

Speed is the Key

and, efficient movement (not effort) is the key to speed

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100% Right is 100% Right

99% Right is 100% Wrong



Take care .. we learn errors as easily as correct movements ..

and

50 repeats forms a habit

but
it takes

thousands of repeats
to change the habit

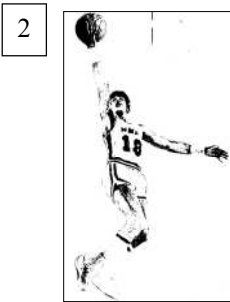
So,
learn correctly right from the start
and **never** compromise technique

"let's start at the very beginning .. a very good place to start" (famous musical advice)



Why Drills?

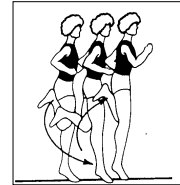
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1. To practice **YOU** being in command of your intentions and reactions.
2. To provide interest, variety, and fun.
3. To improve technique: including rhythm and co-ordination.
4. To improve balance and flexibility (drill both sides of the body to equal efficiency).
5. To improve strength and power through ranges of motion specific to your sport(s).

*Self-esteem is developed through confronting challenges ...
and, developing skills to achieve positive outcomes*

6. To focus on and understand aspects of your event; drills are the key to technique improvement and refinement; the establishment of the correct *dynamic stereotype*.
7. To expand your confidence in your potential as an athlete and as a person.



Muscle Memory and Skill Acquisition

When we learn a skill, it requires **repeated** and **continuous practice** before it becomes **“automatic”**.

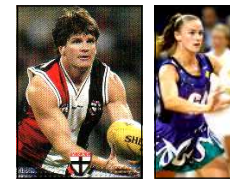
An **automatic skill** is a movement we can do without thought.

Walking is the obvious example. From our early years repeated practice day in, day out, result in our arms and legs eventually co-ordinating into an efficient walking action.

Think about the almost countless arm movement variations you can perform while walking.

Simply: your muscles develop a (correct) *“muscle memory of walking”*. Your (mind and) body is free to focus on other tasks, and, develop a muscle memory of those tasks.

Like walking, running / sprinting / hurdling (examples) are acquired skills that can become automatic when our body develops a *“muscle memory of running / sprinting / hurdling”*. This takes time and is **strongly dependent** on **regular**, ever-improving practice.



“We are what we repeatedly do ... excellence can become a habit”

Learning new skills is FUN !!

But, “Fun” is NOT just allowing young people to do what they like; as coaches—teachers, our responsibility is to provide leadership

- **Think** about your sport .. each sport reflects the sum of a series of movements; each movement can form the basis of a drill. Drills enhance movement skills: speed, co-ordination, confidence and self-esteem .. as such they offer opportunities to contribute to improved performance in **ALL** sports.
- The range of drills is almost endless, but pure fun; variety and enjoyment aside, drills should be specific to the movements you wish to enhance. There are **basic drills**, and a multitude of **sports-specific drills**.
- **Drills** should be **precisely planned** and **perfectly executed** .. **repeatedly**. You have to demand precision, but also apply persistence.
- We learn incorrect responses as easily as correct movements. **NEVER-NEVER** practice errors. **Do not compromise on quality** .. aim on **every** occasion aim to practice a drill perfectly.
- While in many instances walking through a drill is a good basic starting point (i.e. teaching the mind and body what is expected), some drills are easier to do at a moderate tempo, e.g. many athletes find A-Skip easier to accomplish than A-Walk.
- Athletes should be encouraged to **“feel” the movement**, and associate the correct feeling with the correct movement. Remember, the athlete can *“feel”* the movement .. the coach can only see. But, the coach by providing positive, corrective feedback, can assist the athlete to refine his/her feelings.
- Where appropriate, slow the movement down ... execute with eyes closed ... seek to feel what is right ... learn to read your body.
- **An eye-ful is better than a mouthful** .. demonstrations linked to trial execution linked to immediate Feedback (e.g. video/DVD) is the most effective teaching/learning strategy we have. What the athlete sees, he/she can/will refine.
- **End** each training unit with a **successful outcome**, e.g. a perfect drill performance, and, (if appropriate) include the drill into the complete movement pattern to demonstrate your mastery and appreciation of its role in the skill you are refining.
- *You can't put in what God left out* (Chariots of Fire), but **drills** offer us an opportunity to refine and expand our skills, and, accumulate self-esteem ... don't miss the opportunity.

