Steeplechase – A Year Round Plan

Presented by:
Stacie Wentz
NCAA DII Head Men’s and Women’s Coach
Who/what has shaped my coaching philosophy?

- Salisbury University (800/1500m)
  - B.S. Physical Education teaching/Business administration minor
- Assistant distance coach at Johns Hopkins University- 4 Years (2012 NCAA DIII Women’s National Champions)
- Head Men’s and Women’s XC and Track coach at Assumption College- 3.5 years (2016- 27th at NCAA DII Women’s National Championships)
Who/what has shaped my coaching philosophy?

- Daughter of two physical education teachers and coaches (gym rat)
- M.S. in sports management- West Virginia University
- Spent time in athletic compliance (UMES); academic support (WVU); governance administration (NCAA); CHAMPS/Life Skills/SAAC advisor (LSU)
- National Team program manager (8 years)- US Lacrosse/Team USA
  - Went to every national team practice; surrounded by the best coaches in the game
The Team
The Athletes

Tony Fierimonte (2 years coaching)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School</th>
<th>College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:24.90 1600m</td>
<td>4:10.35 indoor mile (4:27.43); 3:50.87 (4:05.05) 1500m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 3200m</td>
<td>8:26.26 (9:26.22) 3000m indoor flat track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>8:56.05 (9:16) 3000m steeple</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rachel Avard (3 years coaching)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High school</th>
<th>College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.4 Hand time 55m H; 13’ long jump</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:58 3000m</td>
<td>10:44 3000m indoor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>11:26 3000m steeple</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21:57 XC 5K</td>
<td>17:59 5000m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Year Round Plan

Who can handle the steeplechase?

• Multi-sport/multi-event athletes
  • Soccer, basketball, softball
  • hurdlers/jumpers

• Goal oriented in the weight room; wanting to always improve

• Tough mental attitude; toughness to aches and pains

• Calm in crowded race environments

• Race patience

• Response to coach telling when to switch gears in a race

• NO FEAR!
Year Round Plan

Summer

• 2 weeks off
• Straight mileage (building 10% a week)- May-June
• July- twice a week (tempo; fartlek)
• July 1- lifting (3 days a week; pure power/Olympic lifts)
• August 1- twice a week (tempo; progression; threshold)
A year Round Plan

Cross Country

• Interval workouts- mostly on grass; crushed gravel
• Core everyday
• Yoga once a week
• Lifting twice a week (maintenance)
• Hurdle mobility twice a week (incorporated with our lifting days)
• Hill repeats once a week (6x30 sec; 6x60 sec)
  • 22-30% grade hills
Indoor track

- One week off after NCAA National Cross Country championships
- Lifting - Move towards more power development (twice a week)
- How to train? (1500m/3000m/5000m ?)
- January/February- more specific hurdle technique and hurdle mobility drills
  - Use your hurdles coach
  - Ankle mobility (ropes/bands); work with athletic training staff
**Indoor track**

- **Sunday** - Long run
- **Monday** - Distance at regular effort/hill repeats
- **Tuesday** - Workout #1  (2 mile warm-up/2 mile cool-down)
- **Wednesday** - Recovery (45-60 min; cardio; pool run)
- **Thursday** - Workout #2  (2 mile warm-up/2 mile cool-down) (shorter/faster intervals)
- **Friday** - Pre-meet (30-45 min); drills and strides
- **Saturday** – Race day
## Indoor track

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Rachel</th>
<th>Tony</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 16</td>
<td>3000m</td>
<td>5000m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 22</td>
<td>5000m</td>
<td>Off- meet cancelled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 30</td>
<td>Mile</td>
<td>3000m; mile; 4x400m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 7</td>
<td>3000m</td>
<td>3000m; 4x400m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 14</td>
<td>mile</td>
<td>mile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 21 (Conference)</td>
<td>5000m</td>
<td>5000m; 3000m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 28 (New England)</td>
<td>5000m</td>
<td>Mile (feb 28); mile (mar 1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outdoor track

- **Lifting – Maintenance (twice a week)**
- **March- begin workouts over hurdles (one hurdle interval workout a week)**
  - 6x1000m (steeple over 2, 4, 6) @ 3k race pace (2-2:30 rest); 4x200m - 7-10 sec slower per 1000m
  - 5x800m (steeple over 1, 3, 5) @ 3K race pace (2 min rest) and 4x400m (@ 1500m race pace) (60-75 sec rest)
  - 3 sets (4x400m) - (steeple over 2,4) (60-75 sec rest) - 3 sec slower per 400m
- 3 sets (400/800/400) or 3 sets of (400/600/400); 1500m race pace
  rest 75/2 min/jog 400m or 75/1:45/jog 400m
A year Round Plan

