

300 Hurdles: Building the Plane While Flying It

2026: Nike Track Clinic

Portland, OR

Coaching Education:

- ▶ Washington State University
 - ▶ Student Athlete & Volunteer Assistant
- ▶ USATF Level 2: Sprints/Hurdles & Combined Events
- ▶ USTFCCCA Level 2: Jumps, Combined Events
- ▶ USTFCCCA Level 3: Master's Endorsement in the Hurdles
- ▶ ALTIS: High Jump, High Hurdles, Horizontal Jumps
- ▶ Countless Mentors, Friends, Athletes

Must Establish a Culture of Trust:

- ▶ Athletes (humans) do not always respond well to change
- ▶ Athletes must trust you that the change is worth it (and doable) and you must be able to articulate that change
 - ▶ MUST HAVE A PLAN
- ▶ Over the course of the season, it is likely that an athlete's blocks should change AT LEAST once as they develop more power, speed, rhythm, and improve technique
 - ▶ Athletes hate changing blocks!
- ▶ Almost all athletes must be able to utilize both legs effectively
 - ▶ Most athletes hate alternating!
- ▶ WILL THEY/YOU BE READY TO CHANGE?



Preparing for Takeoff

- ▶ We are going to assume athletes know how to hurdle and use blocks
- ▶ We are assuming you selected an athlete that you think can be successful in the event (or they selected)

Takeoff to the First Hurdle

- ▶ Single most important stretch of the race
 - ▶ Nearly 1/3 of the race is complete by successfully managing ONE HURDLE
 - ▶ Invest a lot of time here to ensure it is flawless
 - ▶ Creates immense confidence
- ▶ For most athletes, the number of steps to the first hurdle **MUST** change throughout the season! *Will you be prepared to help?*
 - ▶ Men: 19-23 (to run 13/14/15)
 - ▶ Women: 22-26 (to run 15/16/17)

Takeoff to the First Hurdle

- ▶ Start by SPRINTING to the first hurdle (Race is only 300M)
 - ▶ See how they navigate initially (video, count)
 - ▶ Switch blocks as needed (again, they hate it!)
- ▶ Script the whole thing for them as needed
 - ▶ A cone where each foot must go (take away any thinking)*
 - ▶ Gradually remove cones (you will know in first 5 steps if they are going to be on or not)
- ▶ You will never know what their stride pattern between hurdles should be until they hit that first hurdle great - PRIORITIZE THIS.

Takeoff to the First Hurdle

- ▶ And then be prepared to change!
 - ▶ Worst time to find out you need to change?
 - ▶ Racing World Record Holder
- ▶ Best time to be prepared to change?
 - ▶ State Championships
- ▶ How to Prepare:
 - ▶ Anticipate wind and weather
 - ▶ Know your lane assignment and track configuration
 - ▶ Be ready to use either leg out of the blocks (and over hurdles)

Takeoff to the First Hurdle

- ▶ Like the high hurdles, first few steps out of the blocks are crucial for consistency and establishing horizontal force
 - ▶ I will begrudgingly shorten distance to first hurdle or move blocks up
- ▶ Takeoff distance also equally important and often farther than in high hurdles
 - ▶ Err on the side of more exaggerated in practice if needed and trust adrenaline to execute in a race
 - ▶ Fine line between promoting aggressiveness and building bad habits
- ▶ Sprinting at the first hurdle can be scary for all athletes, sometimes scarier for your fastest athletes

Takeoff to the First Hurdle: Warholm

**WORLD
RECORD**



Establishing a Stride Pattern

Strides between Hurdles:

- ▶ Men: 13-17+
- ▶ Women: 15-19+
- ▶ In practice, we discount hurdles about 3' typically (starting with the 2nd hurdle)

Establishing a Stride Pattern

- ▶ A Stride Pattern Gives You a Blueprint for Momentum (Which maximizes speed)
 - ▶ Long Jump? Triple Jump? High Jump?
 - ▶ Rewards smart kids
 - ▶ Establishes an understanding of the event
- ▶ It doesn't have to be a science
 - ▶ You had to bound to get to Hurdle 3 on your RIGHT, anticipate going over 4 with your LEFT
 - ▶ Increase turnover
 - ▶ You might not need to know how many steps but you might know R, R, R, L, R...

