

# Discus Throw

Jon Tipton



Training  
Planning

Principles of  
the Discus

Positions

Application

# Training Plan

Progression of Training - Periodization  
General to Specific  
Slow to Fast  
Strength to Speed  
Residual Training Effects

Training is Testing  
What needs to be done now to get better?  
Specificity in Training  
Training Component Compatibility

Macro  
Annual  
Plan

Meso  
Training  
Block

Micro  
Weekly  
Plan

Daily Plan

Residual Training Effects		
Motor Ability	Retention	Physiological
Oxidative Energy System	30±5	Increased number of aerobic enzymes, mitochondria, capillary density, hemoglobin capacity, glycogen storage, higher rate of fat metabolism
Strength	30±5	Improvement of neural mechanism, muscle hypertrophy
Glycolytic Energy System	18±4	Increased anaerobic enzymes, buffering capacity and glycogen storage, higher possibility of lactate accumulation
Repeat-Power	15±5	Improved aerobic/anaerobic enzymes, improved local blood circulation and lactate tolerance, repeat sprint ability
ATP/CR-P	5±3	Enhanced resynthesis of CR-P
Speed	5±3	Improved neuromuscular interactions and motor control, increases anaerobic power

Adapted from: Issurin, V. (2008). "Block Periodization: Breakthrough in Sports Training." New York, NY: Ultimate Athlete Concepts.

# Macrocycle

GPP - Summer/Fall

Emphasis on General Abilities and/or  
General Weaknesses

SPP - Fall/Winter

Focus on Similar Demands and/or  
Specific Weaknesses

SDP/Pre-Comp - Winter/Spring

Focus on Specific Needs and Specific  
Strength

Comp - Spring/Summer

What do we need to do to compete well  
and/or what do we do well?

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# Mesocycle

Week 1 - Base

Week 2 - Accumulate

Week 3 - Intensify

Week 4 - Recovery

Base

Accumulate

Intensify

Recovery

# Base Week

Establish the baseline for the training period. Volume/Intensity/Frequency

Should blend the previous training period with the current training period.

Teach the progression.

Example

# Base Week

Volume: Throws - 20-25 throws/day

S.S. - 2 sets/day

Lifting - 5x5 (Full ROM)

Athletic Dev. - 1-2 sets/day

Intensity: Throws - Light/Moderate

S.S. - Moderate

Lifting - Auto-regulated

Athletic Dev. - Auto-regulated

Frequency: Throws - 3 Days

S.S. - 2 Days

Lifting - 2 Days

Athletic Dev. - 3 Days

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Accumulate

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Recovery

# Accumulation Week

Increase the volume of training to desired levels within the training period.

Less teaching and more observations.

Adjust training accordingly.

Example

# Accumulation Week

Volume: Throws - 25-30 throws/day

S.S. - 3 sets/day

Lifting - 5/4/3/5/4/3 (Specific ROM)

Athletic Dev. - 2 sets/day

Intensity: Throws - Moderate

S.S. - Moderate

Lifting - Auto-regulated

Athletic Dev. - Auto-regulated

Frequency: Throws - 3 Days

S.S. - 2 Days

Lifting - 2 Days

Athletic Dev. - 3 Days

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Base

Accumulate

Intensify

Recovery

# Intensify Week

The training intensity should be higher this week.

Volume may decrease slightly to accommodate the increase in intensity.

Performances matter this week for all training components.

Example

# Intensify Week

Volume: Throws - 25-30 throws/day

S.S. - 2-3 sets/day

Lifting - 5/4/4/3/3/3 (Force Velocity Curve)

Athletic Dev. - 2 sets/day

Intensity: Throws - Hard

S.S. - Hard

Lifting - Auto-regulated

Athletic Dev. - Auto-regulated

Frequency: Throws - 3 Days

S.S. - 2 Days

Lifting - 2 Days

Athletic Dev. - 3 Days

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# Mesocycle

Week 1 - Base

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Accumulate

Intensify

Recovery

# Recovery Week

During a recovery week one or more of the training elements may be reduced. (Volume/Intensity/Frequency)

Recovery may occur through adaptation.



