

## **Fall Training Guidelines for Throwers – at Missouri**

Ron Garner, a great friend, phenomenal coach and even better person told me once that “what works in one training environment may not work in your training environment.” Essentially, there are many different methods in developing throwers and no one way is the “right” way...find what works best in your given situation.

Each year I keep Ron’s advice in mind as I begin the season reviewing what worked well in the previous year and then set out to determine what I want to remove from our training and what I would like to add to our routine. But, I start from the same premise each year – Develop a Better Athlete. We as coaches talk about it all the time; “Wow, that kid is a great athlete!”. I know one thing for certain; all things being equal the better athlete will most likely come out on top, and even more importantly, the better athlete is more likely to acquire the technical skills necessary to achieve high level performances.

### **GENERAL PREPARATION**

The fall training at Missouri focuses on providing the athletes with the athletic capabilities for what is demanded of them in the ring (Speed, Strength, Power, Coordination, Flexibility, Stability, Agility, Mobility, Spatial Awareness) Essentially, our fall training is designed to enhance the Five Bio-Motor Abilities; Flexibility, Coordination, Endurance (Work Capacity), Speed and Strength.

During the first six to eight weeks the athletes are “training to begin to train”. We focus on flexibility, coordination and a general work capacity as it relates to the needs of throwers. Obviously, we are not concerned with a thrower’s aerobic capability but, we are certainly concerned with he or she’s ability to take more than a hand full of repetitions during a throwing session as we progress through the season. Therefore, “work capacity” vs. endurance is important to the thrower. Work capacity is accomplished easily in the weight room with higher repetitions and lower numbers of sets. I particularly like to package supplemental or auxiliary lifts into circuits. For example, packaging a dumbbell fly, dumbbell single arm row, dumbbell rear raise and a dumbbell should press into a circuit. Circuits are typically performed at a given number of repetitions with 20-30 seconds rest between exercises and 2-4 minutes rest between trips.

While we are working to develop a sound training base during the first several weeks of the fall, we are also developing sound “movement skills” both in the weight room and at the track. During this period an emphasis is placed on skill development in the weight room in the Olympic Lifts; Power Snatch, Hang Snatch, Power Clean, Hang Clean, and Split Jerk. At the track the emphasis is on understanding and learning the proper movements of the each of the throws.

### **GENERAL DEVELOPMENT - Throwing**

Once we move past our introductory training phase where we have prepared the throwers to begin to train, we settle into our fall routine. The fall routine will have an emphasis on skill development in both the discus and hammer, particularly for those athletes who will compete in two or more events. I try to use the warm weather during the fall to develop a sound technical foundation in both the discus and hammer. This period is particularly important for the newcomers to the event of hammer. A sound technical base developed by using lighter implements is a must prior to moving indoors for the winter months where the focus becomes the 35lbs weight for men and the 20lbs weight for the women.

We train the shot put once per week during most of the fall as we devote a great deal of time to the shot put following our Thanksgiving Break. The shot put training will emphasize heavy stand throws and partial movements followed by normal to lighter implements during full throws. I use light implements when doing full movements as the throwers are generally fatigued and the light implement will provide them the best opportunity to focus on their technique.

Drills are used to solve technical issues with older throwers, enhance already well learned skills with the older throwers as well as a tool for learning events from the ground up with newcomers. I'm always careful not to emphasize drills so much that our throwers become effective drillers and ineffective throwers. I am constantly asking the throwers to link the drill movements (partial movements) into full movements.

### **GENERAL DEVELOPMENT - Training**

Training can be an extraordinarily complex process and only adding to the complexities are the athletes. We each work with a number of athletes who present a multitude of variables to the training puzzle; class schedules, injuries, illness, deficiencies in one or more of the bio-motor abilities, as well as a myriad of potential real, and everyday personal issues. Therefore, I try to keep the training routine as simple as possible for the athletes. I want a training routine or plan that is flexible enough and understandable enough to allow for constant adaptation to the wide range of variables that each and every athlete must face on a daily basis.

I break our training days into Neural Days and Core Days. Neural Days; include all exercises that include the neural muscular system. Core Days; include all exercises that do not stress the neural muscular system. Perhaps defining our training into Neural Day and Core Days is overly simplistic but, I find that our training is very easy to manage and easily understood by the athletes. Below are fundamental guidelines that I stress to our throwers:

**Neural Day**

Technique  
 Multiple Jumps  
 Multiple Throws  
 Speed Development  
 Olympic Lifts  
 Core Lifts  
 Secondary Lifts

**Core Day**

Hurdle Coordination  
 Technique  
 Work Capacity  
 General Strength  
 Medicine Balls  
 Auxiliary Lifts

**Recovery Day**

Balance  
 Stability  
 Easy Strides  
 Technique

The athletes can easily understand that neural days involve sprinting, jumping, multiple throws and explosive lifts. While core days involve upper body work, core strengthening, mobility and agility. Below are what exercises can and can not be used together.

**COMPATIBLE**

Speed and Multiple Jumps  
 Speed and Olympic Lifts, Core, Secondary Lifts  
 Multiple Jumps and Multiple Throws  
 Balance any day  
 Coordination with General Strength  
 Core Work any day

**NOT COMPATIBLE**

Neural Work within 48 hours  
 Multiple Jumps back to back days  
 Sprints on back to back days

Training does not need to be a complicated process for athletes. Leave the complexities of training in the office! Keep it simple and fun for the athletes!