

Unlocking the Secrets to Jamaican Sprinting: Training Formula for Success

-Maurice Wilson

Training challenges for Jamaican track and field

- Only four hard surface tracks in a population of 2.7 million
- Hardly any proper gym facilities
- The need for better access in relation to injury rehabilitation

The start of training athletes locally

- “We are going to prove to those coaches abroad that we can do it right here in Jamaica.”
- Those were the prophetic words of Stephen Francis in 1999, coach of Asafa Powell, Melanie Walker, ShellyAnn Fraser and a host of others.

The start of training athletes locally

- This led to the formation of the first organized track and field club in Jamaica
- This gave athletes the option of staying at home

The advantages of athletes staying at home

- q Climate
- q Native foods what makes up a typical (Jamaican breakfast)
- q Near to family and friends
- q Not having to face the grueling collegiate seasons

Jamaican breakfast

Ackee & salt fish
breadfruit &
callaloo



Same food with
fruits added



Training tips

- Have a philosophy long to short, short to long or a mixture of both
- Nothing replaces actually practicing to run
- Core strength is important in developing young athletes
- Give time for recovery
- Depending on the age of the athlete multi- lateral development is always encouraged

Our training season for High School

- Our high school season runs from Sept.- April
- We break our season into 3 main phases before tapering
 - General Preparatory (GPP)
 - Specific Period (SP)
 - Competitive Period (CP)

General Preparatory GPP Phase

- 10- 12 weeks or 35% of our season
- Our high school athletes train 3- 6 times/week
- Aerobic running
- Strength endurance i.e. hill work

General Preparatory phase

- General strength work
- Sub maximal acceleration
- Major focus on running technique

GPP Microcycle

- Monday-acceleration runs
- Tuesday-technique and general strength
- Wednesday-tempo training
- Thursday-strength endurance hill work
- Friday-reinforce technique general strength and med ball work
- Saturday-speed endurance hill work

“Difference maker for Holmwood GPP: Hills



Jamaican GPP secrets

- My philosophy “It is better to take a day than lose a year”.
- Warm-up is very important
- Massage plays an integral role

Jamaican GPP secrets


- Must walk with a water bottle
- Hydrate every 15 minutes
- Stride through before sets
- At least 800m cool down is a must

Jamaican GPP secrets

- Certain exercises must be done before workouts clip must be introduced


Groin side skips





Jamaican GPP secrets

- The coach should know when the athletes need a rest day (physically and emotionally)
- Coach should know when the athlete is ready to run



Jamaican GPP secrets

- Relaxation is the key to our workouts
- This starts from our warm up(done in our accelerations)
- If there is a loss of relaxation especially if it is speed work then the training is terminated



Jamaican GPP secrets

- We are not slave to programs (may change according to climate, fatigue etc)
- The strengths of athletes are emphasized sometimes at the expense of book technique etc
- Nutrition and medical help are sometimes unconventional ex. Instead lucozade a mild drink can be made

Specific Period Phase

- Approximately 12 weeks of our season
- Aerobic intensive
- Maximum speed work
- Fast acceleration

SPP

- Special methods for developing speed
- Speed endurance
- Elastic strength
- Sub max and maximum intensity must be introduced

SP Microcycle

- Monday-acceleration with and without resistance
- Tuesday-technique and general strength
- Wednesday-speed endurance
- Thursday-sub maximal speed
- Friday-acceleration
- Saturday- strength endurance hill work
- Within week: block work, reaction drills, technique

SP Speed work with and without resistance



SPP

- Stabilizing jump work
- Plyometric training
- Circuit strength
- Reinforce technique

Jamaican SP secrets

- During the SPP for young athletes, strength exercises should be concentrated on Abdominals, back, pelvis and rotators of the spine for young athletes
- During SPP volume is still high
- Intensity still high 70-80%

Jamaican SPP

- ❑ Specific exercises must be done related to skills example (block starts)
- ❑ Volume falls toward the end of phase
- ❑ Intensity is elevated towards end of the phase
- ❑ Exercise must be of high quality

Jamaican SPP

- ❑ Exercises can be done for fun to avoid boredom, active rest example easy relays, circuits
- ❑ Secondary competition and trials can be done to provide feedback

Jamaican SPP

- ❑ Athletes technique are reinforced and corrected at high speeds
- ❑ Comparison of technique takes place in relation to video taping (relaxation techniques are observed and analyzed)

Competitive Period Phase

- Approximately eight weeks of our season
- Speed training 2 x week
- Speed endurance 1 x week

Competitive Period

- Elastic training
- Maximum intensity work (speed training)
- Special strength
- Adequate rest between sessions

Competitive Microcycle

- Monday-speed work up to 30 meters
- Tuesday-recovery day easy tempo
- Wednesday-speed assist work
- Thursday-general strength speed endurance
- Friday-flexibility and mental training sessions
- Saturday-competition

Recovery days

- Aerobic
- Mental training
- Massage
- Play games have fun

Testing

- This is done every 4-5 weeks
- Speed runs (60m)
- Strength (maximal lifts, vertical and broad jumps)
- Body weight

Peaking formula

- Break this phase down a bit if you would. All of our coaches are VERY interested in how you peak your athletes
- Last 2-3 weeks of the season
- Major factors in your rest methods in terms of training.

Tips for Peaking on competition day

- Plan training to reach peak on main competition day
- The last two weeks you should unload to allow athletes to reach peak efficiently
- Pay attention to your athletes eating resting
- Rehearse competition procedures(know your schedule , what time you plan to warm up etc.)

Competition Day

- Wake up in time to allow body systems to be fully adapted at competition time
- Take appropriate foods at the right time example, hydrate regularly
- Control arousal and mental state

Competition day continued.....

- Reach competition area on time
- Focus on performance rather than outcome

Jamaican CP Secrets

- Volume of training is reduced depending upon the type of competition
- There must be maintenance of elastic strength (plyos, not too much contacts)
- At least 2-3 light days depending upon the competition
- Work load must be heavy enough to keep athletes fitness but light enough to maintain energy levels

Jamaican CP Secrets

- Athletes must be resting and eating properly
- Athletes must be under constant observation (warm-up, technique etc)
- A lot of speed work is done in the form of baton change
- Minor meets that have been run must be regularly analyzed

Training Formula for Success

- ADMINISTRATION
- Develop strong junior programs
- Continue to upgrade coaches

Training Formula for Success continued...

- Provide regular competitions
- Highlight former great athletes and performances
- Get parents and community members to buy into your programs

Training Formula for Success continued...

- Focus your energies on what you have vs. what you do not have and make the most of it.

Off season training

- Athletes do various activities but nothing in a structured form
- At the very junior level if they are from the country they fly kites, climb trees, play hop scotch etc.

Off season training

- q The athletes that are more experienced may go to swimming or play other games
- q Some go to celebrations, example parties
- q Others catch up with their family and friends
