

BASICS OF HURDLING
DON LARSON: MENS TRACK & FIELD COACH
NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Hurdle races are sprints and good hurdling technique is essential. Many hurdlers have one or the other, we would like to develop both.
- B. Flexibility and strength are a key, being a good hurdler requires both. The advantage here is that both of these factors are highly improvable.
- C. Rhythm and coordination add to the total package. A few simple drills and a little imagination can go a long way.

II. HURDLING TECHNIQUE

- A. Lead Leg
 1. Lead with the knee, not the foot.
 2. Some flexion in the knee on hurdle clearance.
 3. Left leg lead if possible - tremendous advantage for intermediate hurdling.
- B. Trail Leg
 1. The trail leg should be brought through high, fast, and generally flat, with the toes elevated.
 2. The hip continues to rotate as the knee is pulled through, causing the athlete to "step out" toward the next hurdle. Need to stress speed to prevent overstriding off the hurdle.
- C. Arm Action
 1. Lead Arm: When the trail leg starts to come through, the lead arm returns to the correct sprinting action as soon as possible. There is no need to reach for the toe, this causes twisting. Should attempt to keep the arms as close to normal sprinting form as possible. A flailing arm will cause balance problems.
 2. Trail Arm: The trail arm should be kept relaxed and as close to the body as possible and just ahead of the hip.
 3. Between the hurdles: The action should be vigorous. Be a sprinter! Fast arms will help stride pattern. Get arms back into sprinting action as soon as possible after clearing the hurdle.
 4. Shoulders and hips: The shoulders and hips should always be square to the hurdle and forward, not twisted or dipped one way or the other.
 5. Head and Eyes: Attempt to keep the head stationary with the eyes focused up and toward the next hurdle.
- D. Run tall - hurdles are an exaggerated sprint race.

NOTE: Aggressiveness is a good characteristic of the hurdler. We emphasize attacking the hurdle, and that means hurdle #1 through the finish.

III. DEVELOPING TECHNIQUE

- A. Hurdle Practice Warm-up
 - Hurdle Rolls
 - Roll Backs
 - BU
 - A's and C's
 - BU
 - Iron Cross
 - Scorpion
 - BU
 - Leg Swings
 - Seated Leg Raises
 - Fire Hydrant
 - BU
 - Standing Quad
 - Nose/Navel
 - BU
 - Calf Stretch
 - BU
- B. Additional Flexibility
 1. Lead and trail leg
 2. Wall drills
 3. Partner Drill

C. Motion Drills

1. Simple skip -- with arm action -- lead leg extension
2. Hurdle walk overs
3. Pull overs

D. Single Leg Drills

1. Easy stride -- 1) Lead Leg, 2) Trail Leg, 3) Full Hurdles. Hurdles are placed at a distance that allows for an easy stride, (add 3-5') rather than short choppy steps that straighten the body angle. (Use 3 or more hurdles.)
2. 1 step -- 1) Lead Leg, 2) Trail Leg, 3) Full Hurdles. Hurdles are placed 6-10' apart for the trail leg, 10-14' for the lead leg drill. Correction of a lazy trail leg, leading with the knee, speed, and rhythm are all a part of these drills.
3. 3 step -- 1) Lead Leg, 2) Trail Leg, 3) Full Hurdles. Hurdles are placed slightly less than normal distance apart. This will enable the athlete to take the normal three steps between the hurdles. The emphasis is on speed-quickness.

E. Full Hurdle - Specific Training

1. Development stride pattern - first hurdle
Practice starts
2. Develop stride pattern - between hurdles
Short Space Drill
Shorter Hurdle
Both
3. Compete in practice

IV. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- A. Use more than one hurdle during drill 3 or more depending on drill.
- B. Try to do hurdle workout/drills before conditioning. Hard to develop stride pattern.
- C. After development of basic hurdle technique gear most of the work towards race speed drills.

NOTES:



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