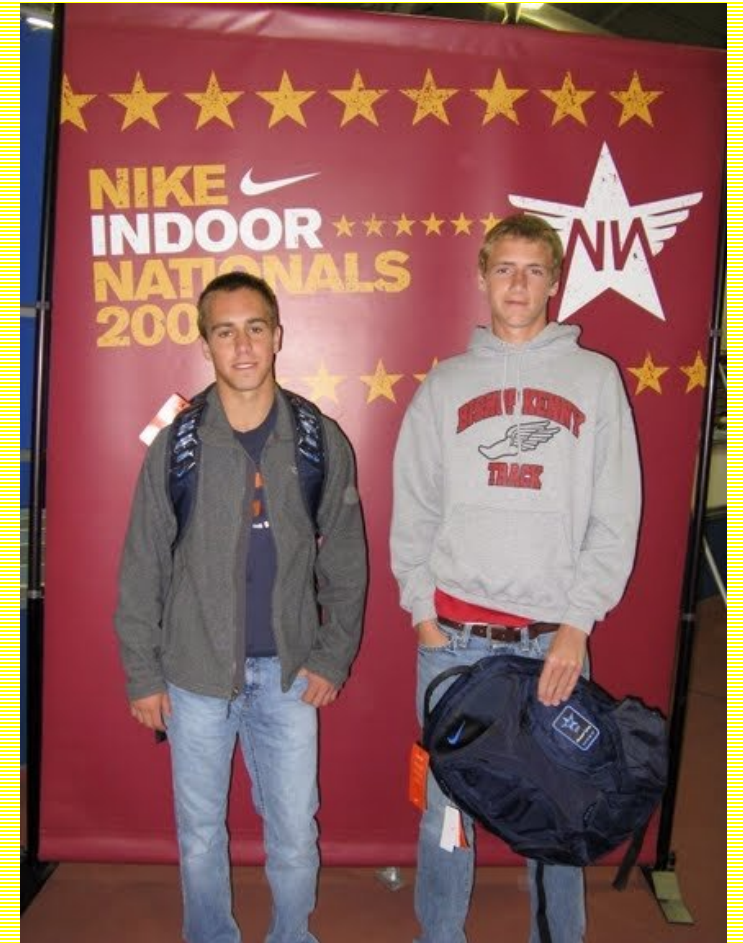


Elite Level Management and Balancing Varying Ability Levels in Your Program



The Challenges

- Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of each athlete, whether elite or not
- Training the elite level athlete and non elites together
- Different season lengths for Elites, other Varsity athletes and JV
- Set high goals but be realistic
- Early success and the challenges
- Big time competitions, exposure
- Don't just focus on your stud (s)
- The Vulture Effect



Season Length

- Official practice July 30th (many newbies come out the 1st week of school mid August), seniors hold conditioning 2 weeks after Track State meet, coaches meet them first Monday in June after school ends
- JV Season complete Wednesday October 3rd (most years mid to late September)
- State Championship Saturday November 11th (some years the week before, depending on the FSU home football schedule!)
- NXN SE and Footlocker South Saturday after Thanksgiving
- NXN first Saturday in December, Footlocker Nationals mid December



Racing

- Florida requires 5 races prior to the State Series (District, Region, State), new interpretation to the rule allows an athlete to get credit for a race if they are registered and in uniform at the meet. Our top 5 this year will race only 4 races, others are young or inexperienced and will race more. Less racing = more hill training out at Clermont. Beware that less racing can sometimes make athletes feel their eggs are all in one basket, so remind them of the ultimate season goal!
- Elite athletes have a longer season so don't over race, no matter what level of Elite athlete you have, Area elite, Region elite, State elite or National elite.
- Split squad- Varsity travels out of State while JV races in Florida in a Varsity race. Elite athlete and perhaps a talented team gets strong competition and JV gets Varsity race experience and better weather since JV races are typically later in the heat. ***Be sure the rest of your Varsity is ready to race in an Elite race. ***

Integrating Elite Athletes' Workouts with Others

- Elite athlete runs out with other Varsity members on distance run, comes back faster on their own.
- Elite athlete starts with other Varsity members but will run on their own for the rest of the intervals to ensure proper recovery time for all.
- Start elite athlete after others so they have someone to catch. They finish about the same time and can start the next interval together.
- Team mates will join elite athlete training for Foot locker Nationals or NXN and take turns pacing the athlete. They will warm up and cool down with the athlete.
- Potential elite freshman athlete- have them join in and do part of a workout. Example: We do mile repeats in two 800m loops. The frosh joins in on their 2nd loop, then for the next one joins in on the first, assess from there. Volume will be less but they will gain confidence to run with the "big girls/boys."

