

A Few Sessions for Junior Sprinters / Hurdlers and Intermediates

It is important to recognise that the following is **not** presented as *the* sessions
rather

a collection of ideas that open minded, athlete-focused development coaches can view, evaluate,
select from, and modify to suit their circumstances.

Every athlete is an experiment of ONE,
as is every training situation.

Every week has 168 hours ...
(many) coaches work directly with their athletes for 2-8 hours,
depending on training age / interest / opportunity.

The ideas are offered to athletes to expand their skills,
and to enhance their self-esteem.

They are daring to be different

Good is not enough .. when better is possible
Knowledge accumulates quickly in an open mind

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- ⇒ **Drills and Skills**



- In my view, the term “junior coach” has negative connotations.

If there is to be a label “**Development Coach**” comes closer to reality.

Bill Sweetenham, a world leader in the coaching of swimmers comments: “*Few swimmers make significant changes to their technique after reaching their mid-teens.*”

Is track and field so different? Having had extensive experience in both sports, I would suggest the statement has a degree of validity .. sure there are exceptions, but let’s look at the bigger picture.

So what’s the message .. more of a question actually: *Should young athletes have **the best coaches**, or, should **the best** be used to serve the needs of the emerging elite?*

My answer: Athletes should have the coach **best suited** (most appropriate) to their needs (their stage of physical and mental experience).

I would seriously doubt my capacity and commitment to refine a 1:47.00 800m runner to the elite levels of 1:43.00 and beyond; I am not interested in such singular focus, important though it is. While some mope around complaining about *why athletes don’t come to them*, I’m active every day, with wonderful groups of swimmers and runners, whose interests lie far beyond the narrow confines of achievement in one area. (*If you want a copy of our Newsletter, just ask; I am eager to attract new ideas .. I am happy to share ideas.*)

I’m a **Development Coach** .. my role is to work with youngsters, teach well the fundamental skills of athletics (especially sprinting, hurdling, middle distance) enhance self-esteem in young people, share experiences, and enjoy the almost unlimited opportunities for satisfaction associated with working with minds eager to learn new skills and have their efforts recognised.

The ever-changing structure I have developed over 35 years attempts to achieve this.

Too many assume that every child wants to be an Olympic Champion .. or, is it too many coaches see themselves as an Olympic Coach?

There are lots of things to do in life.

For most, athletic ability and sporting “potential” (*a measure of what we are yet to achieve*), is but a passing phase. Experienced development coaches recognise this, and aim to enhance generic and specific movement capabilities, thereby enhancing the range of options available to each emerging adult.

- ◆ **Athletics**, however, is **uniquely placed** in the sporting kaleidoscope.

Our major pre-occupation is with *speed* .. performing tasks as quickly as possible, whether it be sprinting 100 metres, running a marathon or putting the shot.

Because of this acknowledged focus, skills developed through athletics have an application in almost all sporting contexts .. speed is a skill. And, **all athletes need (seek) speed**.

- So, **athletics must expand out** .. encourage other sports to join in .. take from other sports the benefits or skills they better develop .. and, **show leadership** in not demanding allegiance, but offering benefits that will help all. The result could be an enhanced level of respect for athletics. Young minds want to explore and learn new ideas / skills .. It’s all about how each parent/coach/athlete communicates ... what they have to offer.

***When the mind is stretched by a new idea,
it never returns to its former dimensions***

- The practices that are currently applied, have landed us in the sport’s current position. Of course, there are many good ideas, often seldom applied effectively beyond the scope of specific coaching groups.

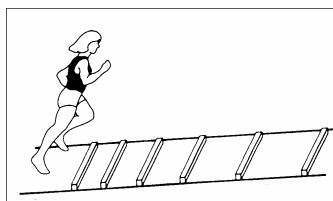
And, while I strongly support the need for centralised policy and consistency, *every area, every group, every place, is an experiment of one*. Each area must develop practices that specifically satisfy the needs of that area ... change is inevitable, and if we don’t change, if we don’t experiment, if we automatically dismiss and refuse to try new ideas ... we’ll get (at best) what we we currently have is that good enough?

