

Sprints Lesson Plan

Level: Introductory

Topic: Upper Body Form

Lesson Focus and Goals:

- This session will teach you and your students proper running mechanics at a fun and easy level of understanding. In this session, we will be looking at proper upper body running form!
- Did you know: Your arms are just as important as your legs when running fast!

Warm up:

- Your favourite tag or running based game to get the body moving!
- 20m of drills/stretches, for example:
 - Arm circles/swings
 - Side shuffles and grape vine
 - Animal Walks (crab, bunny hops etc.)
 - Marching A's (high knees) and C's (butt kicks)
 - 2 - 3 strides

Teaching Cues:

- Ensure the athlete's arm swing is rotating at the shoulder NOT the elbow (holding ~90° elbow angle). Imagine a hinge in the shoulder.
- When athletes are running to the cones, have them pick a spot on the wall/horizon (at eye level) to promote a neutral head position.
- Keep a comfortable/relaxed hand position, have them pretend to hold a potato chip.
- Watch for excessive rotation in the athlete's trunk. Cue: if they were a car, always keeping their headlights (chest) facing the way they are moving.

Main workout:

- Place 3 cones every 20m; 1st= start line, 2nd= 20m from start, 3rd= 40m from start.
- Have athletes do a march (to cone 2) and a run (to cone 3) with the following arms: glued to their sides, same arm with same leg, arms going horizontal, and opposite arm/opposite leg.
- Get athletes to stand along start line, have them bend their arms to around 90°. Then get them to pump their arms, focusing on bringing their hands up to their cheeks, and down to their hips - ensure they are rotating at the shoulder, not the elbow (30 seconds, 3-5 repetitions). Try getting the athletes to progressively increase their arm speed during each repetition. Make sure they maintain a full range of motion, while keeping their trunks nice and tall.
- With new arm motion in mind, get them to march to the 20m cone and then jog and eventually run to the 40m cone. Make sure to focus on staying tall and using the correct arm swing motion.
- For the final activity, split class into 2 teams, with two groups per team. Have one group per team on start line, and the other at 40m line.
 - This is a relay run where the athletes will sit down once they have all run to the opposite side. To win, an entire team must be seated.

Cool Down:

- There are many different options for cooling down, the main focus is to get the athletes to decrease their heart rate.
- With an eager class, you could play another tag or running based game.
- If the students/athletes are feeling tired, yoga or light stretching could be utilized.
- Make sure as the athletes are cooling down, or after, you review the main components of this session (arms, head position, hands, and trunk). Quizzing the students or athletes can be a great way to make the material interactive and engaging.