(Not every athlete can be the fastest .. but, all can refine their skills: We can't all be winners, but, we can all be champions.)

Standard Strategies

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A **few** ideas / strategies that should be considered in the presentation of your coaching session(s).

You will have your own “*coaching philosophy*”; you may make personal modifications; but, keep in mind:
everything you do,
everything you say,
will be dinner table conversation in each athlete’s home over the next few days.

Your perception of your performance as a coach or teacher is sometimes the least important consideration.

In each session

- **Speak / demonstrate clearly and confidently.** Athletes are seeking and appreciate leadership.
- Keep your approach **simple** and **consistent**. (Don’t complicate things; simplicity facilitates success; demand attention, (*Looking and Listening*), and do not proceed without it; praise endeavour; show confidence in the ability of athletes to achieve the standards you set.)
- **Review Skills** from the previous session; 10-20% of time allocated should be associated with this purpose. Do **not** prioritise “skill extension” ahead of “skill acquisition”.
- **Continually** and **consistently** reinforce expectations: equipment, punctuality; **do not compromise** standards.
- **Be prepared** .. *Why are we doing this?* Relate activities (drills) to the outcomes you are seeking to achieve.
- **Always** outline (in advance) to the athletes “*what’s in it (the session / the drill) for them*”; use incentives and rewards, e.g. cards, certificates, praise at some stage to **every** athlete, but, be sure to **expect the best they can offer** (*no more ... no less ... no excuses*).
- Positive, corrective feedback should prevail. Athletes should walk away from **every** session confident they have enhanced their knowledge and/or skills.
- **Be in control at all times**; e.g. allowing athletes to make decisions is just another way of you being in control. Keep the session moving .. a **minimum** of talk (demonstrate, explain .. but on a needs basis). But remember, do not need 4 years of tertiary training to let kids do what they like ... parents are watching; be accountable (a term often used but less understood).
- Don’t be distracted.
- Have a **theme** for each session: e.g. **100% Right is 100% Right .. 99% Right is 100% Wrong; Good is not enough, where better is possible; Be Your Best: No More; No less; No Excuses; You can never be better than you best; It takes more courage to try than to win.**
- **Use care and common sense**, but, don’t be afraid to challenge the athletes. Young people love to acquire new skills and have those skills recognised; they enjoy being able to do things others cannot do.
- **Do something positive and personal for every athlete, every session**; e.g. praise; technique evaluation; special attention; a comment / a joke; personal comments to the athlete in view of the parent; have the athlete demonstrate to the group, lead a drill, or answer (correctly) a question(s).



There are many other issues and strategies; **every athlete is an experiment of one**; you will constantly add to your strategies ... it’s called, **experience** (you can’t buy it, only acquire it).

But, keep in mind that **teaching is fundamentally a simple process**:
YOU take a group of students / athletes into a classroom / on to a track;
show them, explain to them how to do something;

Knowledge (only) accumulates quickly in an open mind

An Eyeful is better than a Mouthful

organise skill acquisition opportunities, providing appropriate feedback;
then, let them have a series of attempts; see how they perform;
reinforce, refine, replicate **the learning process NEVER ends!**

The sequence of learning to move efficiently

Most (team) sports involve open skills .. the participant is subject to unexpected occurrences; e.g. a mis-directed or “surprise” pass; an intrusion into “their” space by an opponent; action required on the non-preferred side of their body, **Note:** “athlete” refers to all sports participants

In order to develop the athlete’s capacity to deal with the unexpected, fundamental movement capacities must be developed and refined .. once refined, the athlete can progress on and apply those skills in their chosen area of skill.