Example

# Recovery Week

Volume: Throws - 25 throws/day

S.S. - 2-3 sets

Lifting - 6x3 - Unilateral Variation

Athletic Dev. - 1-2 sets/day

Intensity: Throws - Moderate/Hard

S.S. - Moderate/Hard

Lifting - Auto-regulated

Athletic Dev. - Auto-regulated

Frequency: Throws - 3 Days

S.S. - 2 Days

Lifting - 2 Days

Athletic Dev. - 3 Days

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# Microcycle

Day 1 - Speed (Light/Comp Implements and Sprints)

Day 2 - Special Strength and Lift

Day 3 - Technique (Light/Comp/Heavy Implements and Multi Throws)

Day 4 - Strength (Comp/Heavy Implements and Multi Jumps or Plyos)

Day 5 - Special Strength and Lift

Day 6 - OYO Feel or Active Recovery

Day 7 - OFF

Complex Sets -

Simple Sets -

Giant Sets -

Alternating implements each throw, typically done Heavy to Light

Complete desired volume with an implement before moving to the next implement, can be done in any order

Alternating every 2-3 throws between a lot of implements

Discus - Corresponding Implements				
2lb PB	1.3k Denfi	4lb PB	1.6k Denfi	BP
1k Ball	1.5k Ball	4lb Ball	2k Ball	2k Ball
.75k	1k	1.25k	1.5k	1.6k
2k Denfi	6lb PB	2.5k Denfi	8lb PB	3.4k Denfi
5lb Pipe	2.5k Ball	6lb Ball	3k ball	8lb ball
1.75k	2k	2.25k	2.5k	3k

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# Daily Plan

Daily Brief  
General Warm-Up  
Specific Warm-Up or Special Strength  
Throw Primary or Movement Prep  
Throw Secondary or Lift  
Athletic Development or Post Work  
Daily Debrief

**Common  
Practice**

# Common Practices

Stands NR

Giant Steps or Step-Ins NR

Walking Fulls NR

Static Fulls NR (Pre-turned or Centered)

Fulls NR

Fulls

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## 5 Principles

Simplify the process

What really matters?

Focus on movement  
rather than positions

When competent in  
movement then look at  
positions.

Balance

Direction

Rhythm

Orbit

Patience

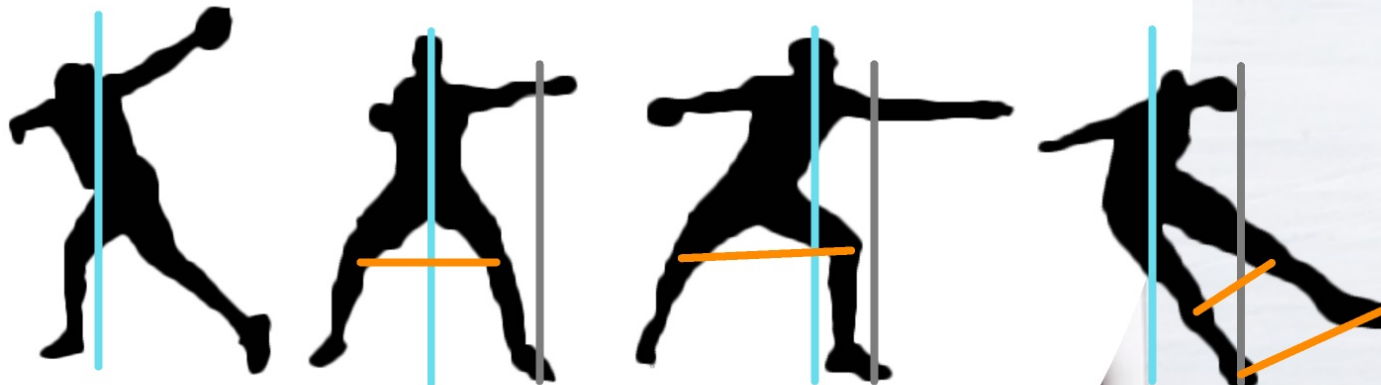
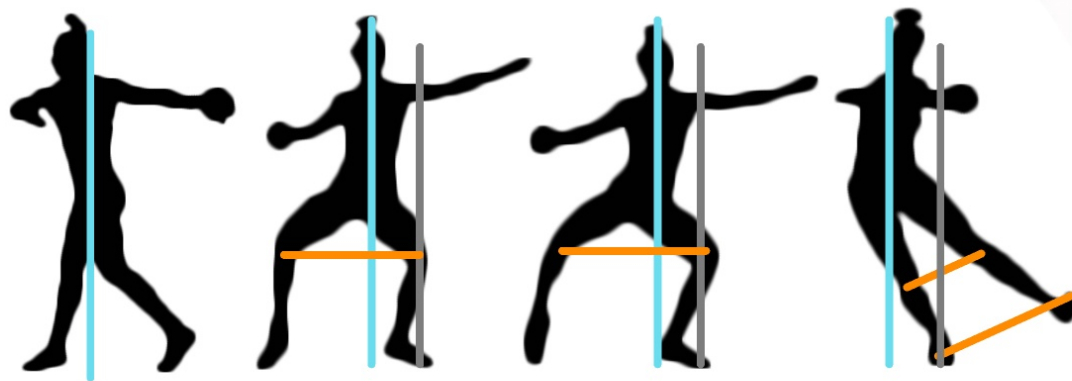
# Balance

