PREPARING THROWERS FOR CHAMPIONSHIP MEETS

David Dumble
Arizona State University
**IDEAL SITUATION**

- Johnny is a Senior with a great work ethic
- He is a great guy and deserves to be an All-American
- Never made it to NCAA Championships before, but has overcome obstacles to have an amazing season
- Puts out a great throw in prelims to make it to finals
- Then PR’s on his last throw to win the National Championship!
- A perfect Hollywood script
CHARACTERISTICS OF JOHNNY’S PERFORMANCE

• Feeling fresh - physically peaked
• Throwing far in practice
• Focused on his objective to throw well
• Has learned from his experiences in practice and competition
• Excited to compete
• Confident
PEAKING

• Peak Phase – A planned period of time when the athlete is at the top performance of the year.

• Maximum strength

• Fully recovered - Fresh
  • No soreness
  • Quick reaction time

• Measured in explosive movements like
  • Overhead shot throw
  • Standing Long Jump
  • 30m Sprints
LIFTING PERIODIZATION

Macrocycle

• 2-3 month period
• From High Volume, Low Intensity
• To High Intensity, Low Volume

Last Mesocycle

• Last 2-3 weeks before Championship meet.
• Decreased Volume
• Decreasing Weight, Increasing Speed
• Last week may have no weight room lifting
• Under very little physical stress
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H- Heavy
M- Medium
L- Light
LIFTING DURING PEAKING

- **Speed Lifts**
  - Olympic lifts – Snatch, Cleans, Jerks
  - Power lifts – Chain/Band Squat, Chain/Band Bench

- **Low reps, high intensity**

- **No Volume Lifts**

- **Limited Accessory Lifts**
SPEED DURING PEAKING

- 30-40m Sprints
- Box Jumps
- Standing Long Jumps
- Over Head Shot Throws
- MB Throws
- Etc.
Throwing During Peaking

- Slowly cut the volume of throws in a practice
- Less stand throws
- Less short approaches
- Less drills
- Number of practice throws start to resemble meet type numbers
- Lighter implements to get used to faster, meet type rhythm
PEAKING OUTDOOR COLLEGIATE SEASON

Estimate the championship that is most important for each thrower, then count back 2-3 weeks to begin peaking process.

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<th>Dual Meet Athlete</th>
<th>Pac-12 Athlete</th>
<th>First Round Athlete</th>
<th>NCAA Championship Athlete</th>
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<td>• Has made the conference team</td>
<td>• Possible NCAA Championship athlete</td>
<td>• Top 8-10 in region</td>
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<td>• Not made the Pac-12 Championship</td>
<td>• Low or not on the Regional list</td>
<td>• Will score well at Pac-12’s with moderate peaking</td>
<td>• Will perform well at preliminary meets with little or no peaking</td>
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- Jordan
- Cj
- Eddie
- Marc
- Ashley

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THROWING FAR IN A CHAMPIONSHIP MEET

• Requires the exact same balance, position, rhythm, and timing as any other throw.

• Big throws are produced from peaking in the weight room, full recovery, the excitement of the meet, adrenaline, competition, etc.

• Thrower needs confidence in their technique

• Have the ability to focus on their movement in the ring
A YOUNG THROWERS MINDSET

• They have season long goals of a certain distance.

• Meets are the most challenging because this is when distance matters the most.

• But this is when they need to focus on execution not distance.

• They need confidence in their movements to achieve the big throw.
CHAMPIONSHIP MINDSET

• Cause vs. Effect

• The athlete needs to focus on what they can control.

• The action in the ring or down the runway determines the distance.

• Distance is always the goal, but never the focus

• Employee asking for a raise before they improve their performance.
Michelle Carter
2008 Olympic Games

Qualifying

• Top 12 or all Auto Qualifiers (18.40m)
• Performance - 18.49m
• 13th out of 15 Qualifiers

Finals

• Top 8 throwers get additional 3 throws
• Performance - 17.74m
• Place - 15th
• Focused on distance instead of what got her to the finals.
• 18.49m would have been 9th in finals
Teaching the Right Mindset

• Develop the right focus at practice.

• Most young throwers define their throw based on distance.

• Separate the relationship of distance and success during practice.

• Their daily goal is technique, rhythm, or timing.
Gaining experience is learning who they are physically and mentally in all kinds of situations.

