

# *Why Drills ?*

## **Motivating – Rewarding Young Athletes**

Program presented by

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***No one can ever make  
you feel inferior ..***

***without  
your  
consent***

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Many (most) young people will never  
be the fastest .. the best .. a winner

**But, while we can't all be winners,  
We can all be champions.**



**From my experience**, while the vast majority of young athletes will not reach “elite” performance levels .. **ALL** can drill efficiently, and, enjoy the self-esteem that skill acquisition offers.

Sure, some will take longer than others, but:

Only

***Patience***  
***Practice .. Perfect Practice***  
***Produces***  
***Professional Performance***



## Why Drills ?

1. To practice **YOU** being in command of your intentions and reactions



## Why Drills ?

2. To stimulate interest, variety and fun.



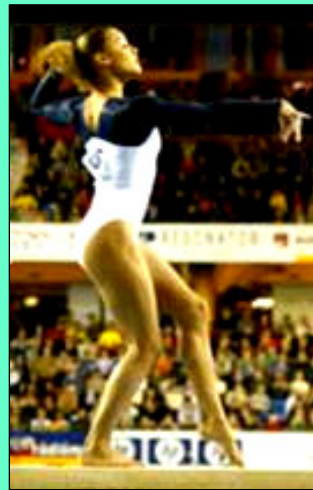
## Why Drills ?

3. To improve technique: including rhythm and co-ordination.



## Why Drills ?

4. To improve balance and flexibility  
(drill both sides of the body to equal efficiency)



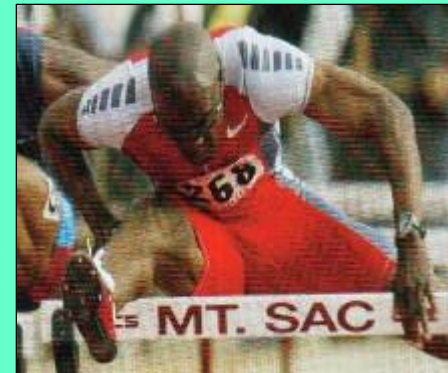
## Why Drills ?

5. To improve strength and power through ranges of motion specific to your sport(s).



## Why Drills ?

6. To focus on and understand aspects of your event; drills are the key to technique improvement and refinement; the establishment of a **correct** *dynamic stereotype*.

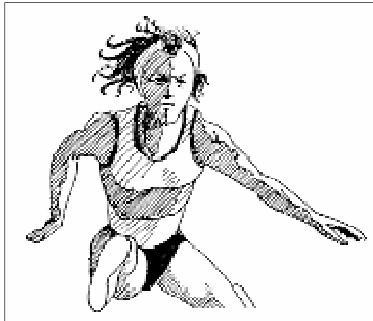


- Identifying errors is relatively easy;
- Strategies to correct movements ..... not so easy (establishing a correct dynamic stereotype)

- **Drills can help**



A sample skills certificate



*North West Athletics: Speed is the Key*

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# *Hurdle Drills: SLO MO*

Intermediate / Senior

(Trail Leg)

## *Ratings*

### *Left Right*

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

*Russell Parsons / Noel Dillon*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**It is important to reward (acknowledge) skill progression**

A sample skills certificate

## Freestyle

Fingers ► Wrist  
► Elbow ► Shoulder  
No splash entry  
Long Strokes  
“High” Elbow  
throughout the stroke  
F/S: slow arms / fast kick



Never under-estimate the importance of recognising (rewarding) endeavour and progress.

Such tags can be instructional, can be reminders, can be rewards, ....

Young athletes love to collect ...

One of the greatest things is to learn, demonstrate and have acknowledged, a new accomplishment.

## Why Drills ?

7. To expand your confidence in your potential as an athlete, and as a person.

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



Does ..  
***what is  
best for the  
athlete***  
rank in your  
philosophy and  
delivery?

# So, what is a **drill** ?

Simply - a **drill**  
**is part of a movement**

We are breaking down a movement into its sum of parts, e.g. clearance of a hurdle

Learning / practising the parts

Then, re-assembling the parts  
*Having-a-go*



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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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### Starts

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

I'M PROUD OF YOU!

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Both feet turned out

Both feet turned out

NWA Swimming

Breaststroke Reminders

# 1

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NWA Swimming

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Streamline Breaststroke Kick on back

Head Back

Hips Up – Toes Up

There are many options to reward and encourage young athletes as they pursue new skills

Not our focus now, but many examples are available

Interested?

