



## Post Event Notes from Gymnastics Foundations Courses

- Island Tag – A great game I learned was island tag. It develops motor skills and awareness while using basic skills such as landings, jumps and leg strength. Mats of different heights are spread out on the floor and are used as islands. One person is 'it'. Any person can be safe if they are on an island but if someone else jumps on the island, the person who was on the mat must get off and they can only stay on the island for 3 seconds. The person who is 'it' can make a shark fin on their head with their hand. When they catch other players, they become sharks too, until everyone is caught.
- Communities – A fun game that I learnt was called communities. This game works well with a bunch of people. Everyone can run around or do bunny hops, skipping, frog jumps, etc. (locomotions). The coach will call out (a body part) 3 elbows and the gymnasts will have to find 3 elbows including one of theirs and 2 other people's elbows. Last people to find 2 other elbows can do 5 jumping jacks, etc.
  - When the communities get together the coach can get them to tell something about themselves to their community or do a conditioning activity as a group. Communities are also a good way to create partners so athletes don't go with the same people all the time.
- A fun conditioning activity I learned was to play follow the leader around a course that the coach set-up. You can work on different parts of the children's muscles. It is fun but it also builds muscle.
- Barn Yard Tag – Place 1 or 2 large mats to be the barns. Ask the athletes what kind of animals live in a barn. Take one of their suggestions and everyone has to be that animal. You pretend to 'accidentally' leave the gate open and you have to go and tag the athletes to put them back in the barn. The game is repeated with the athletes acting like different animals.
- Monkeys and Crabs – monkeys are 'it' and they do a monkey walk, crabs are not it and they do a crab walk. The objective is for the crabs to evade the monkeys. When a crab is caught the monkey becomes a crab and the crab becomes a monkey. \*\*Tips: heads up, use open space, thumbs to bum for crab walk, more monkeys is easier for the 'it'
- Band-Aid Tag – Everyone is 'it'; coach or CIT is the medic. When you are tagged you must use a 'Band-Aid' (your hand) to cover that spot, once you have used both 'Band-Aids (both hands) and you get tagged a 3<sup>rd</sup> time, you must go see one of the medics (a coach or CIT) who will give you something to do (i.e. 5 tuck jumps or 10 sec front support) to be healed of all your wounds, thus allowing you to re-enter the game.
- Discovered Learning – I learnt about discovered learning, in which an athlete performs an action that indirectly ends up teaching them a gymnastics skill. Ex. Asking a gymnast to jump into a hoop you are holding above the ground. Gradually as you raise the hoop the gymnast needs to bend his/her knees and learns how to do a tuck jump.
- Seat Drop for Trampoline – one must first know how to do a stop bounce, a straight jump and a seat drop position stationary on the floor. The progression to learn seat drop on the trampoline goes as so:
  - Stationary seat drop position on trampoline bed with fingers pointing towards toes
  - Standing on mat on trampoline bed, seat drop from stand (no jump)
  - Standing on mat on trampoline bed, seat drop from small jump (stay at this step until landing is consistent)
  - Seat drop from small jump on trampoline
  - Continue to add height gradually

- Over time, gymnast can work to achieve a straight position in the air with arms up, prior to landing in seat drop position
- Forward roll – when teaching a gymnast how to do a forward roll you can use the rhyme “tall as a house, small as a mouse”. When they say tall as a house they are reaching as high as they can and when they say small as a mouse they make themselves as small as possible before they roll.

### **Post Event Notes from the Level 2 Tramp Technical**

- Whenever you are spotting a new skill you HAVE to catch their landing
- You always need to show the athlete that you are confident when spotting them
- Make sure your athlete can back pullover to hand-knee, back pullover to front drop and slow back layout before they learn how to do a back  $\frac{3}{4}$
- I learned that there are 3 types of twist: cat twist, tilt twist and torque twist
- To recognize the direction of someone’s twist stand on their left side and if you see their stomach first then they twist left, if you see their back first then they twist right.
- One thing the facilitator said that I found very useful was the idea to use a doll while coaching, so the athletes can manipulate it and help them gain a more thorough understanding of the skill. As well, if the athlete is using the doll you can tell what they are thinking and if they fully understand the skill or if more explanation is needed.
- 3 things to consider before moving an athlete on to the next skill/progression:
  - Athlete’s confidence in their own abilities
  - Athlete’s history when learning new skills & handling challenges
  - Athlete’s confidence in coach’s spotting/decision making skills
- Progressions for Front Tuck:
  - Hand/knee salto to back
  - Hand/knee salto to bum
  - Hand/knee salto to feet
  - Forward roll ‘missing your hands’
  - + others – these will develop a more body-aware athlete before moving onto the ‘real’ front tuck (feet to feet). It also helps them understand how to create rotation

### **Post Event Notes from the Level 3 Rhythmic Technical**

- Proper turning:
  - Shoulders down
  - Don’t wind up in preparation, keep hips forward
  - Wide stance
  - Push forward directly over toe of supporting leg
  - Lengthen to releve when done turning, lengthen space between ribs and hips and emphasize shape at the last second

### **Post Event Notes from the Competition 1 WAG Course**

- Teaching saltos – Teach the salto from a height and only let them complete them on the floor once they can prove they can complete it off of a height and land where the floor would be (ex. If doing off of a beam they must have completed the rotation by the time their feet are at the beam height).

- Flyaway – I learnt a great flyaway drill where you have the girls swing three times on the low bar with their knees tucked, on the third swing you catch them on your shoulder and you hold them tight before placing them down on the mats below, the progression from that is to flip them over into mean cat and then double spot up to standing.
- Planning – I learned how important planning each lesson is. Planning the year's goals and working backwards to come up with daily plans, weekly plans and monthly plans.
- Physical Preparation – work muscular endurance before strengthening, and strengthening before power.
- Press Handstand:
  - Pressing from 'L' position with legs on box
  - Shoulder slide outs with sliders to strengthen shoulder muscles
  - Hold athletes legs, make them pull their shoulders forward/backward
  - Presses against wall (elephant press and legs together)
- Beam skills should never be spotted on the high beam. It is important to teach properly on a low beam before moving up.
- A lot of muscles aren't properly conditioned during training (for example: flexed feet) so when that muscle is strong on one side (pointed toes) but weak on the other (flexed) it can cause issues and possibly lead to injuries. It is important to work muscles that aren't commonly used through our training.
- A big thing for me in spotting that I learned was to never start spotting with 1 arm on the gymnast because as they develop the skill and need less/no spot it becomes difficult for them to do it without spot as they are dependent on feeling the contact with the coach.