**Knowledge (only) accumulates quickly
in
an open mind**

Sample Starts / Hurdles Session for Juniors (1)

1. **WARM-UP:** Jog, Stretch, Drills, Accelerations; Introduce one new stretch each session
— then, Speed and Hurdle Specific Drills (10 mins.)

2. **STARTS:** **Standing Starts** to 20m / 30m ... emphasis on stable “Set” position, with correct knee, foot, arm alignments (3-4; complete recoveries)



- 3-Point Starts** (from standing) ... (2-3; complete recoveries)

Acceleration Ladder (Stick Drill) ... max. efforts to 15 / 20m; alternating lead foot ... extra practice of preferred hurdles start foot position; standing starts; (4-6; complete recoveries)

Whistle, Clap and “Gun” starts.

(15 mins.)

10/40	15/50
Start	Start
.40	.50
.90	1.15
1.50	1.95
2.20	2.90
3.00	4.00
3.90	5.25
- 10 -	- 10 -
- 15 -	- 15 -

3. **Hurdle Drills** ... sneakers on

**100% Right is 100% Right
99% Right is 100% Wrong**

- 3.1 **Command Drills:** A-Skip; Alternating Butt Kicks; Combinations; A & C; B-Skip; A-B-C; A-B-Trail Leg.

- 3.2 **Marching Stepovers** .. start sequence with non-preferred lead leg; why? 6 Hurdles .. Variations

- 3.3 **Single Step-Overs** .. start sequence with non-preferred lead leg; why? 6 Hurdles .. timed comparisons .. preferred / non-preferred lead leg.

- 3.4 **HURDLE COMBINATIONS:** spikes on
6 Marching Step-Overs (non-preferred lead leg, 3 steps b/t) → A-Skip → 6 Single Step-Overs (Max. speed) → A-Skip → 6 Marching Step-Overs (preferred lead leg, 3 steps b/t).

Repeat(s): starting with preferred lead leg. (25 mins.)

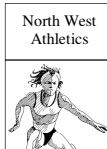
Ensure that drills are applied with equal attention to detail on both sides of the body
When in doubt .. do extra / more on the non-preferred side

4. **STARTS to H1:** the importance of speed to and off H1
3-4 Starts to H1 → finish at 20m; “Gun” starts ... 3-4 repeats; complete recoveries. (10 mins.)
5. **Review / Warm Down** .. incl. variations, e.g. under & overs (10 mins.)

Resources: 2 or 3 x 18 hurdles (assuming 2-3 lanes operating); tape measure; masking tape (sticks); stop watch(es), whistle, gun / caps; video cameras, batteries, cassettes; full water bottle(s); hat; *slip-slop-slap*.

One new stretch / one new drill each session
Do **NOT** prioritise skill/drill progression ahead of skill acquisition

**Only
Plenty of Perfect Practice
Produces
Professional
Performance(s)**



Video taping of athlete efforts (drills, starts, hurdles .. front / side / back)

Times assigned to segments are approximate.

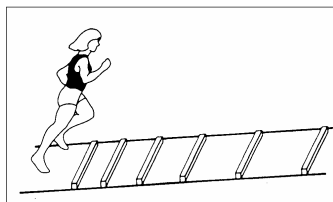
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Sample Starts / Hurdles Session for Juniors (2)

1. **WARM-UP:** Jog, Stretch, Drills, Accelerations; — then, Speed and Hurdle Specific Drills (10 mins.)

Introduce one new stretch each session

2. **STARTS:** **Standing Starts** to 20m / 30m ... emphasis on stable “Set” position, with correct knee, foot, arm alignments (3-4; complete recoveries)



3-Point Starts (from standing) ... (2-3; complete recoveries)

Acceleration Ladder (Stick Drill) ... max. efforts to 15 / 20m; alternating lead foot ... extra practice of preferred hurdles start foot position; standing starts; (4-6; complete recoveries)

Whistle, Clap and “Gun” starts.

(15 mins.)