# Muscle Memory and Skill Acquisition

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

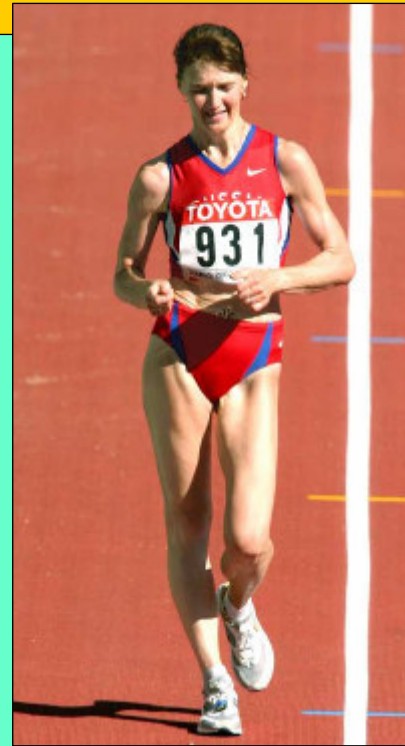


An **automatic skill** is a movement we can do without thought.

**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.

Modified from Forbes Carlisle, Aust. Swimming Coaching Legend



***“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 and/or teachers, our responsibility is to provide

**leadership**

For example,

**YOU** allowing kids to choose what they would like to do  
(from a list approved and presented by you)  
is just another way of **YOU** being in control;  
**YOU** displaying leadership and initiative

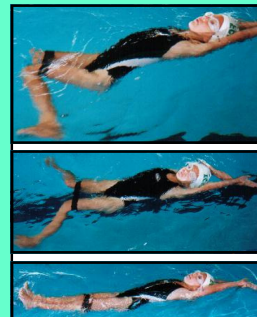


A few things to consider .. Fundamental Strategies  
Many are sport focused, but broader applications can apply

## Think about your sport (activity / interest)

- Each sport is a sum of movements ..
- Each movement can form the basis of a drill ..
- Drills can enhance movement skill / efficiency ..  
*speed, co-ordination .. confidence, self-esteem*  
There is a **multiplier effect**.

**And**, improved performance in a whole range of sports can be enhanced by improvements from drills.

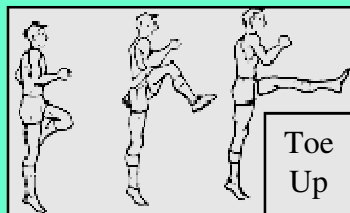


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**Streamline  
Breaststroke Kick  
on back**  
*Head Back  
Hips Up – Toes Up*

The range of drills is almost endless, but pure fun and variety aside, drills should be specific to the movements you wish to enhance.

There are basic drills - but in each sport, a multitude of sport-specific drills.



- Drills should be precisely planned and perfectly executed ... repeatedly.

Patience --- Precision --- Persistence



***Fast Claw*** .. *Preparation* position

Any comments?

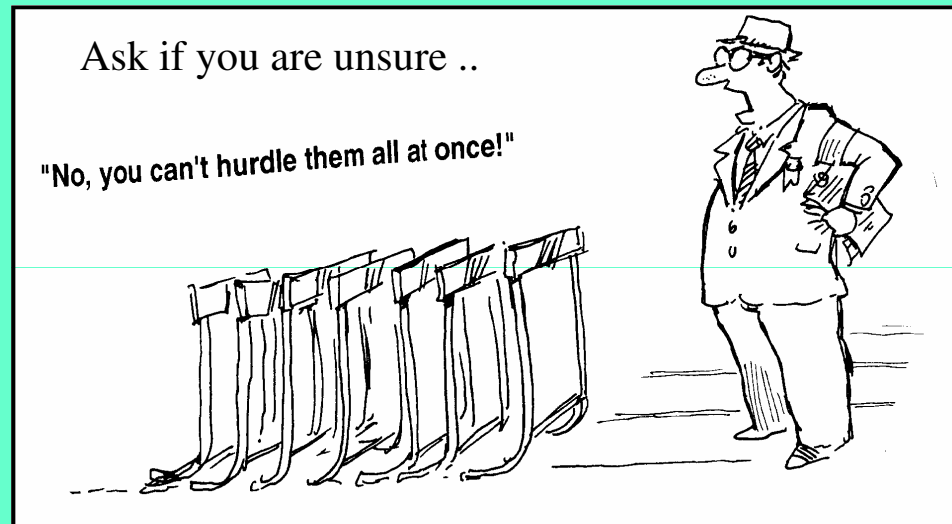
Positive?