Coaches will welcome co-ordinated athletes, allowing them to focus on specific skills.

50 repeats forms a habit, but it takes **thousands of carefully executed repeats to change that habit**; and, because bad habits are learnt as easily as correct procedures, great care and attention to detail is required when leading young athletes.

Correct procedures **MUST** be taught precisely, right from the start, if the athlete’s potential is to be accessed and maximised ... the term “development coach” is more appropriate than “junior” coach.

There is no minimum age before which skills should not and cannot introduced, developed and enhanced .. it takes creative coaching, an appreciation of what is appropriate (coaching-teaching experience), and persistent pursuit of excellence in a varied, fun environment that recognizes and rewards skill acquisition and endeavour.

(However, there is an age or time at which it is very, very difficult to produce fundamental changes to behaviour .. once formed, habits are very, very difficult to change. For example, I can teach almost any 5-6 year-old swimmer to tumble turn in 5-10 minutes; some adults may never learn.)

More co-ordinated, faster, and more confident (*confidence comes from enhanced self-esteem*), they are then ready to move on into their chosen sporting interest, and/or explore a range of interests.

Coaching fundamental skills is not more difficult than leading the elite .. but, it is different, and requires specialised skills.

Athletes who have developed a skill acquisition mind-set have areas to derive satisfaction when competition outcomes are less than what was hoped for. Early maturation often produces “easy” success, and a “don’t need to develop skills” attitude ... when growth ceases, declining competitive status can lead to frustration and drop out .. is the best position for the young athlete to finish an improving 2nd, or 3rd, or 4th?

An **essential** aspect of coaching / helping young athletes is to have a structured program that recognizes (rewards) individual endeavour and individual progression: see: www.nwaswimaths.com ► PROGRAMS ► “Standard Strategies”

Bottom Line:

If you want to prepare youngsters for the best sporting outcomes of which they are capable, invest some of their early experiences in a fundamental drills and movement skills program.

Basic Drills

Some drills are fundamental and can be viewed as the foundation for further speed and co-ordination refinement; e.g.

- A-Walk ► A-Skip (► A-Run)
- Ankling
- Butt Kicks: Right—Left—Alternating
- Fast Claw
- Seated Arm Drill
- Running-the-Boards
- Fast Leg: Right—Left—Alternating
- Combinations: Fast Leg►Butt Kick .. Alternating
- Starts: 3 point starts
- Karioka

The list goes on and on .. there are hundreds of movement skills with which to challenge the skills and capacities of youngsters. They will not all learn at the same rate, but, with patience, precision and support, **they will all learn.**

Most (>99%) of young athletes will never run at elite fast levels, but **all can drill well, enhance their self-esteem**, and gain a greater appreciation of elite achievers.

In over 40 years teaching-coaching I have seen very few young athletes reach elite junior or adult performance levels, but, I have never seen a youngster who could not enhance their drill skills.

My CV: www.nwaswimaths.com .. RESOURCES

Several DVD programs can provide demonstrations of the drills by young athletes; motivational and skill tags are also shown in this document, and on the NWA web site in PRESENTATIONS and PROGRAMS

Trying hard requires more courage than winning

Sample laminated tags to recognize endeavour and skill acquisition



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Seated Arm Drill

- Sit tall; knees together;
- Preserve a 90° arm angle;
- Arm swing should not cross centre line of the body;
- Gradually increase tempo to maximum for 5-6 seconds.