Establishing a Stride Pattern

- ▶ Meat & Potatoes (We practice the thing we want to do)
 - ▶ Start with 2 hurdles and figure out the # of steps
 - ▶ Can we do it twice in a row?
 - ▶ Can we start in blocks and do it to 3?
 - ▶ We got to 3 but had to reach, can we be ready to alternate when we get to 4?
- ▶ We outsmart ourselves in a lot of events, copy every drill on Instagram, and you know who gets the best on our team? The kids that run over 5 hurdles at race pace the most often...

Establishing a Stride Pattern

- ▶ Video is essential (let them see themselves)
- ▶ A huge challenge for athletes to be ready enough, early enough in the season, to rehearse their best in practice.
- ▶ Might not be able to rehearse it exactly
- ▶ Need to make a plan for an athlete that does not exist yet, but you know will exist by May 1st
 - ▶ Bring hurdles closer, challenge stride length, take a risk, use dual meets to experiment

Establishing a Stride Pattern

Shoreline Inv. @ Shoreline HS April 28		All-City Meet @ Sparks Stadium May 2		SPSL Championships @ Sumner May 12		WCD Championships @ Kent-Meridian May 19	
R		R		R		R	
(L) 22	6.45	(L) - 15	6.6	(L) - 15	6.3	(L) - 15	6.5
(L) 15	4.5	(L) - 15	4.5	(L) - 15	4.2	(L) - 15	4.3
(L) 15	4.5	(L) - 15	4.7	(L) - 15	4.4	(L) - 15	4.4
(L) 15		(L) - 15	4.7	(L) - 15	4.6	(L) - 15	4.7
(L) 15		(L) - 15	4.7	(L) - 15	4.7	(R) - 16	4.9
(R) 16	5.1	(L) - 15	4.9	(R) - 16	5.0	(L) - 16	5.1
(L) 16	5.2	(R) - 16	5.3	(L) - 16	5.2	(L) - 17	5.4
(L) 17	5.4	(L) - 16	5.3	(R) - 16	5.5	(L) - 17	5.6
Time:	42.45	Time:	42.39	Time:	41.76	Time:	42.56
50 Cold, Rainy		70 Warm		75 Degrees		75 Deg.	
		Little backstretch		Swirling Wind		Hot, Humid	
		headwind		1,2,3 in stride		Calm	

Athlete Reflection Sheet

- Have athletes self-assess
- Document steps (starting with blocks)
- Document hurdle leg

Shoreline Inv. @ Shoreline HS April 28	All-City Meet @ Sparks Stadium May 2	SPSL Championships @ Sumner May 12	WCD Championships @ Kent-Meridian May 19
R	R	R	R
(L) 22 6.45	(L) - 15 6.6	(L) - 15 6.3	(L) - 15 6.5
(L) 15 4.5	(L) - 15 4.5	(L) - 15 4.2	(L) - 15 4.3
(L) 15 4.5	(L) - 15 4.7	(L) - 15 4.4	(L) - 15 4.4
(L) 15	(L) - 15 4.7	(L) - 15 4.6	(L) - 15 4.7
(L) 15	(L) - 15 4.7	(L) - 15 4.7	(R) -16 4.9
(R) 16 5.1	(L) - 15 4.9	(R) - 16 5.0	(L) - 16 5.1
(L) 16 5.2	(R) - 16 5.3	(L) - 16 5.2	(L) - 17 5.4
(L) 17 5.4	(L) - 16 5.3	(R) - 16 5.5	(L) - 17 5.6
Time: 42.45	Time: 42.39	Time: 41.76	Time: 42.56
50 Cold, Rainy	70 Warm	75 Degrees	75 Deg.
	Little backstretch	Swirling Wind	Hot, Humid
	headwind	1,2,3 in stride	Calm

- Reflect: How did you feel during your race?
- Reflect: What stood out to you after watching your race?
- Reflect: Where did you lose momentum?
- Reflect: What might we anticipate in the next race?
- Reflect: What was the best segment of the race?

