

Coaching Athletes to be their Best

- I. There is only one thing worse for an athlete than not having a coach – and that is having a bad coach.**
 - A. Coaches have an awesome responsibility. Athletes put their trust and often their future in the coach's hands. The coach is also parent, agent, counselor, judge and jury.**
 - B. Any coach who is through learning is through!**
 - C. Everyday the coach should do something to improve his coaching expertise. Clinics, books, film, video, word-of-mouth—whatever it takes to improve, the coach should strive to do it.**

D. One major learning tool is the athletes themselves.

II. Keep up with the latest in training methods.

A. New information often comes out regarding most event areas.

B. Utilize information from those who have a proven track record of success over a long period of time.

C. Most outstanding coaches do not change what they have been successful with but they do make minor adjustments.

D. My personal theory is that coaches should try to improve their training procedures by at least one percent a year.

III. Advantages of having one training program over a long period of time

A. The coach can evaluate workout performances over a long period of time and can make good sound decisions after review of them.

B. The athletes also will be more comfortable in a system where they can see improvement over a long period of time.

IV. “If it is not broke, don’t fix it!”

A. Many of the things that Michael Johnson did in workouts in 1996 were things others had done 10 years earlier. He could just do them better.

One drill we added in 1997 was a modified version of one of my miler’s workouts—we call this drill 30/30.

B. Our 200/400 workout program today is probably about 75% of what we were doing in 1975. The 25% additions have made us much better than in 1975; however, the 75% is still the backbone of our training program.

V. The coach must help the athlete to understand the principle of the training program if he is going to be successful.

A. Have a meeting at start of the training to give the athlete an overview of what is to be accomplished.

B. Goal-setting is an important motivator.

C. Goals must be realistic.

D. Most important is HOW the athlete expects to reach his goals.

VI. Relationship of Coach to Athlete

- A. Both coach and athlete should maintain a professional relationship at practice as well at competitions.**

- B. The coach should provide the athlete a detailed time schedule regarding such things as warm-up, massage, final preparation before reporting to starting line.**

- C. The coach should know the athlete's mood swings in order to better communicate with the athlete in stressful situations.**

- D. A familiar routine seems to relax the athlete more.**

VII. Are we as coaches any smarter than 25 years ago?

- A. We only have a bigger vocabulary.**
- B. For most of us, the track is our test lab. We have kept the methods that work and we have stopped using the ones that don't.**

VIII. Organizing Practice Sessions

- A. Very important to be organized in practice sessions because the athlete will respect the system more.**
- B. Communication with your athlete is vital.**

- C. Post your training session so the athlete can prepare for the training in his mind while doing warm-ups. Record results daily.**
- D. Training area should be as pleasant as possible. It makes for a better mental frame of mind.**

IX. Support staff is vital

- A. Assistant coaches, if possible, for event areas.**
- B. Team doctors, general medical and specialists, such as bone and joint doctors, etc.**
- C. Chiropractor, acupuncturist, surgeon, etc.**

- D. Sports medicine, massage therapy, physical therapy.**
- E. Flexibility expert**
- F. Weight training coach**
- G. Media relations person**
- H. Manager (agent)**