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IMPROVEMENT AWARD

Well Done

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Tags are business card size, laminated and can collected or display on equipment bags

Speed is the Key .. Introduction to Basic Drills

(All athletes need Speed)



These guidelines should be viewed in conjunction with the DVD:

1. Drills for Speed (Speed is the Key) and/or
2. Intro to Hurdle Drills

The DVD's are on loan, and can be retained for five (5) weeks; after that time they should be returned:

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How to use the videos effectively:

1. **Drills can be done informally**; i.e. you can do them any time, anywhere.
2. I suggest 2-4 sessions a week; 10-15 minutes a session .. that's not much to ask, and a regular effort produces significant changes and improvements. Also, one training session a week is plenty (usually one hour).
3. **Focus** on learning one new drill each session .. don't rush, don't be impatient; the video will show you examples of young athletes doing some of the drills; watch and learn.
4. The best coach of **you** is **YOU** .. watch / learn / practice **patiently** / practice **perfectly**; little things are important .. the aim is to establish and develop good habits right from the start .. **we are what we repeatedly do**
5. The **aim** is to help you develop your capacity to move efficiently .. *not to make you the fastest, but, to make you faster.*
6. A drill is part of a movement (running/moving faster) .. we practice the parts, then, put them all together to move/run better.
7. You will be given a small card to recognise your increasing mastery of the drills; collect the cards and keep them in your folder or attach them to your training bag. Sample cards from the Speed is the Key program are shown.



Learning
New
Skills
is
Fun



Learning New Skills is Fun ... and,

you are learning skills that others will not be able to perform, unless they practice.

A Starting Point: Each DVD has three (3) programs .. new drills are introduced and also revised; watch a few minutes at a time, 2-3 times a week; learn the drills patiently .. do not progress to the next drill (e.g. 1.2) until you have mastered the elements of the previous drill (1.1). You will be tested regularly on the drills and cards awarded when you have shown that your execution is of a high standard.

The recommended sequence (order) may be different from that shown on the video(s); but, all key drills are shown.

For example:

Session 1: A-Skip: *Toe Up—Heel Up—Knee Up* (Card 1)

4-6 x 10m .. 8-10 A-Skips on each leg

Alternating Butt Kick (Card 2)

4-6 x 10m .. 8-10 *snaps* (heel to buttocks) on each side

Slow forward progress—fast snaps; TALL; active foot landing **just** beyond the support foot.

Session 2: Revise A-Skip and Alternating Butt Kicks

Ankling ... 3-4 x 5m .. fast; step over the opposite ankle

Fast Leg ... alternating: *Tall—Toes dorsiflexed—active arms*

knee lift until thigh parallel with ground

Jog►FL►Jog►FL►Jog►FL ...

3-4 x 20m .. 4-6 fast leg on each side

What does *dorsiflexed* mean?

Session 3:

Revise A-Skip, Alt. Butt Kicks, Ankling, Alt. Fast Leg

Fast Claw: you will need a coach to call the claws; 3 x 5 each leg .. wait for the call; claw **fast** .. note cues on the card.



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1

Improving my A-Skip

“Toe Up — Heel Up — Knee Up”

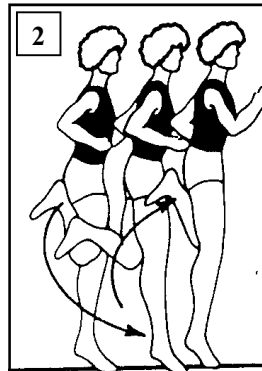
“Step over the support leg knee”

Arms: approx 90°; hand back to hip

“Tall” .. be the tallest you can be

Lots of perfect practice .. 10L / 10R

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Butt Kicks

- **Right** Fast “snaps”; slow forward progress

- **Left**

- **Alternating**

Reminders

Tall - Toes dorsiflexed - active arms - snap heel to buttocks

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Fast Claw

Maximum of 6-8 calls (repeats)

“Preparation” = Tall — active knee to thigh parallel with ground - toes dorsiflexed - “claw” to ground beneath hips - lift heel of active leg to buttock - fast recovery back to “preparation” position - wait for support leg - upright - heel lift. Commands by 3rd party.