10/40 15/50

Start	Start
.40	.50
.90	1.15
1.50	1.95
2.20	2.90
3.00	4.00
3.90	5.25

3. **Hurdle Drills** ... sneakers on

3.1 **Command Drills:** A-Skip; Alternating Butt Kicks; Combinations; A & C; B-Skip; A-B-C; A-B-Trail Leg, SLB.

3.2 **Marching Stepovers** .. start sequence with non-preferred lead leg; why? 6 Hurdles .. Variations

3.3 **Single Step-Overs** .. start sequence with non-preferred lead leg; why? 6 Hurdles .. timed comparisons .. preferred / non-preferred lead leg.

- 3.4 **HURDLE COMBINATIONS:** spikes on
6 Marching Step-Overs (non-preferred lead leg, 3 steps b/t) → A-Skip → 6 Single Step-Overs (Max. speed) → A-Skip → 6 Marching Step-Overs (preferred lead leg, 3 steps b/t).

Repeat(s): starting with preferred lead leg. (25 mins.)

Ensure that drills are applied with equal attention to detail on both sides of the body
When in doubt .. do extra / more on the non-preferred side

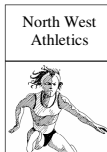
4. **STARTS to H1 – H2 – H3:** the importance of speed to and off H1
2 Starts to H1 → finish at 20m and 30m; “Gun” starts ... complete recoveries;
2 starts to H2
1-2 starts to H3 (20 mins.)

5. **Review / Warm Down** .. incl. variations, e.g. under & overs (10 mins.)

Resources: 2 or 3 x 18 hurdles (assuming 2-3 lanes operating); tape measure; masking tape (sticks); stop watch(es), whistle, gun and caps; video cameras, cassettes; full water bottle(s); hat; *slip-slop-slap*.

One new stretch / one new drill each session
Do **NOT** prioritise skill/drill progression ahead of skill acquisition

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Video taping of athlete efforts (drills, starts, hurdles .. front / side / back)

Times assigned to segments are approximate.

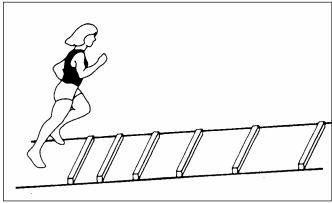
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Sample Starts / Hurdles Session for Intermediates (1)

1. WARM-UP: Jog, Stretch, Drills, Accelerations; — then, .. Hurdle Specific Drills (10 mins.)

Introduce one new stretch each session

2. STARTS: Standing Starts to 20m / 30m ... emphasis on stable “Set” position, with correct knee, foot, arm alignments (2-3; complete recoveries)



3-Point Starts (from standing) ... (3-4; complete recoveries)

Acceleration Ladder (Stick Drill) ... max. efforts to 15 / 20m; alternating lead foot ... extra practice of preferred hurdles start foot position; standing starts; (4-6; complete recoveries) (10 mins.)

10/40	15/50
Start	Start
.40	.50
.90	1.15
1.50	1.95
2.20	2.90
3.00	4.00
3.90	5.25
- 10 -	- 10 -
- 15 -	- 15 -

Whistle, Clap and “Gun” starts.

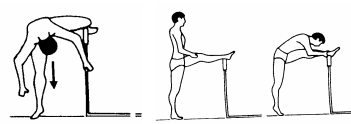
Juniors & Intermediates work together on 1-3; thereafter, Intermediates spend more time on specifics

3. Hurdle Drills ... sneakers on

3.1 Command Drills: A-Skip; Alternating Butt Kicks; Combinations; A & C; B-Skip; A-B-C; A-B-Trail Leg; SLB; SLB-Fast Leg.

3.2 Marching Stepovers .. start sequence with non-preferred lead leg; why? 6 Hurdles .. variations: heights / lead leg

3.3 Single Step-Overs .. start sequence with non-preferred lead leg; why? 6 hurdles .. timed comparisons .. preferred /non-preferred lead leg.



Slo Mo ???
Achievement Certificate available

(15 mins.)

