

## Technique...And Beyond

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“Athletes need to enjoy their training. They don't enjoy going down to the track with a coach making them do repetitions until they're exhausted. From enjoyment comes the will to win.”

— [Arthur Lydiard](#)

“Don't ever perceive other people's success as your own failure.”

— [Rob Liano](#)

“Intelligent coaching is sometimes no coaching.”

— Marty Stern

“No one learns as much about a subject as one who is forced to teach it.”

— [Peter F. Drucker](#)

### **Objectives At Each Practice – regardless of age or ability**

#1 – Develop a CONSISTENT APPROACH according to each athlete's ABILITY and EXPERIENCE in order to create CENTRIPITAL FORCE and PROPER LEAN.....or

#2 – Develop proper TAKEOFF technique to transfer energy.....or

#3 – Develop proper BAR CLEARANCE technique to successfully clear the bar.

**Things to look for in a high jumper** (Ask around...other coaches might see things in their seasons that can help you)

- . \* athletic                      \* smooth running form                      \* power / explosive                      \* flexibility
- \* aerial awareness              \* fearless    \* positive mentality is a plus

### **Keys to Helping Jumpers Understand HJ...and Developing Good Jumpers**

\* I believe it is important to help the athletes understand the physics of high jump. Teaching HOW things are supposed to happen and WHY things happen are KEY to skill development. (watch same videos to start each season)

\* I believe the use of VIDEO to analyze technique during practice and competition gives the athlete the MENTAL CONNECTION needed for improvement to happen. I attribute use of video to the increased success of my jumpers.

\* DEPUTIZE your athletes to be co-coaches with you. They can take the videos and watch certain aspects of each others' practice to analyze, give feedback, and transfer understanding to their own performance.

# JUNIOR HIGH jumpers

OMG...Jr.High coaches and Kindergarten teachers should have “Get Into Heaven Free” cards. Jr. High coaches are usually greatly outnumbered, which leads to field event athletes left to fend for themselves, resulting in practicing technique POORLY.

J.H. program needs to be on the same page as the H.S. program for the sake of consistency.

Remember.....PRACTICE MAKES ~~PERFECT~~ PERMANENT

\* SPEND THE TIME to develop a consistent approach. Jr. High kids think it’s all about going over the bar. Change their mindset early by not doing full-approach jumps until the week of the first meet. Stick to getting the approach consistent and working on getting off the ground with take-off drills. They will have plenty of time to work on bar clearance. If you want to work on bar clearance, do it either on the pit or from the ground without full approaches. There is nothing more difficult to change than bad habits developed by starting Day 1 with full approach jumps.

## FINDING and SETTING MARKS

HAVING SET MARKS at any level eliminates poor jump attempts due to an inconsistent starting mark.

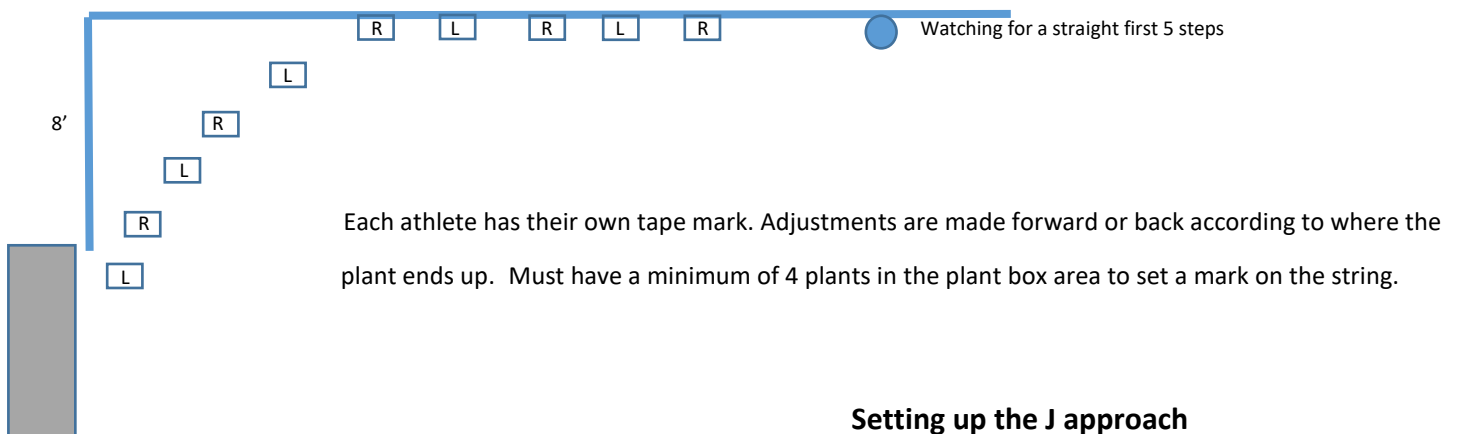
\* The wider out from the standard, the faster the approach must be...so my rule for Jr. High is 8-9’ out parallel from the jump side standard for all jumpers. Adjustments can be made later, especially with advanced jumpers.