Almost Every Hurdle Workout Predicated on Mimicking Race Conditions

Speed is Essential BUT Stride Length/Pattern Predetermined

- ▶ It is not how fast you can run 35 meters; it is how fast you can run 35 meters off one hurdle and into the other.
- ▶ Everyone can do it (to varying success), HOW FAST CAN YOU DO IT?!?!?
- ▶ Once you determine your pattern, it is about figuring out the balance of how fast you can run that pattern successfully.
 - ▶ Just because you CAN DO IT, does not mean it will deliver the best outcome.
 - ▶ Ex: Bounding to 16s, troubles alternating, cannot finish well

21	6.1
14	4
14	4.2
15	4.2
15	4.6
15	4.6
15	4.8
15	4.85

(L) - 15	6.3
(L) - 15	4.2
(L) - 15	4.4
(L) - 15	4.6
(L) - 15	4.7
(R) - 16	5.0
(L) - 16	5.2
(R) - 16	5.5
Time:	41.76

Miscellaneous:

- ▶ Learning to Run the 110H/100H on Opposite Leg
- ▶ Running 110H/100H Speed w/ 4-Stepping (Great Spacing)
- ▶ Will they ever get to run the race fresh? (Making decisions for the athlete)
- ▶ How do we balance other events?
- ▶ Being a “hurdler” does not mean you should/can do both hurdle events.
- ▶ As your athletes get better, find the best RACES for them.
 - ▶ 300H & 400 often have HUGE talent gaps from best athletes to next-best
- ▶ Find 4-stepping/5-stepping/6-stepping distances that are competitive among athletes (blending genders, talent levels, etc.)
- ▶ Walk-Back Dual w/ Surprise Lead Leg
- ▶ Sidewalk Cracks (Steering)
- ▶ Using Both Sides of Your Brain
 - ▶ Brush Your Teeth Left-Handed; Cut Your Meat Left-Handed

Early Season Workout Ideas

- ▶ A lot of running in first couple weeks without hurdling (depending on athlete)
 - ▶ Hip Flexors/Legs Tired Anyway
- ▶ Broken 400/300H
 - ▶ Run 200 (32/36); rest 90; run 200 over hurdles (2-3)
 - ▶ Not sharp, not pretty... but must be ready on Day 12
- ▶ 3 x (3 x 150 w/ Hurdles)
 - ▶ Run 150 w/ Hurdles; Jog Halfway Back/Walk Halfway Back on Infield; Repeat 150m; Full Recovery Between Sets
- ▶ 300/200 w/ SOME Hurdles
 - ▶ Use 1st and 2nd Hurdle (Just 1st or None); Empty Around Corner; Random Hurdles Along Finish
 - ▶ Using Both Legs, Being Aggressive, Hurdling Fatigued
- ▶ Never too early to start thinking about the first hurdle.

Competitive Season Workout Ideas

Emphasis on Quality Repetitions (Race Modeling Drives the Bus)

- ▶ 4 x 5 Hurdles (Or 1 x 5, 1 x 4, 1 x 3, 1 x 2) (OR other direction)
 - ▶ 3ft in from normal spacing
- ▶ 1-2 x 300m w/ Some Hurdling
 - ▶ First 3 Hurdles, (Skip 2 Hurdles), Last 3 Hurdles (Cruise Between? Sprint Between)
 - ▶ Open 175, Last 4 Hurdles
 - ▶ Open 75, Last 4 Hurdles
- ▶ Every Meet is a Workout Opportunity (Speed Endurance: 4x200, 4x400)

Post-Season

- ▶ Do not get greedy! Less is More!
- ▶ Identify what the athlete needs to feel confident: Comes with Trust.
- ▶ 3 x First 3 Hurdles (Monday?)
- ▶ 2-3 x Starts to First Hurdle (Tuesday?)



No Two
Athletes are
the Same

Questions?

Contact Me:

- ▶ Bob Frey: mrbobfrey@gmail.com
- ▶ Emerald Ridge High School
- ▶ Washington Track & Field Academy (watfacademy.com)