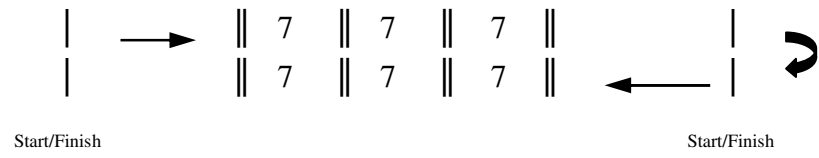
Ensure that drills are applied with equal attention to detail on both sides of the body
When in doubt .. do extra / more on the non-preferred side

4. STARTS to H1 – H2: the importance

2 Starts to H1 → finish at 20m and 30m; “Gun” starts ... complete recoveries;
2 starts to H2

2 x 5 stepping between 4H .. rolling start; walk back recoveries +1-2 mins.

Rolling start ▶ 2-4 x 4H (7m separation) and return .. left leg lead / right leg lead .. Variations



(20-30 mins.)

5. Review / Warm Down .. incl. variations, e.g. unders & overs, hurdle relays, ... (10 mins.)

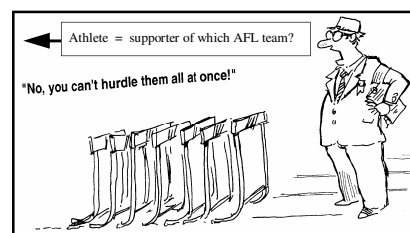
One new stretch / one new drill each session .. do **not** prioritise skill/drill progression ahead of skill acquisition

Sample Hurdles Session for Intermediates (2)

Introduce one new stretch each session, and later, one new drill each session

- 1. WARM-UP:** Jog, Stretch, Drills, Accelerations;
— then, (sneakers) .. Hurdle Specific Drills, incl. Trail Leg Hips Circles, Wall Attack, Slo Mo. (10 mins.)

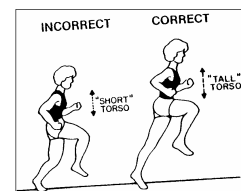
- 2. Hurdle Drill variations** .. Spikes on?
Start with: **Marching Stepovers** .. start sequence with non-preferred lead leg; why? 6 Hurdles: variations: heights / lead leg then, **Single Step-Overs** .. start sequence with non-preferred lead leg; why? 6 hurdles .. timed comparisons .. preferred / non-preferred lead leg.
then, **Laterals** (Anisimova) .. stress balance and co-ordination; develop and maintain a rhythm. (and /or, **Calvesi** and/or **Karate Kid Kicks** .. separate sheets) (15 mins.)



ANISIMOVA DRILL (Russia) Laterals
'A' skip crossing over side of hurdle
Face the side of the hurdle. Lead foot clears back and forth over the edge of the hurdle. Key on the foot. Keep the toe up. Keep body tall

"KARATE KID" KICK DRILL
Karate stance + hop + kick
This drill is designed to rehearse 'tall' hips and ankle strength. Hop holding lead leg up (A or B position). Once this is perfected, step over a hurdle and bring trail leg into an 'A' position.

- 3. Rhythm Runs .. Ins & Outs** (sneakers .. Δ to spikes after 1st rep.)
- 3-5 x 50m .. 3-point starts; w/b +1 min. recovery
(Stress: Relaxation at speed; watch foot strike; posture)
 - Introduce **Ins** and **Outs** (separate sheet) .. 2-4 practice runs off 3-point starts



(20 mins.)

- 4. Strength: athletes MUST have sneakers for Bounds (no exceptions)**

4.1 Bounds: max. of 50 contacts

5 Hurdles: 2 x 5 Pre-Jump; 4 x 5 Explosive; 2 x 5 Pre-Jump

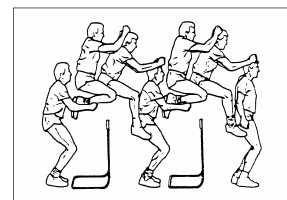
2 x 5 Bound .. *Stick the landing* (Coach commands)

Ensure adequate recovery between sets: a stretch?? (e.g. 1 or 2, below)

4.2 4 x 6 Sand Hops (bare feet)