Outdoor track

Sunday   Long run

Monday  distance at regular effort/hill repeats (yoga Monday morning)

Tuesday  workout #1 (2 mile warm-up/2 mile cool-down)
  • Hurdle warm-up drills

Wednesday  recovery (45-60 min; cardio; pool run)

Thursday  workout #2 (2 mile warm-up/2 mile cool-down) (shorter/faster intervals)
  • Hurdle warm-up drills

Friday   pre-meet (30-45 min); strides; water jump work

Saturday race
Outdoor track
Tony’s Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/29</td>
<td>Towson</td>
<td>Steeple 9:08 (won by 1:34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>AIC</td>
<td>1500m 3:59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/11</td>
<td>Connecticut College</td>
<td>5000m 14:37.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/17</td>
<td>Princeton</td>
<td>Steeple 8:56.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/2</td>
<td>conference meet</td>
<td>Steeple 9:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5000m 14:37.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/8</td>
<td>New England’s</td>
<td>1500m 3:50.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/21</td>
<td>Ncaa’s</td>
<td>Steeple</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Outdoor track

## Rachel’s Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Distance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/12</td>
<td>Coastal Carolina</td>
<td>Steeple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/26</td>
<td>Bridgewater State</td>
<td>1500m/800m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/2</td>
<td>Fitchburg State</td>
<td>5000m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8</td>
<td>Princeton</td>
<td>Steeple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/16</td>
<td>Connecticut College</td>
<td>5000m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/23</td>
<td>MIT</td>
<td>1500m/800m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/30</td>
<td>Stonehill</td>
<td>3000m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>NE-10 Conference</td>
<td>Steeple/5000m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A year Round Plan

Things to think about

• Hurdle with both legs
• Set up hurdles in lanes 2-3 (learn to stay out of trouble)
• Don’t teach to step onto non-water barrier (Rachel is 5’)
  • Differences in philosophy
  • Stuttering occurs/slowing down instead of accelerating
• One foot in water only
• Focus on accelerating:
  • Into barrier
  • Into water jump
A year Round Plan

Cues

• Head up
• Stay strong
• Be aggressive

Water Barrier
• Get out
• Attack
• Pop – pop (rhythm)
Psychological factors to the Steeplechase

HOW to get over the FEAR
Psychological factors to the Steeplechase

• Banana hurdles
• Progress up to regular hurdles
• Progress up to actual steeple barrier
• Repetitions of drills
• Visualization
• Getting athletes to focus on each barrier
Visualization
(www.runnersconnect.net)

• In your mind, there is no difference between an actual experience or an imagined one.

• Actors rehearse every line and gesture, a runner should do the same. Especially in the steeplechase, you should prepare for every situation that could happen.
  • Step 1- Be specific and detailed
    • Use all 5 senses (is it cold or hot? How big is the field size? What will the sound be like?)
  • Step 2- Don’t just visualize the positive-expect the unexpected
    • A lot can go wrong in the steeplechase
Visualization

- **Step 3 - Boost your self-confidence**
  - High confidence correlates to an increased level of performance
  - Visualize yourself succeeding
  - Use a mirror - repeat specific, positive messages to yourself. Mirror helps to engage the visual receptors in the brain and helps to internalize the positive messages
  - “I am fit, I am fast”
  - Start to get nervous - think back to all the great workouts you had; visualize your last successful race
  - Focus on what you can control - visualize yourself executing the game plan going through the warm-up and even focus on breathing
  - Implement mental cue - “relax and go” over the barrier; remind yourself proper form
Visualization during the race

• Remember mantras that will help you gain confidence
  • “I am strong. I can do this” instead of “push through the pain, don’t give up.”
    • The second mantra elicits negative connotations with the words pain and give up.
Visualization

How to implement visualization

• Relax! Choose a quiet place with no distractions and being by relaxing your entire body.
• Set the scene
• Focus on emotional and physical sensations
  • While on the starting line “I AM an athlete, I CAN do this. I AM supposed to be here.”
• See a positive outcome
• Repeat
A year Round Plan

Questions?

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