\* Every jumper uses either a 10 or 11 step approach, depending on which foot they want to start on. Must end with a 5-step curve.

\* We use a single string with tape at the 9’ mark. Lay it out from the jump-side standard to the tape mark, then up the approach at a 90 degree angle (or as close as Jr. High kids can get it to 90).

\* We use a mark-and-remark method to find starting marks. THIS TAKES TIME. I NEVER allow jumpers to run out from the standard, either at practice or at a meet to set a mark. You can use the video found at the link below to find the radius and angle of plant, but with a zillion kids who need to find a mark, you probably don’t have the time.

\* When setting up starting marks, or jumping in practice, deputize athletes to watch for straight first 5, lean, and plant box. They are REQUIRED to give input. This gives them ownership in the process, greatly enhances understanding, keeps focus, and makes them students of the event. OBVIOUSLY, YOU ARE WATCHING, but it gives them something to do while learning in the meantime.



### Setting up the J approach

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mfaj-OdbS-c>

● Watching for plant location

● Watching for lean

## BASIC STARTER DRILLS

- \* 2-step walking knee drives with arm blocks
- \* 3-step jogging pop-ups with arm blocks
- \* 12' cone circle > jogging with 5-step pop-ups
- \* Standing back arches on the pit (partner ?)
- \* Back jumps starting on the pit
- \* Form running – knees out in front, free arms
- \* Full-approach pop-ups with standards/bungee
- \* 3-step walking knee drives with arm blocks
- \* 5-step pop-ups with arm blocks
- \* Back arches on the ground
- \* Back jumps onto the pit from the ground
- \* Back jumps over a bungee (ground or box)
- \* U-runs
- \* 1 or 2 full-approach attempts

## PRACTICES

- \* If your jumpers lay permanent tape marks on your approach, MAKE SURE your pit and standard are always positioned in the correct place. We've painted dots to mark the location of the pit and standards.
- \* Depending on how many jump practice days are scheduled before a meet, unless the objective is full approach jumps, new jumpers need specific skill mastery. This could be drills for approach, plant/takeoff, or bar clearance. If things have gone well, work in a couple full approach jumps at the end for fun.
- \* Video as much as is possible. You don't have to do every attempt of every kid, but it gives the instant feedback that the kids need. I use "Coaches Eye" app on my iPads (larger screen). Especially for beginners, SEEING IS UNDERSTANDING.

## HIGH SCHOOL jumpers

- \* I look for the same athletic characteristics as with the Jr. High kids. Don't be afraid to give other kids a try, even if they've already been out for a couple years. They might not perfect it before they graduate, but if it's points you need, they might pick up that 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> place that gives you a team title. Who knows....they might be a state champion.
- \* New jumpers are going to watch your experienced jumpers and want to dive right in and do what they are doing, at the same level at which they are doing it. It can be difficult to resist the urge to let them do it.
- \* New jumpers need to master the little things required to make good jump attempts. Take the time to get it right.
- \* Individualize workouts for each jumper. Do together what needs done, then get specific with each athlete.

