

# Succeeding in the Hurdles

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Sprinting through the barriers...



# Mental Keys to Hurdling

- Concentration -most errors are not due to physical inability, but lack of focus!
  - Focus on every hurdle then worry about the next one - don't get ahead of yourself
  - Be aggressive - ATTACK
  - Don't worry about looking pretty - you are going to war!
  - Don't dwell on hitting hurdles - look ahead!
  - The way you train is the way you'll compete
  - Hurdling is a sprinting event with 10 obstacles
  - Falling is an occupational hazard of hurdling - contact sport
  - 300ih: cannot fear pain

You hear....  
You Forget;

You see.....  
You remember;

You do....  
You understand!!!



# Training Suggestions

- Start with low hurdles and shortened distance to teach sprint mechanics from the beginning. No 1-2-3 bounding!
- Arms and legs work as one system to keep body balanced. Newton's Law of equal and opposite reactions
- Hurdle with both legs early to avoid injuries. 300 hurdlers must be able to do both.
- Turn runners on 4x100 and jumpers often make good high hurdlers and vice versa - rhythm
- Must run speed endurance work at LEAST once a week
- Increase flat speed:  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the steps in your race are not over the hurdles
- 300ih: down and back flights: down with one leg, back with the other; flights of drills 4-stepping to practice both legs

# Training the 300m Hurdles

No one can sprint the whole way, so practicing stride pattern is critical

MUST know how to hurdle with both legs

Do not refer to "strong/good" leg and "weak/bad" leg

Anywhere from 13 to 19 steps in between hurdles,  
fewer is not always better

Must be smooth and maintain turnover - you may run faster taking more steps rather than fewer

# 300m Hurdles

Get in very good running shape (e.g. 400m/800m training) as the one who slows down the least has better chance of winning

Sprint through the hurdles rather than jumping over  
If you have trouble with stutter steps, count strides between hurdles until you learn rhythm



# Start to 1st Hurdle

- Same as sprinter until 5th - 6th step - stay low
- Don't look at the hurdle - look past it.
- 8 steps to first hurdle is ideal, sets rhythm
- Be the next to last one down into blocks
- Lead leg in back block
- Big split with the arms
- Commit to it!
- Intermediate hurdlers should be able to start with both legs





# Lead of Men vs Women

- Women's hurdles are proportionally lower in relation to their height
- Less lean is needed, women stay fairly upright and lead leg remains bent in order to snap off the hurdle
- "Sprint" over the hurdles with little variation in technique
- Men's hurdles are proportionally higher
  - More lean is needed and lead leg is more extended, although not straight.
  - Men will lead with the head into the hurdle more than women.



- If you are too high over the hurdle, you took off too close to the hurdle or swung the leg up instead of driving with the knee. Can't run in the air.
- Too much height also caused by slowing down before the hurdle, or being too close.
- Drive the knee THEN the foot over the black rectangle on the hurdle - no swinging the leg.
- Lead arm does not cross the body or reach too far in front - look at your wrist watch.
- “Knee drive”
- “Punch the elbow back”



# Trail Leg

- Knee up, toe up
- If lead knee drives properly, trail leg will be fully extended from the ground
- “Knee into armpit” - NOT parallel
- Keep trail leg tight all the through - no hooking
- Tall knee into sprinting position off the hurdle
- Trail arm must be active - punch through without pausing!



# Running Drills

- Running drills aren't just to warm up: teach rhythm and proper sprinting position, develop speed
- Knees up, toes up - pointing toes = shin splints
- Work both legs
- Drill with a purpose
- Examples: A skips, B skips, ABC skips, fast leg with bounds
  - Knees up, toes up
  - Hip flexor walks & hip flexor raises
  - Doggies
  - Flexibility

# Hurdling Rhythm

- Snap down off the hurdle to return to sprinting as quickly as possible
- Legs move as fast as arms do
- Runs over hurdles 1-2-4
- Sprint over baby hurdles
- For athletes that have trouble 3-stepping, move hurdles in enough to sprint correctly
  - Build confidence
  - Avoid harmful bounding
  - Cannot 3-step unless you practice it often
  - Gradually move hurdles out as rhythm becomes a habit
  - “Tap your feet”

# Hurdle finishing

- Need to be in 200m shape
- Need to be fit to handle multiple rounds - hurdle endurance with 10 to 12 hurdles
- Keep focus over all 10 hurdles
- Sprint off the last hurdle and lean





# 300m Hurdle Finishing

Fast touch-downs: 9 accelerations and 9 small races within one race

In high hurdles, most mistakes are due to lack of focus while in intermediate hurdles most mistakes are due to lack of conditioning

Late in the race arm control becomes important: arms dictate your time in the air

Overall, hurdling technique is not as important for IH as for the 100/110's so don't sacrifice conditioning for hurdle drills

# All-Time Great: Edwin Moses

*"I used to have tears in my eyes on the way to practice because I was so focused... I think that's one trait a lot of athletes diverge from these days...I let absolutely nothing get in the way of my goal..."*

"I had to force myself to be tough. If you're at the end of your day and you're down to the last couple of runs, the overwhelming desire for your body is to not want to do anything... You start that last run and say 'I know this is really going to hurt'. Those are the only ones that really count."





# For more information about CSU:

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