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Each young athlete who continues the program will be videoed so that he/she can see their execution, and, coach themselves to make improvements.

Remember

it takes more courage to try than to win

Speed is the Key: Basic Speed Drills (1)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Junior - Intermediate - Senior

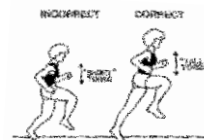


A few "Drills for Speed" ... How do you rate?

	Rating				
1. A - SKIP	5	4	3	2	1
2. FAST CLAW	5	4	3	2	1
3. BUTT KICKS (Left)	5	4	3	2	1
4. BUTT KICKS (Right)	5	4	3	2	1
5. Alternating BUTT KICKS	5	4	3	2	1

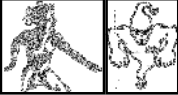
Ratings:

- 5 = Excellent; "lookin' good" .. "real good".
- 4 = Very Good; minor improvements in technique / tempo possible.
- 3 = Good; some fundamental technique / tempo elements need attention.
- 2 = Fair; improvement evident; more practice recommended.
- 1 = Early days; practice regularly, the improvement will come.



There are **many** more certificates and tags available.

(Only) Plenty of Perfect Practice Produces Permanent Perfect Performances



Look and Learn

An eyeful is better than a mouthful

A great deal can be achieved in 10-15 minutes / 2-3 times a week.

In a **very** short time (with regular practice) you will develop sound skills with basic movement drills: (and, **improved co-ordination, movement and speed skills carry over into all sports**).

- A-Skip
- Butt Kicks .. Right; Left; Alternating
- Fast Claw
- Fast Leg .. Right; Left; Alternating
- Double A's
- Combinations (Fast Leg – Butt Kick .. Alternating)

Watch the video; don't be impatient .. **Never Give Up**.

(Critical Cue for A-Skip: "Toe Up" - "Heel Up" - "Knee Up" - Step over the support leg knee".)

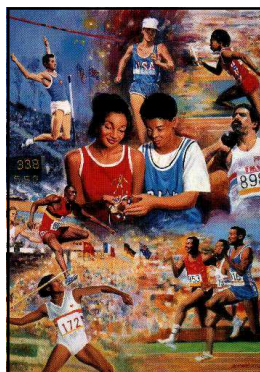
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Drills ► enhanced movement skills, and help keep you fit & trim

A great deal can be achieved by practicing drills regularly .. 15-20 minutes .. do drills in every warm-up in every sport ... gradually, but certainly, YOU will improve.



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Drills & Skills

(Phase 1)
Well Done !!

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Winners Win (today)

but

Skills

are

forever

Flexibility is important; *every athlete is an experiment of one*; learn the stretches that assist you to be more flexible, i.e. apply your power (safely) over its maximum range.

In general, **warm-ups** should have an increasingly **dynamic** aspect, but, young bodies should also seek the benefits of enhanced flexibility.

After a w/u: you compete or train

After a w/d: you go home

What is the message?

7

(Some) **Debbie Flintoff-King Stretches**

Don't over-stretch; hold each stretch for **at least** thirty (30) seconds



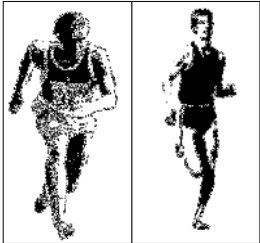
Debbie Flintoff-King (AUS)
Olympic Champion, 1988
W400H: 53.17