### These are the videos I show all jumpers at the beginning of each season

Best video to show the importance of the keeping the lean at plant. Start watching at 3 min. into the video – 6:27

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HspzxKXhpzk>

Fun to show to new high jumpers (Western Roll) – 4:43

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBtBdNHBNSI>

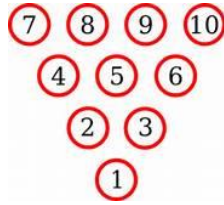
Getting a Leg Up: High Jump Explained – 4:46

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rel165sqh-l>

How to fix coming out of the curve early – 5:06

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=81NidfEGL9o>

I use a “pocket shot” in bowling to express the importance of hitting the right plant spot in HJ. Many kids have bowled and understand that if the bowler misses the pocket, the strike doesn’t happen. If a jumper hits the plant at the wrong angle, or too far up, out, or close to the bar, the jump doesn’t happen as planned.



**OTHER MISC. STUFF:** MEASURING STRING.....DEMONSTRATION BAR.....FILMING - FLIP CARDS

### **Common Problems in the High Jump**

From Jim Santos at the 2000 Iowa Track Coaches Clinic

- **Approach steps too short, preventing the jumper from attaining good speed into the takeoff:** *Solution:* Be sure to have 5 steps on the curve. You can go from 4 steps to 6 steps on the approach into the curve for a total number of 9-11 strides in the approach.
- **Inconsistent steps into the plant:** *Solution:* Practice the first 4-6 steps going into the arc. These steps must remain constant. Use 2 marks, a starting point, and a mark to start the arc. Remember the 25' arc
- **Not enough speed into the plant:** *Solution:* Practice a fast last 3 steps into the plant. Do not slow down in the last 3 steps...accelerate.
- **Running parallel to the bar during the last 2 strides of the approach:** *Solution:* Check the arc of the approach. Be sure that there are only 5 strides in the curve, not 6.
- **Plant is inconsistent:** *Solution:* The heel of the plant foot must always be in line with the inside high jump standard. Use the standard as a checkpoint for all plants for every jumper.
- **The knee of the jumper crosses over on the takeoff and exposes the back too early to the bar:** *Solution:* The plant foot must be pointed toward the inside far standard on the plant. If the jumper plants the foot parallel to the bar, the takeoff knee will come across the body too much to allow for a good takeoff.
- **Jumping into the bar too early:** *Solution:* Arms must drive upward before reaching over the bar. Check the inside shoulder on the plant. This shoulder should be higher than the outside shoulder.

# High Jump

**Approach** – depending on who you talk to...60-90% of all jump issues can be resolved by correcting something in this phase

- Mental imagery
- Consistent, comfortable, relaxed stride. Uniform acceleration.
- All speed gained in strides before the curve. Good knee drive
- Same speed at all heights
- Speed is as much that the athlete can handle through the curve and at the plant
- 5 step curve. Start on inside foot to avoid making a basketball V-cut
- Creates the lean that will help turn horizontal energy to vertical energy
- Eyes focus forward on the straight. Shift to far standard in the J

**Take Off** –

- Don't over-stride last 3 steps.
- Foot angle toward far standard
- Quickness of the plant is KEY...don't allow energy absorption
- Straight leg plant – 20 % of lift
- Drive knee tight and high. HoooooIIIIIIddddd it.....let the body catch up...Think of trying to let it reach the height of the bar. No knee drive, layout will begin too soon. 60% of lift comes from here
- Drive foot should not get past the knee.
- Plant is heel/toe
- Strong arms. Punch and block. Not too high. I like them around the top of the head. 20% of power from here.

**Bar Clearance** – Heads, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes

- GET VERTICAL FIRST
- Be Patient...Don't get into a hurry to get into the arch. You have to go up before you can go over.
- Head back or look over the shoulder. This aids in pressing the shoulders, which gives the upper back arch. It also allows the hips to rise. Try it.
- Press the hips and squeeze the cheeks. This gives the lower back arch. Try it.
- Arms to the thighs or sides
- Knees apart and heels together.
- As hips clear, tucking the chin into the chest will drop the hips and allow the feet to rotate over the bar. Try it.
- If you do it right, you should land on your upper back/shoulders