Center of Mass and the relationship between angular momentum and linear locomotion.

Rotational Balance = Center of mass in line with the axis of rotation in single support (sternum, knee, toe)

As angular momentum transitions into linear locomotion the COM should transfer into the direction of movement.

**Examples**



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# Direction

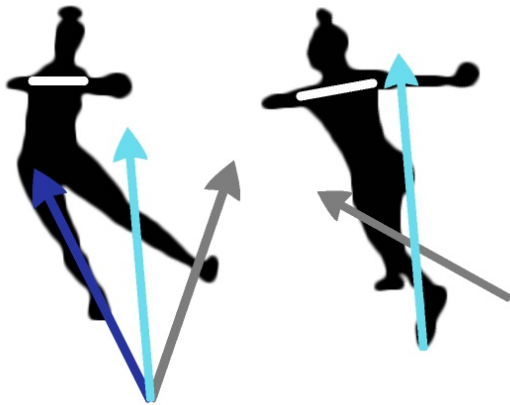
Sum of Force Vectors = Direction of Movement

Assuming the thrower is balanced on entry, direction is established by the "sprint." The summation of the force vectors of the sweep and the shin angle will determine the initial direction of the throw.

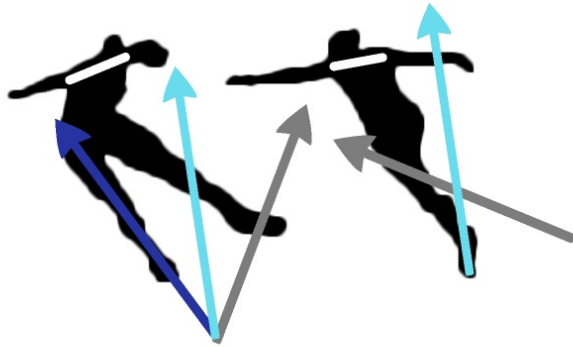
The upper body (shoulder axis, chest, head, eyes) plays an important role in the overall direction of movement.



**Examples**



Rotational Momentum to  
Linear Translation to  
Angular Acceleration



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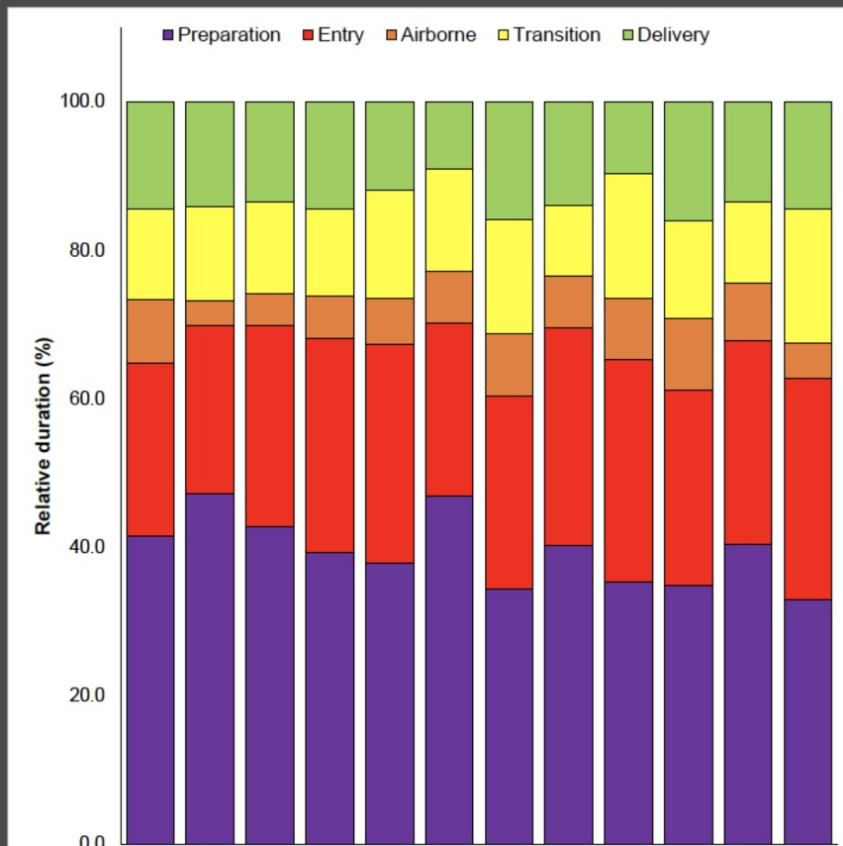
# Rhythm