Preparing for a successful performance at a championship meet is accomplished at practices and meets throughout their career.
• Throwers must learn how their body reacts to:
  • High Volume Lifting
  • High Intensity Lifting
  • Rest/Recovery
  • Speed Work
  • Other Training Stresses

• How to keep their body healthy

• How outside stresses affect them
  • School
  • Family
  • Boyfriend or Girlfriend
LEARNING AT PRACTICE

- Athletes need to learn skills that can help them perform well at meets.
  - How to control their body to learn the new technique
  - How to find the right motion when it isn’t coming easily
  - How to control their emotions and not let frustration affect their practice
  - How to accept and overcome challenges during practice
  - How to stay positive
  - How to visualize
LEARNING AT PRACTICE

• Simulate and learn from meet type experiences

• Coach needs to introduce change/obstacles during practice to help them learn how they react to problems

• How to warm up with limited throws

• How to throw well with 10-15min between throws
  (1st round of the NCAA Championships)

• If you are from Arizona and the championship forecast is rain, How to throw in a wet ring!
LEARNING AT MEETS

• How did they perform?

• How did they react to sub-optimal conditions?
  • Inclement weather
  • Bad officiating/phantom fouls
  • Favorite implement not weighing in
  • Imperfect travel
  • Bad hotel room/bed
  • Unusual food options
  • Etc.
Visualization

- The facility, the weather, the time of day
- How they will enter the facility
- How they will warm up
- Being calm and in control
- The ideal throw
- Overcoming obstacles
Visualization

- Been there before
- Thrown well before
- Know how to react in all kinds of situations
- Performed well in all kinds of conditions
- Less worrying
- Increases confidence
EMOTIONAL

Excited

• Thoughts of how it will feel to throw well, win, beat competition, etc.
• Proud to contribute points to the team.
• Want to make coach, parents, school proud

Scared

• Outside expectations
  • Parents
  • Media
  • Team
• Pressure to place where they come in ranked
• Pressure to score points
EMOTIONAL

Talk About

• Things in their control
• Improvement since last year
• Great performances so far this year
• More prepared
• Peaked and fresher than any other meet this year

Don’t Talk About

• Negative outcomes
• How the team needs their points
• Other outcomes that build up anxiety in that thrower
• How this meet is the most important of the year
CONFIDENCE

Definition: a feeling of self-assurance arising from one's appreciation of one's own abilities or qualities.
Developing confidence in themselves and in their throwing takes time.

- Initial self-confidence
- Successes in high school
- Confidence in their performance from the previous season
- Improvements over the season
Developing Confidence

- Instilled daily over a long period of time
- Praise improvements
- Praise effort in difficult times
- Praise great performances
- Learn from bad experiences
- Applaud self-discovery
Ryan Whiting

- Naturally had self-confidence
- Didn’t need to see distance at practice to know he was good
- Trusted the peaking process
- Excited to compete

Jessica Pressley

- Low self-confidence
- Needed reassuring that she was going to throw well
- Started peak early so she would see the distance at practice
- Nervous to compete
Developing Confidence

• Different throwers develop confidence in different ways
  • Trust in your coach
  • Being proud of all the work they have done all year
  • Being proud of all their previous good performances
  • Knowing that they have experienced difficulties and still come through
  • Knowing that they have been throwing well in practice
  • Knowing that they are better than this time last year
  • Knowledge that their body will be peaking just for this meet
CONFIDENCE IN COMPETITION

- Excited for the championship
- Doesn’t worry when their implement doesn’t weigh in
- Warm-ups don’t have to go well
- Lightning delays are easier to navigate
- Foul throws don’t affect them
- Overcome obstacles and still compete well
As the meet draws close

- The athlete can work on-
  - Controlling outside stresses
  - Visualizing
  - Positive affirmations

- The coach can-
  - Stay positive and encouraging
  - Discuss confidence building topics
  - Stay with simple cues
  - Don’t introduce new ideas or movements
CHARACTERISTICS OF JOHNNY’S PERFORMANCE

• Feeling fresh - physically peaked *(Last 2-3 weeks of the season)*

• Throwing far in practice *(Long term)*

• Focused on his objective to throw well *(Long term)*

• Has learned from his experiences in practice and competition *(Long term)*

• Excited to compete *(Every meet)*

• Confident *(Long term)*
THANK YOU

Questions?