

Eight rules for peak performance

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These are the presentation notes for a lecture that is for young athletes, their parents and coaches. Please bear in mind that these are notes only and do not convey the full meaning and detail of what is a 1.5 hour presentation.

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The Eight Rules

- Choose the right sport
- Develop the basics first
- The “no Injury” rule
- The ‘athlete lifespan’ rule
- Nutrition for life
- The four “P’s”
- The big bus concept
- The “neck-check”

- **Choose the right sport**

- Body type
 - May change dramatically after puberty
 - Avoid premature over-specialisation
- Must suit temperament
- Must have realistic opportunities
- “Sport for life”

- **Develop the basics first**

- Hone basic skills
 - Then develop a bag full of variations on the basic
- Learn to enjoy physical activity through a balance of free activity, training and competition
- Develop the basics of stamina, strength, speed, agility, coordination and flexibility
 - Then begin to add the “heavy duty” stuff
 - Serious competition comes last

- **The “no Injury” rule**

- A primary rule of youth coaching is no performance/career-limiting injuries
- Progressive resistance
 - Hard day – easy day rule
 - Never the same over consecutive workouts
 - 6-12 week blocks
 - Active recovery/rest
- Listen to your body
 - Know when it is telling you to ease off
- Unfettered competition = injury

- **The ‘athlete lifespan’ rule**

- Lydiard approach = gradual gains over 8-10 yrs
 - Plateau after 8-10 years and may be sustained for several years
 - Then decline by a factor of about 0.01/yr
- Physical maturity at about 28 years old
 - Begin serious athletic conditioning @ 18 yrs

To commence intense training & comp at a less mature physical and emotional age is to risk premature peaking, chronic injury and physical and emotional burnout

The steady process of building an aerobic base

• Nutrition for life

The typical young athlete diet

- Predisposes the individual to:
 - Tooth decay and gum disease
 - Diabetes
 - Obesity
 - Heart disease
 - Diseases of the digestive tract
 - Chronic fatigue
 - Viral infections
 - Injury
 - Inconsistent performances
 - Premature retirement from sport

Eat less

- Processed carbohydrates, including honey and sugar
- Sweets and chocolate
- Processed grains, especially white flour
- Potato consumption
- Highly processed foods
- Hard animal fats
- Carbonated drinks
- Fruit juice consumption
- Caffeine drinks
- Energy drinks

Eat more

- Eat more leafy greens and coloured veges
- Choose whole grain foods
- Eat more nuts
- Consume more quality oils
- Eat fish 2-3 times per week
- Eat Marmite daily
- Eat more raw fruit

The 18-a-day Challenge

- For at least one week from tomorrow, eat 18+ different foods daily from the following food groups:
 - Leafy greens and coloured veges
 - Whole grains including breads
 - Nuts and legumes

- Fish
- Lean meat
- Milk, cheese and yoghurt
- Raw fruit and berries

• **The four “P’s”**

- **Plan**
 - Have a plan and stick to it
- **Progress**
 - Monitor progress through time trials or other measures
- **Pick**
 - Pick your competitions
 - Developmental competitions
 - The competitions that count
- **Pace**
 - Pace yourself through the season
 - Pace yourself during the competition

• **The big bus concept**

- Most sports injuries are of gradual onset
- First signs
 - Very tired and aching, sore throat, poor sleep
 - Sore tendon, muscle, joint
- Action
 - Listen to your body!
 - Cut the session short
 - Go home, have a long hot bath
 - Eat lots of very good food and drink
 - Massage, gentle exercise & stretch

Resuming exercise

- Have two rest days
- 3rd day – easy resumption of activity close to home
- 4th day – a little more
- By 7th day – back into full action
 - Cut the activity short and have another rest day, if recovery has not been complete
 - For the sake of a few days rest, progressing to a chronic overuse injury can undo months of training

Rest can be active

When to get medical help

- If you follow sound training principles, have a nutrient rich diet and follow these guidelines for avoiding overuse injury and chronic fatigue, you should hardly ever need to consult a medical person
- Exceptions
 - Sudden violent injury
 - Popping, tearing sound or giving away sensation
 - Rapid swelling
 - deformity

- Loss of function
- Injury that does not respond to rest
- Infections and wounds

• The “neck-check”

- “Neck check”
 - If infection is below the neck – rest until it has passed
 - Infection other than head cold will be in the muscles
 - Vigorous exercise will further harm already stressed muscle tissue
 - Heart is a muscle and there is a real risk of sudden death
- Head cold
 - May continue to exercise but back right off duration and intensity
 - The virus is telling you that you need to rest, sleep and eat better
 - Keep warm
- Below chest
 - Rest completely or
 - All exercise **very** low intensity and duration
 - No eccentric activity
 - Keep warm

Summary: the Eight Rules

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