Rhythm is a product of: relaxed tension, the acceleration of the system, the tempo of the throw, and the style of the thrower.

Slow to Fast  
Down-up, Down-Out  
Left, Right-Left  
1, 2-3, 4



Examples



See 2017 IAAF World Championships Biomechanical Report:  
Temporal characteristics of the athletes' movement

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# Orbit

Tangential Velocity is directly proportionate to the radius.

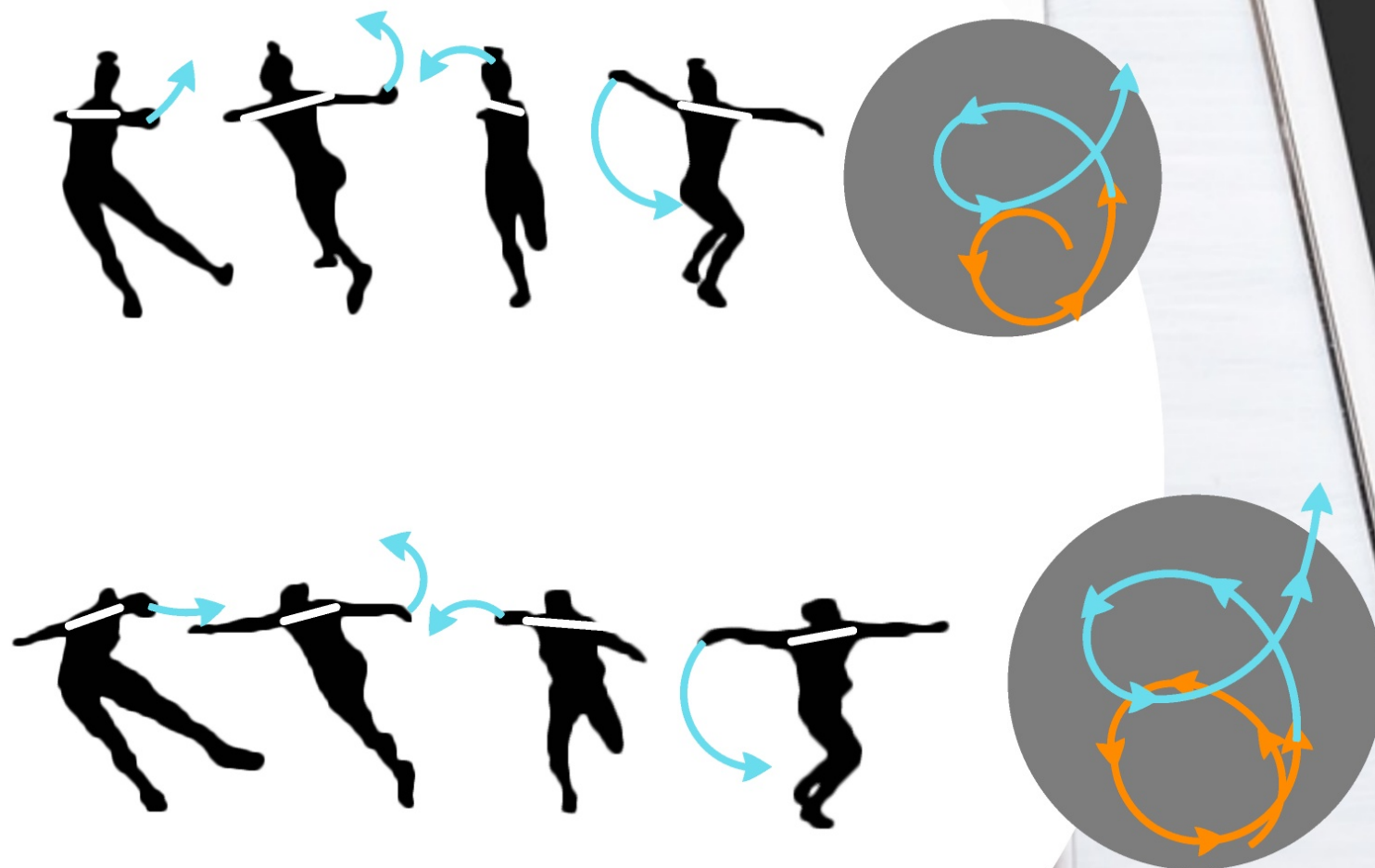
Angular Acceleration and the role it plays in Tangential Velocity.

