



# Chris Ruff

Head T & F Coach  
Del Norte HS

**300M HURDLES**

# 300M HURDLES

## Who Should Run Them?

- ❑ **Speed Wins:** The 300H race is the worst possible event for an athlete who lacks leg speed. The race requires sprinter speed between hurdles, coordination, strength, endurance and explosion. Your best athletes should be trying this event unless they are an elite sprinter.
- ❑ **You Can Sprint a Hurdler, But You Can't Hurdle a Sprinter:** the longer hurdles are a great place to place your sprinters who are most 400m oriented. Remember, just because an athlete is a hurdler doesn't mean they can't help you in the relays or open events. However, it wouldn't be advisable to "throw a sprinter into the hurdles."
- ❑ **Fearless and mentally tough athletes are good candidates for the 300H's:** The hurdles are challenging to any athlete, it is not a race for the timid or "fluid runners." Aggressive competitors with leg speed are the best candidate in the this race.

# 300M HURDLES

## Parameters

### 300M HURDLE PARAMETERS

- ❑ **Distance from the start line to the 1<sup>st</sup> hurdle is 45m, with 35m between each hurdle.**
- ❑ **Girls: 30” Hurdles:** Girls typically use 22-25 Strides to the first hurdle and 15-20 between.
- ❑ **Boys: 36” Hurdles:** Boys typically use 19-23 strides to first hurdle and 13-17 in between.
- ❑ **Average stride length for clearing the hurdle is approximately 3 meters, of which 63% is before the hurdle and 37% is after the hurdle.**

# 300M HURDLES TRAINING

- ❑ **Strength/Aerobic Fitness:** For strength and aerobic fitness, train your long hurdlers much like the 400 meter runners. The base building workouts with longer intervals, like 500's, 400's, repeat 300's are a great opportunity to work on finishing strength for 300M hurdlers. When training hurdlers for Anaerobic Endurance and Aerobic Fitness, it is imperative that the workout simulate the race as closely as possible in order to acclimate the athlete to the challenges of clearing barriers while fatigued.
- ❑ **Speed:** Is your workout 4 x 150m full speed, full recovery? Have the hurdlers run those 150's over hurdles placed on the designated race distance.
- ❑ **Finish Work:** Use the final 100 meters of sprint intervals to prepare athletes for the finish of the 300H's. When running a 500, 400, 300meter interval, place the last 3 hurdles of the 300H race in the hurdlers lane. The Athlete should attempt to finish the last 3 hurdles as close to race speed as they can. Having athletes hurdle when under great fatigue is a great way to prepare them for the actual race, under controlled conditions.
- ❑ **Start Work:** The start is very important to set the tone and rhythm of the 300H event. Getting an aggressive, consistent start is crucial in having a successful race. One day a week (the day before meets for my athletes) have your athletes practice that first 5-4-3 hurdles of the longer race, at full effort. This a great way to develop stride patterns, sprint endurance and proper hurdle technique on the turn. The athletes, from the blocks, will run the first 5 Hurdles (near 200M), then the first 4, then the first 3. This should be as near to full effort as possible.
- ❑ **Hurdlers Must React, Not Guess:** Deceleration is the greatest enemy of the 300 hurdler. It takes an incredible amount of energy stores to decelerate and accelerate over and over again. 300H hurdlers should look past and "react" to the oncoming hurdle, not guess as to what lead leg will present. The ability to alternate is an invaluable asset to have, as a runner can react with whatever leg comes up clear the hurdle. Practice takeoff points with both legs: use cones to establish takeoff distance for the athlete and have them use that as reference in order to acclimate them to the longer distanced takeoff.
- ❑ **Be Creative:** Change distances between hurdles, taking away the athlete's ability to "guess" where to take off. IE: Place 4 hurdles on the turn at random places; this will force the athlete to adapt and "react" to what space they are presented with. This is a great way to eliminate the time killing stutter step deceleration that plagues many hurdlers.

# 300M HURDLES STRATEGY

- ❑ **This Is A Sprint Race:** Unlike the college and international distance of 400m, the 300m distance is much more a sprint than it is an endurance event. Properly trained hurdlers should be able to run most of the distance at full effort.
- ❑ **The 1<sup>st</sup> Hurdle:** The approach from the blocks to the first hurdle should always be “as fast as you can, as relaxed as you can.” The first hurdle sets the tone for the entire race, and inconsistent step to the first hurdle can lead to the hurdler using their alternate leg for the majority of the race, costing time and energy. Full speed approaches to the first hurdle can mitigate the possibility of an alternate leg first hurdle.
- ❑ **Hurdlers are moving much faster in the 300H than they are in the 100/110HH race:** Because of the 35m length in between hurdles, the speed at which the hurdlers are approaching and negotiating the hurdles is deceptively fast. Because of this greater speed, hurdlers are taking off much further away and have a more exaggerated trail leg on touchdown stride.
- ❑ **Hurdles on the turn:** Hurdlers should run the turn hurdles as if they are on a straight line. The attack should be perpendicular to the hurdle crossbar. Athletes should run in the middle of the lane on the turn, as the right leg lead may come up; running in the middle of the lane, prevents a left leg trail from not clearing the hurdle, which can lead to disqualification.

# ESSENTIAL SKILLS

## 300M HURDLES

- ❑ Ability to forcefully takeoff, moving forward **THROUGH** the hurdle to minimize deceleration.
- ❑ Be able to efficiently perform hurdling skills using either lead leg.
- ❑ Be strong enough to maintain efficient and consistent rhythm throughout the entire race.
- ❑ Develop the ability to **REACT** to the hurdle not **GUESS** which foot **MAY** come up.
- ❑ Be able to look beyond the hurdle with correct sprinting posture while avoiding the temptation to **TARGET** the hurdle. When an athlete **“TARGETS”** a hurdler and stares at the crossbar, their shoulders will drop and their stride length will shorten and decelerate as a natural response.



Q & A  
OPEN SESSION