Improvements?

- We learn incorrect responses as easily as correct movements ... so, learn correctly right from the start, and, **NEVER - NEVER** practice errors.

**PRACTICE MAKES PERMANENT**

**Research suggests that it takes about 50 repetitions to form a habit ..  
but,  
It can take thousands of repetitions to change a habit**



Also

**Don't over-practice**

**Speed** is a **Key** element in most sports;  
**don't** repeat activities such that you  
**practice "slowness"**.



**Quality**  
is more important  
than  
**Quantity**



- 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. **A-Skip** may be easier than **A-Walk**.

**Always Remember !!**

An **Eyeful**  
is  
**Better** than  
a **Mouthful**



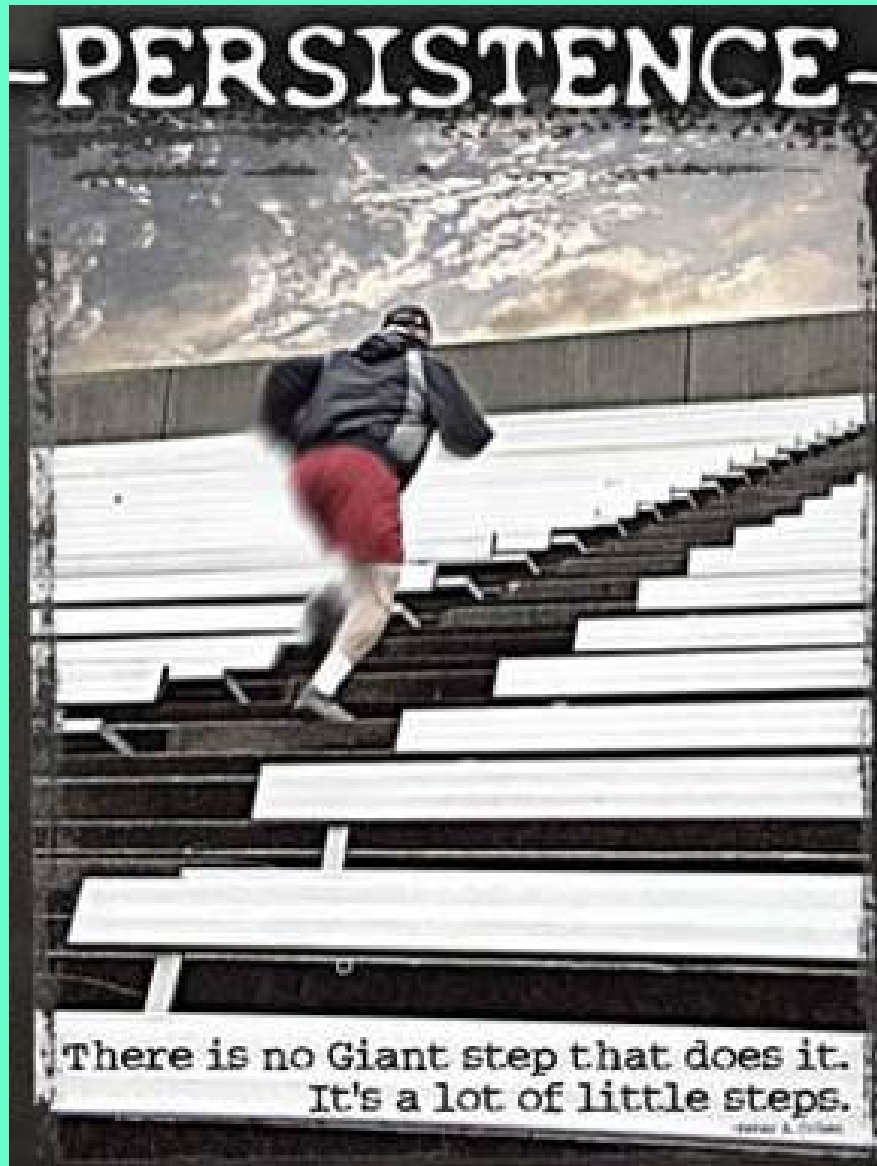
**Which?**

**Why? ..**

Have a reason

Share the reason





- Athletes should be encouraged to “feel” the movement, and, associate the correct feeling with the correct movement.