Action of the block arm throughout the throw and the effect it has on the orbit.

Path of Orbit and the skew perpendicular to the direction of the throw during the delivery phase. (How separation affects this)

Orbit should only move approximately 2 feet on the vertical plane for most throwers.

## Examples



# Orbit

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# Patience

Active - Dig on the Right Leg  
Sweep the Back of the Circle  
Passive - Let the throw happen  
Wait - More Time

Ground Up and/or Center Out

Hip/Shoulder/Discus Separation

Double Support on Release

Non-Reverse-Reverse

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# Positions

Positions Create Power

What Shapes do we see?

Where is the center of mass of the system?

Where is the discus?

Wind-Up

Unwind

Single  
Support 1  
Sprint

Transition

Single  
Support 2

Power  
Position

Delivery

Recovery

# Wind-up

Pre-Wind Up:

Load The Legs - Set Left Leg Axis

Use the shoulder axis to create the wind and set the Orbit - Thoracic Spine Rotation and Scapular Retraction to set up separation and balance

Advanced athletes will use more full wind up

Novice athletes will restrict wind up and keep more weight on left leg.

Right Foot should be fixed and flat

Weight on inside of ball of left foot with the heel high up

Head and Left Arm stays in line with the sternum

**Examples**

**Drills**



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Wind Ups

Wind Up w/ Jump

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# Unwind

Use the left leg to initiate the unwind  
Heel rotates in and down to 9:00  
Maintain pivot inside of left foot

Long reach with out with left arm  
Left Arm inside of Left Knee

Tension between the knees  
Right Knee pushes forward to 12:00  
Build the House

Head stays neutral  
See the Horizon

**Examples**

**Drills**



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3 Circle Pivots

Wilkins Stretch

Stretch to Paw

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# Sprint

9 o'clock drop - Around and Down

As Right Foot leaves contact with the ground the Left Knee breaks and drops towards the front of the circle

Get on the horse

Right foot dorsi-flexes (Paw and Kick Mud) and Right Leg leads with inside of thigh

Maintain Posture

Vertical Left Thigh and Sternum over Knee, Shoulders should stay level, See the horizon

Hold the "X"

Left knee right sector, Right knee left armpit

Wide sweep is a counter balance to the Left Knee drop and will allow an athlete more time for the left foot to rotate to the center of the sector

Face the throw

Lower Body leads the throw

**Examples**

**Drills**



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Wall Drill #1

Puppet Drill

Pivot to South African

Giant Steps

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# Transition

Switches Rotational Axis

Face the throw and Pull/Skip/Squeeze  
Left Knee to Right Knee

Maintain Separation and Rotation  
Do NOTHING / Allow the system to  
work into power position

Set Orbit - Implement rises with hip  
Set it on a shelf

Let the ground come to you and absorb



Examples

Drills



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Patty Cake

Transition Drill

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# Right Leg Touchdown

Establishes Rotational Axis

Right Foot touches down between 2:30 and 12:30

Center of Mass holds on top of Right Leg  
Sternum-Knee-Toe

Engage Right Hip

Knee to 12:00

Bent Leg, High Heel, and Eyes Back  
"Settle" through the left leg

Discus Up and Back

High Point of Orbit should be about head height

Left arm low-ish/shoulder holds

Left foot follows similar path as sweep

**Examples**

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Continuous Half Turns

Wall Drill #2

Flamingo Drill

Step-Ins

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# Power Position

Maintains Rotational Axis  
Pressure down on Right Leg  
POSTURE  
Hips Under

Position of the left foot relative to the right foot is dependent on anthropometrics, rhythm and style  
Left foot touchdown rotates from toe to heel

