: 60 in 60 seconds .. medicine ball variations for second and third year applicants;
Sit-Up variations were individual specific to address core body strength needs of each athlete.
Sit & Reach Flexibility: +15
Skinfold: an "athletic" skinfold

General Fitness: Bar Circuit .. 3 times through a series of 12 exercises (bar weights variations according to the capacity and needs of each athlete .. e.g. gender and years of involvement in the program .. a significant challenge for all).

Athletic Tests: Demonstrate efficiently all "DFK stretches" (see separate NWA sheet)
Demonstrate all basic sprint drills: basic set of 6 (see separate NWA sheet)
Complete (in general) two performance tests to a pre-determined standard: e.g. 60m; 150m.

The young athletes responded to the challenges, earned their opportunity, and received widespread praise from AIS staff for their endeavour, fitness, commitment and focus throughout each stay in Canberra.

Some exceptional performances were recorded; e.g. "Beep Test" Level 17.5, and all athletes displayed progression over their period of association with the program (and beyond).

All athletes were generous in their praise for the program and the opportunities it provided.

All moved on to interests and lives enriched by the commitment they displayed

We can't all be winners .. but .. we can all be CHAMPIONS

It is easy to criticise the specifics of the program .. if such responses are your first, you are part of the problem in the sport of athletics (and perhaps other sports) .. you are not likely to be part of any solution.

Simply ... **Athletes Will Rise to the Level of Expectation**

Coaches (Teachers) should never lack the courage the challenge young men and women to seek the highest standards of which they are capable.



January 1993