(work both legs; start with non-preferred side;

i.e. 6 Right ► 6 Left (rest 60-90 seconds, repeat x 4)

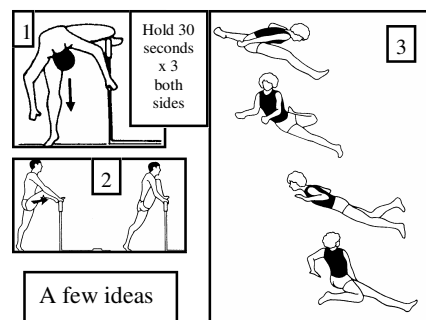


(15 mins.)

- 5. Review / Warm Down**
3 x 70m .. walk-back (in sneakers)
Easy Jog (choice) ... static stretches

How should execution of warm-up and warm down differ? Why?

It is better to have perfect technique at a lower height rather than poor technique at racing height
Brent McFarlane (The Science of Hurdling & Speed)



(12 mins.)

Strategies are (should be) cumulative

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Don't do something once, then discard .. Practice & Refine your skills

Only Plenty of Perfect Practice Produces Perfect Performances

We are what we repeatedly do - work towards making Excellence YOUR habit

Sample Hurdles Session for Intermediates (3)


© NWA, 2001

Introduce one new stretch each session


- 1. WARM-UP:** Jog, Stretch, Drills, Accelerations;
 — then (sneakers) .. **Hurdle Specific Drills**
 incl. Trail Leg Hips Circles, Wall Attack, Slo Mo, A-B-TL (15 mins.)

Start with: **Marching Stepovers** .. start sequence with non-preferred lead leg; why?
 6 Hurdles: variations: heights / lead leg
 then, **Single Step-Overs** .. start sequence with non-preferred lead leg; why?
 then, **Laterals** (Anisimova) .. stress balance and co-ordination; develop and maintain a rhythm.
 (and /or, **Calvesi** and /or **Karate Kid Kicks** .. separate sheets)

ANISIMOVA DRILL (Russia) Laterals
'A' skip crossing over side of hurdle
 Face the side of the hurdle. Lead foot clears back and forth over the edge of the hurdle. Key on the foot. Keep the toe up. Keep body tall



CALVESI DRILL (Italy) 'A' hop over hurdles. Held 'A'.



Lead leg is held in an 'A' position. Athlete hops up to the hurdle with lead leg held up and steps over. The trail leg is also pulled over hurdle into a held 'A' position. Repeat with the other lead leg up to 5-8 hurdles.

- 2. Hurdle Specifics:** take the time to set-up all required resources before the commencement of the session

2.1 4-5 x 3 pt. starts to 25m ... rolling (1), 3 pt. (2) and block starts (2).

2.2 4 x Acceleration Ladder ... different athletes will have different spacings.

2.3 4 x Hurdle Turnarounds: 3-4 hurdles .. 3 steps b/t

▲		12m		7m		7m		12m		▲
Cone										Cone
Start/Finish										Start/Finish

Individual Runs, and Team Competitions

2.4 4 x 5 Stepping between hurdles .. 3 – 4 Hurdles

Hurdle Turnarounds: Down & Back Preferred / Non-Preferred; Down Non-Preferred / Back Preferred; ...

	12m		7m		7m		7m		approx. 10m	
Start										Finish

Walk back recovery +1-2 mins. review

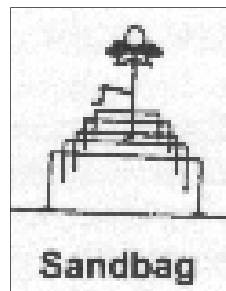
2.5 2 x H4 ... Gun Starts .. 12m run-out; maximum efforts; complete recoveries.

Hurdle spacing varied to ensure fast, snappy strides.

(45 mins.)

- 3. Review / Warm Down**
 3 x 70m .. walk-back (in sneakers)
 Easy Jog (choice) ... static stretches

(15 mins.)



The range of variations, drills, activities is almost endless, but, persist patiently; introduce new challenges gradually.

Today is the Tomorrow YOU created Yesterday