1. **Frog Stretch:** (for the groin) Kneel; knees wide apart; toes in and touching at the back; from sitting on heels, lean forward; arms outstretched.
2. **Thigh Stretch:** Kneel; back to the wall; place your knee against the wall; position your foot outside your buttocks so you can press back with your bottom into the wall. The opposing leg balances; repeat on both sides.
3. **Kneeling Twist:** (for the groin and lower back) Kneel on your right knee; bring your left knee out in front of you; extend your right shoulder over your left knee, pushing your palm to the ground.
4. **Sitting Forward Bend / Modified Hurdle Sit** (Hamstrings) Sit with legs outstretched; bend your right knee, the sole of the foot pulled into the groin. Using both hands, grip your left knee, ankle or foot (wherever you feel the stretch is enough). Repeat on both sides.
5. **Lying Forward Stretch (Bent Knee)** Sit, bending your right knee at 45°, extending your left leg straight back behind you. Lean forward stretching your arms in front of you. Keep your right buttock on the floor. Both sides.
6. **Dog Stretch:** Standing, feet shoulder width apart, with toes slightly turned in. Walk your hands away from your body, fingers pointed straight ahead. Head hangs loose; push your heels to the ground (hold); at the same time keep your buttocks high.
7. **Tricinasna:** (for the back) Best done against a wall. with feet apart (1m+), run your left foot along the skirting board (2cm out from the wall). Right heel back, toes pointed slightly inwards. Keep your legs straight; extend your left arm down; try to keep your shoulders back. Right arm raised above your head. Look up.
8. **Simple Twist:** Sit down cross-legged. Take your right leg over your left knee. Take your left shoulder inside your right knee, and hold on to your right foot. Turn, and look over your right shoulder.
9. **One Leg Over / Under** Sit down cross legged; take your left leg and bend it over the top of your right knee. Keep your butt on the floor; do not sit on your heels. Aim to get your knees on top of one another; lean / reach forward (chest to top of thigh) until you feel a stretch; hold, then repeat with alternate knee on top.



**These are not the only stretches ... an excellent series
.. select, apply and practice your own event-specific stretches.**

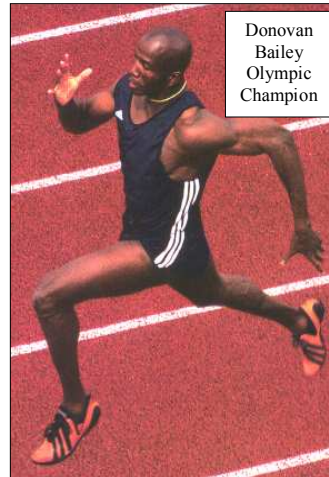
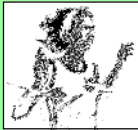
Coaches: beware too much static activity .. some, OK - functional, "yes" .. but youngsters are seeking activity; *the only wrong activity may be no activity.* So incorporate stretches incidentally, regularly, creatively.



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***Tough times
don't last;
Tough people
do !***



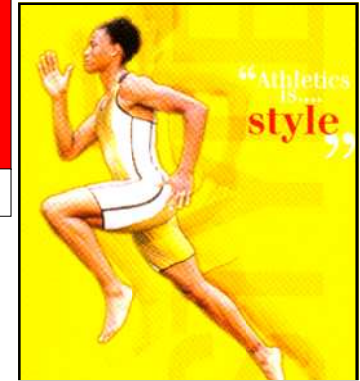
Donovan
Bailey
Olympic
Champion

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**Choose any / all
Many more
available**



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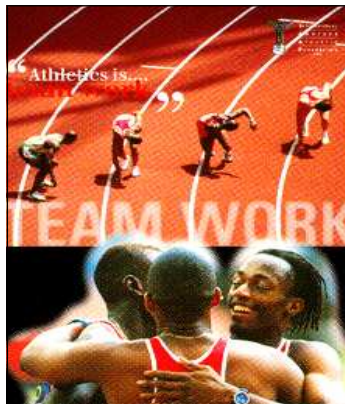
**You'll
never
rise higher
than
your
dreams**