Separation  
Left Arm First and levels  
Eyes Back

**Examples**

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Half Turns

Power Throws

Drop Step Power Position

Walking Stands

MB/Dowel Drills

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Position

Delivery

Recovery

# Delivery

Transfers Angular Momentum to Linear  
Center of Mass Shift from Right leg to between the feet

Long Radius  
Shoulder Axis turns around the Spine  
Sweep implement through 12:00 and reach to 9:00

Double Support  
Bent Right leg "Digging" into the ground  
Hold the ground and see the release

Block Firm  
Left Arm shortens and Left Side Stops  
Keep Left Hip Up

Slight deviation off axis towards the right.

Height of Release should be about shoulder height or slightly above

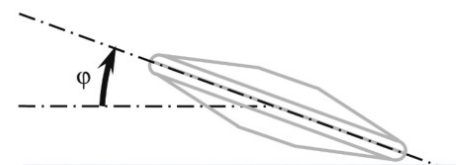
Pitch of Discus (~15\*), Angle of Release (~35\*), Release Velocity (up to 25m/sec), Effects of Wind (M-Right Quarter Wind, W-Right Crosswind [Hildebrand et al. 2009])

**Examples**

**Drills**



Rear view



# Delivery

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**Examples**

**Drills**



Towel Sweeps

Seated/Kneeling Throws

Inverted "C"

Restricted Stands

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Center of Mass Shift from Right leg to between the feet

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**Examples**

**Drills**

# Positions

Positions Create Power

What Shapes do we see?

Where is the center of mass of the system?

Where is the discus?

Wind-Up

Unwind

Single  
Support 1  
Sprint

Transition

Single  
Support 2

Power  
Position

Delivery

Recovery

# Recovery

Non Reverse vs. Reverse

Jump Reverse vs. Non-Reverse-Reverse

Finish out into the direction of the throw

Right arm back into circle  
Find the Back of the Circle

3:00 Right foot placement on reverse

Drills



Hands on Hips

Mimic throws

Band Drills

Trashcan Method

# Recovery

Non Reverse vs. Reverse

Jump Reverse vs. Non-Reverse-Reverse

Finish out into the direction of the throw

Right arm back into circle  
Find the Back of the Circle

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Drills

# Positions

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Single  
Support 2

Power  
Position

Delivery

Recovery

# Discus Throw

Jon Tipton



Training  
Planning

Principles of  
the Discus

Positions

Application

# Application

Observe  
Hypothesize  
Intervention  
Observe

Trial and Error

Progression

Common  
Errors

Individualization

Thank You

# Progression - Dreyfus Model

## Novice - Broad Strokes

Get them doing and gaining confidence, "let 'em play"  
Rhythm and Separation

## Beginner - Shape the Art

Start teaching them fundamentals  
Balance and Direction

## Competent - Detail Work

Break down the throw into skills  
Orbit

## Proficient - Clean it up

Fix smaller issues  
Patience

## Expert - Frame it and protect it

Sell out on what they're good at while eliminating risks  
Rhythm, Orbit, and Patience



# Application

Observe  
Hypothesize  
Intervention  
Observe

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Common  
Errors

Individualization

Thank You

# Common Errors

Going Up out of the back

Left arm or eyes lead the throw

Over or Under Rotating out of the Back

Poor Posture and disengaged hips

Jumping at release or reversing too soon

No focus on orbit

Professional Drillers



# Application

Observe  
Hypothesize  
Intervention  
Observe

Trial and Error

Progression

Common  
Errors

Individualization

Thank You

# Individualization

Athlete Profiling  
Anthropometrics  
Flexibility  
Mobility  
Strength  
Injury History  
Movement Analysis



# Application

Observe  
Hypothesize  
Intervention  
Observe

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Individualization

Thank You

# Thank You!!!

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Jon Tipton - Youtube Drills & Progressions



# Application

Observe  
Hypothesize  
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Observe

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Thank You

# Discus Throw

Jon Tipton



Training  
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