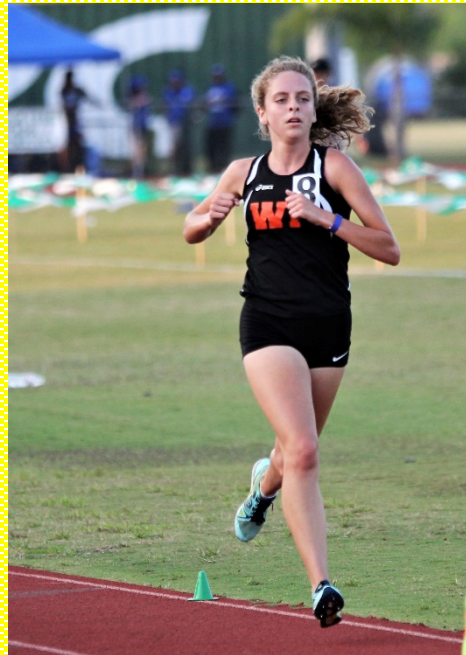


Setting Goals for Elite athletes and others

- **Set high goals but be realistic. Set goals for early season, mid season, end of season, high school career, college career and beyond.**
- **Remember it is a process, and there will be a lot of highs and a lot of lows along the way. Help them work through slumps. For those who start off winning right away, prepare them for the time period when they won't win every race. Focus on long term success, progress, the team, and having fun.**
- **It is tempting to do too much mileage early on. My goal is to see them progress throughout high school, college and beyond. You will have to reign in highly competitive athletes.**

Florida Elite: Hana Herndon progression

- Middle School ran a few times a week in the fall for a school running club (very low mileage) and in the spring during the middle school season, 2:35 in the 800m at the County Championship
- Freshman Year: 19:13 5k CC, 11:12 3200m (fell 5 laps in at State meet), 5:15.10 1600m
- Sophomore Year: 18:29 5k CC *All State*, 11:23.30 3200m, 5:17.18 1600m
- Junior Year 18:38, 11:08.02 3200m *All State*, 5:06.08 1600m, 4 x 800m State Champion
- Senior Year 18:55, 10:57.06 3200m *All State*, 5:02.64 All State, 4 x 800m State Champion
- Freshman Year at Georgia Tech 17:03 5k Outdoor track, 9:55.84 indoor 3000, 4:29.32 1500m



National Elite: Rafaella Gibbons

- Middle School: 10:10 3000m, 5:10 1600m, Multiple CC State Middle School Champions, USATF Junior Olympics Nationals 2nd place, ran up to 22 miles a week, but had a some experience with quality work and long runs.
- Freshman Year: 3 State titles (Cross Country, 3200m and 4 x 800m) and finished 27th at NXN 17:39 5k CC, 10:42.06 3200m, 5:02.97 1600m, had her run only between 22 to 27 miles a week
- Sophomore Year: 17:27 5k CC, 10:27 3200m (postal in fall), 4:55.97 1600m, Qualified again for NXN, State Champion in the 4 x 800m relay
- Junior Year: 18:09 5k CC, 10:36 3200m at Arcadia Invitational, 5:02 1600m, State Champion 4 x 800. She became a bit discouraged not winning as much and in her words “running slow.” This year I spent building her up emotionally and stayed very positive. TRUST THE PROCESS!
- Senior Year: 18:05 5K CC, 10:42 3200m, 4:56 1600m, State Champion in the 1600!
- Patience and Persistence pays off! Ends her Career with 9 State Championship Gold Medals and 20 overall State Medals.
- 3 Cross Country State Team Titles, 2 Cross Country State Team Runner Ups, 1 Track State Runner up Team for Track. Rafey loves her team!!!



Workout considerations

- **Since elites have a longer season, make sure not to do VO2 max work too early. Keep base work and threshold work as long as possible. Once you do incorporate VO2 work, make sure to keep strength workouts from the prior two phases. This should help you avoid a peak too early and keep the athlete feeling strong and fresh through a very long season.**
- **May need to have a little mini “peak” or back off some during Championship time depending on the level of your competition. If Footlocker or NXN is the goal, we don’t want to sacrifice a State Championship!**

Fostering a team atmosphere



- **Watch party for NXN or Footlocker Nationals to cheer on their team mate competing**
- **Spirit days- Crazy hat day, class colors, crazy socks, twin day**
- **Varsity athlete of the week and JV athlete of the week**
- **Scavenger hunt run in the summer**
- **Team pasta dinners, pancake breakfasts, movie nights**
- **Everyone is invited to summer running camp, as long as they train!**
- **Big Sister/Little Sisters selected by captains, give little gifts and notes**
- **I write team letters to everyone as well as to Varsity and individual notes for large travel meets/Championships**

The Big Picture

- **Keep it fun; remember they are in high school!**
- **Prepare them for College.**
- **Don't put too much stock in one race.**
- **Same rules for elites and non elites.**
- **Don't live in the past.**



Questions?



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