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Relays
Working Together
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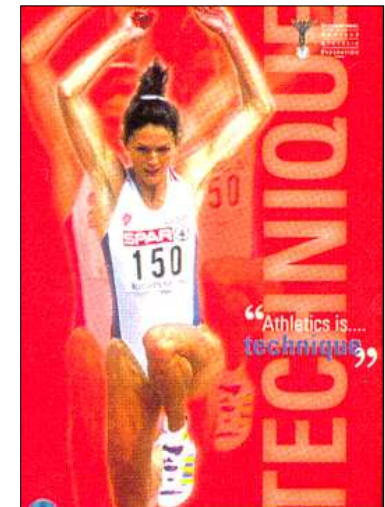
**The only
performance
over which
YOU
have control,
is
your
performance**

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***The only time
you can't
afford to fail,
is
the last time
you try.***

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A Few Tags
 Use (sparingly) to reward skills and endeavour



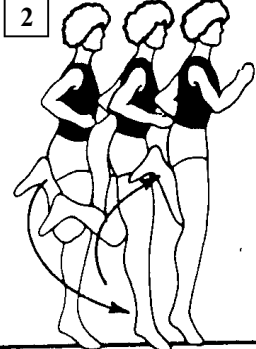
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Improving my A-Skip
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1 Improving my A-Skip
 "Toe Up — Heel Up — Knee Up"
 "Step over the support leg knee"
 Arms: approx 90°; hand back to hip
 "Tall" .. be the tallest you can be
 Lots of perfect practice .. 10L / 10R
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Improving my A-Skip
 "Toe Up — Heel Up — Knee Up"
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 Lots of perfect practice: 10L / 10R
Improvement is my aim
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2 Butt Kicks
 - Right Fast "snaps"; slow forward progress
 - Left
 - Alternating
 Reminders
 Tall—Toes dorsiflexed—active arms—snap heel to buttocks
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Fast Leg
 - Right Active foot should land just beyond support foot
 - Left
 - Alternating
 Reminders
 Tall—Toes dorsiflexed—active arms knee lift until thigh parallel with ground
 Jog►FL►Jog►FL►Jog►FL ...
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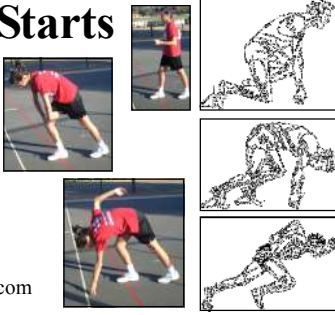


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Fast Claw
 Maximum of 6-8 calls (repeats)
 "Preparation" = Tall—active knee to thigh parallel with ground - toes dorsiflexed - "claw" to ground beneath hips - lift heel of active leg to buttock - fast recovery back to "preparation" position - wait for command. Straight support leg - upright - heel lift. Commands by 3rd party.
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Starts

- ▶ Standing
- ▶ Falling
- ▶ Hop
- ▶ 3-Point >>>>
- ▶ Bow-Touch-Go
- ▶ Reaction
- ▶ 4-Point



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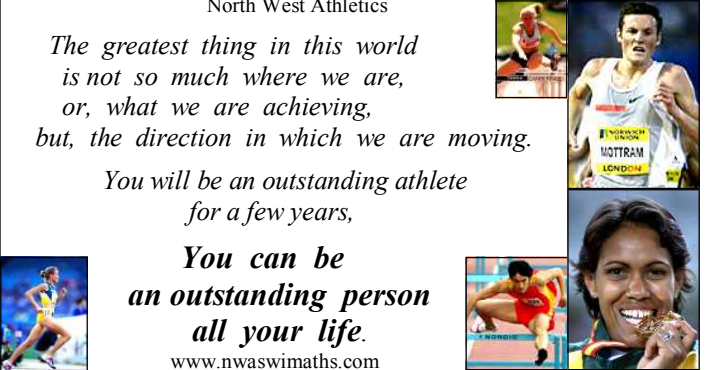
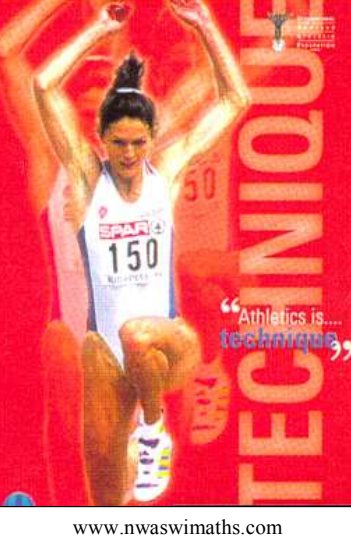
North West Athletics

