Unlocking the Secrets to Jamaican Sprinting
Mechanics and Drills for Speed

Dynamic warm-up sequence
- Walking
- Easy jog
- Arm swings
- Toe touches
- Ankling
- Back lunge & forward lunge
- Side skip
- Groin skip

Warm up
- Depending on the climate and what time we train our warm-up varies
- A dynamic warm up is standard, with at least 6x30–40–50m accelerations
- During the warm-up mechanics are constantly reinforced
- When there is a speed day specific sprint drills are included in the warm up session
- We try to finish our drills 10–15 minutes before our main activity

Warm drills
- Walking one or two laps
- Arm swings

Warm drills
- Backward lunge
- Forward lunge

Warm up drills
- Ankling
- Toe touches
Sprinting mechanics are designed to educate the body on the components of the sprinting process.

The demands include:
- Hip flexion
- Endurance
- Flexibility
- Extension on ground contact
- Stride length and frequency

Arm action:
- Swing from the shoulders and have them about 90 degrees
- Pull down and back

Have a slight forward lean.

The angle of the lean comes from the ground and not the waist.

The lean comes from displacing one’s center of gravity in the direction which they are running.

Try not to be tight in your upper body.

Dynamic warm-up inclusive of acceleration drills:
- High knee walk
- A SKIP
- B SKIP

Variations of both drills with arms extended in front and behind.

Do not tell athletes to run on their toes.

Run on the balls of your feet and push against the ground, try not to reach out.

High knees quick drill
- Fast leg
- Backwards running
- Lunge walk
- 45 degrees walk
A series of exercises are done before the program begins ex.
- Hip exercise
- Bicycle
- Lead leg pickups
- Abductor and adductor drills
- Leg swings

Circuit training is used in the early part of the season
- Additional body exercise are done ex.
- Hip raise
- Knee to chin
- Hip extension
- Iron cross

Stability work is done with cones ex.
- Side hop
- Alternating leg over
- Forward jumps
- Single leg hops
- Quick contact hurdles

Contrast training exercises ex
- Sled pull from three point
- Weighted vest
- Med ball bucket toss
- Speed belt
- Speed assist with tubing
We include start drills in our program from day one, e.g., three-point start, hop hop and also various other reaction drills.

“ON YOUR MARKS”

- Most importantly: strongest and most agile leg is placed in the front block
- Hands behind the start line: eyes looking forward along the ground
- Neck is relaxed, head inline with the trunk
Elongated

This position must enable the athlete to push off the blocks
Even weight distribution
Hips higher than shoulders
Front leg about 90 degrees rear leg 120 degrees

Set
Explosive drive from starting blocks, first from rear then front block the push is really off both legs
Legs fully extended on driving
Rear leg swings forward fast and low after drive
Push back into the track with vigorous arm swings

GO

‘GO’ Block start

Drills to improve the start
Push against the wall drill
Slay drill or tire drills
Hill work
Contrast training
Different start commands are practiced
One and two legged jumps then sprint
How relays have affected Jamaica's success

- 1952 Herb Mckenley, Les Laing, Arthur Wint and George Rhoden won our first ever relay gold medal
- This then created a relay culture in the country
- In the high schools coaches place a high value on relays when competing at the championships
- The skills are taught at an early age

Relays techniques and drills

- Proper technique is continuously reinforced
- Relay work is sometimes used to enhance speed training
- Try not to leave a session without reinforcing and perfecting exchanges with your team

Seasonal overview of relay progression

- GPP Baton passing work begins early in the season, basic technique and drills are thought
- SPP by the specific period all relay concepts are in place and practiced
- Competitive period: teams are competing every other week
Two main types: Visual and Non Visual.

Visual mostly used for 4x400m and 4x800m.

Non visual 4x100m and 4x200m.

Relays “The start”:
- Use any of the start technique.
- Hold the baton between thumb and forefingers creating a bridge at the end of the baton.

Relay start:
- Starter must start with baton in the right hand then pass to left etc.
- Hold the baton at the end.
- Relay runners must be properly positioned on the track, right left etc.
Relays

- The Incoming runner must:
  - Maintain lane position, keep to the correct side of the track
  - Keep the speed of the baton moving through the zone
  - Give clear command
  - Is the chief person responsible for the exchange

- The Outgoing runner:
  - Must accelerate maximally out of the acceleration zone
  - Listen for the command given
  - Must maintain a steady hand

Drills for relay speed

- Static exchange: one command is given all hands go up the baton is passed quickly to the front
  - This helps in making sure the baton is passed in a steady hand, the passer is concentrating while there is noise beside him
  - Helps in passing quickly but accurately
  - Movement can be added to this drill

Relay drills

- Static reach drill hand touch no baton
- Static reach from a back view

Relay drills with baton

Competitive relay drills in static position
Relays drill from static to dynamic

Relays

- Jogging reach drill

The zones used in relays

- The acceleration zone: 10 meters in length
- The purpose is to allow outgoing runner to reach close to top speed as baton is exchanged
- The take over zones: 20m in length
- Both zones are known as the take over zone 30m in length

Acceleration zone drills

- Using mark to train outgoing runner

The purpose of the acceleration zone is to allow the outgoing runner to reach close to top speed as the baton is exchanged.

Relays

- Half track changes

- 4x100m exchange under pressure

Half speed exchanges
A visual pass is used

No verbal command is given

Collect baton in left then change to right after clearing traffic

There is a 20m zone

4x400m exchanges

4x400m easy exchange

4x400m under pressure

Relay tips

Do relay passing in warm-up

Frequency two to three times per week working different legs

Good turn runners leg 1st and 3rd

Good speed endurance for backstretch and anchors

Good starters out of the blocks

Try to put the four most cohesive runners on the team not necessarily the four fastest

Relays can help to detract from the monotony of training