**Remember: the coach can only see /  
(often) the athlete can only feel**

*Where appropriate,  
slow the movement  
down .. execute  
with eyes closed ..  
seek to **feel** what is  
right/best ..  
encourage the  
athlete to learn to  
“read” their body.*

Every athlete is an  
experiment of one



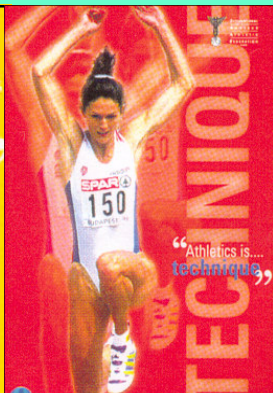
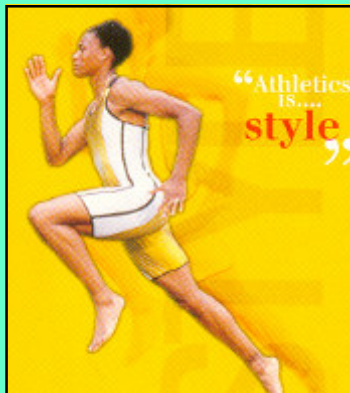
Lots of  
positive,  
corrective  
feedback can  
help the  
athlete refine  
their feelings

Video / mirrors

- End each training unit with a successful outcome ... e.g. a perfect drill execution and (perhaps)

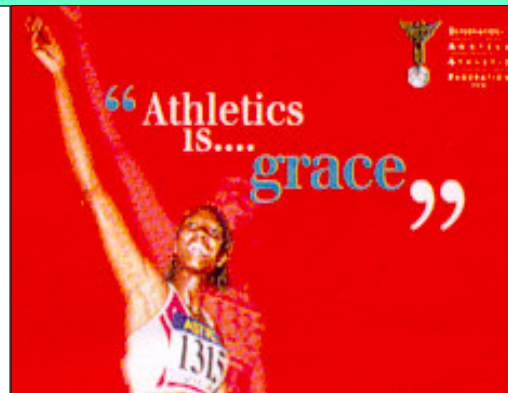
include the drill into the complete movement pattern, or, a progressive and advanced level of the skill

.. always seek to link drills to the complete movement.



The **ONLY** performance over which **YOU** have **control** is **YOUR PERFORMANCE**

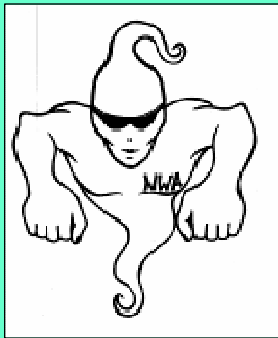
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**Potential** is what you may be capable of doing  
**Motivation** directs what you do  
**Attitude** determines how well you do

## Have a flexible plan

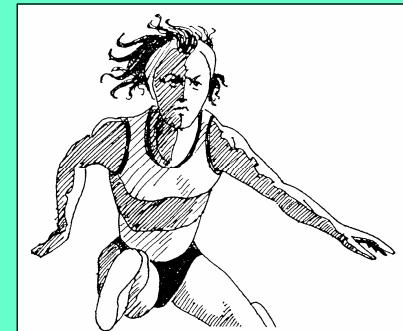
*Far better to have a (flexible) plan, than no plan at all*



The plan may be in your head, it  
may be formalised on paper,

but

**HAVE A PLAN**



Among your preparations ..

**What is the outcome you wish to achieve?**

then,

**Your strategies** (incl. variations) .. **your plan to achieve that outcome**

With experience you will learn to .. improvise .. react  
but, in the early stages .. **use / learn from** the experiences of others

# *You can't put in what God left out*

*("Chariots of Fire")*

but

**Drills** offer an opportunity to refine and expand skills, and enhance self-esteem.

**Don't miss the opportunity**

I have seen many, many swimmers and runners who are not and never will be the fastest ... but, I have never encountered a **resolute** athlete who could not develop commendable drill mastery ..

**We can't all be winners, but we can all be champions**



## **Potential**

is what you may be  
capable of doing

## **Motivation**

directs what you do

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determines  
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## Associated Handouts

- Presentation Details
- Various Drill Progressions .. Athletics / Swimming  
(sample motivational / skill awards)

## Other Presentations

Sprint Hurdles .. An Analysis  
Why Drills?

Learning New Skills is Fun .. Athletics

and others



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There are many  
more issues  
raised by the  
presentation than  
are answered ..

*Knowledge  
accumulates  
quickly **only** in  
an open mind.*

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