The greatest thing in this world is not so much where we are, or, what we are achieving, but, the direction in which we are moving.

You will be an outstanding athlete for a few years,

You can be an outstanding person all your life.

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TECHNIQUE
 "Athletics is... technique"
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"Win with a grin, Lose with a smile."



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A
few
more
tags



North West Athletics
*Only
Plenty of
Perfect
Practice
Produces
Professional
Performances*
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Performance
is
today's
achievement
SKILLS
are
forever

*We can't all be winners
but
We can all be
CHAMPIONS*

*No one can ever make
you feel inferior ..
without your
consent*

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*The thrill is not
just winning,
but,
having the courage
to join the race*

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**Athletics
is
Lookin'
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YOU can be**
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Movement Skills: The A, B, C of Faster Movement

(more efficient)

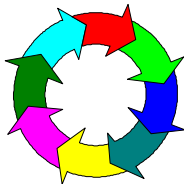


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*A great
pleasure
in life*

*is doing
what
people
say
you
cannot
do*



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In General
10 Week Program

Drills & Skills Evaluation .. 1

Why Drills?

- To practice **YOU** being in command of your intentions and reactions;
- To improve your technique, incl. rhythm and co-ordination;
- To provide variety;
- To improve balance and flexibility (drill both sides of the body to equal efficiency);
- To improve strength and power with **movements specific to your event interest(s)**;
- To learn new skills in a **fun** way;
- To focus (concentrate) on aspects of movement / technique that need to be improved ... drills are the key to correction and refinement.

Name: _____ Date(s): _____

	Drill / Skill	Rating				
Test One	1. "A" Skip	5	4	3	2	1
	2. Alternating Butt Kicks	5	4	3	2	1
	3. Ankling	5	4	3	2	1
	4. Alternating Fast Leg	5	4	3	2	1
	5. Fast Claw .. Left Leg	5	4	3	2	1
	6. Fast Claw .. Right Leg	5	4	3	2	1
Test Two	7. Combinations (Fast Leg ► Butt Kick)	5	4	3	2	1
	8. Straight Leg Bounding	5	4	3	2	1
	9. Alt. Str. Leg Bounding ► Fast Leg	5	4	3	2	1
	10. Double "A" / Triple "A"	5	4	3	2	1
Test Three	11. Seated Arm Drill	5	4	3	2	1
	12. "B" Skip	5	4	3	2	1
	13. Karioka	5	4	3	2	1
	14. Running the Boards	5	4	3	2	1
	15. Coach Command Drills	5	4	3	2	1
Starts	Standing	5	4	3	2	1
	Falling	5	4	3	2	1
	3 Point	5	4	3	2	1
	Acceleration Ladder	5	4	3	2	1

Ratings: 5 = Excellent; "lookin' good" .. "real good".
 4 = Very Good; minor improvements in technique - tempo recommended.
 3 = Good; some fundamental technique - tempo elements need attention.
 2 = Fair; improvement evident, but more practice recommended.
 1 = Early days; practice regularly, the improvement will come.

Ratings should be considered and appreciated in relation to the *training age* and experience of the athletes ... a great deal can be achieved with brief **regular** practices.

Only
Plenty of Perfect Practice Produces Permanent Perfect Performance(s)