



# Coaching

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## MAY 2008 NEWSLETTER

**REGIONAL COACHING CONFERENCE** There was a good turn out of seven coaches from the county at Bath on 12<sup>th</sup> April, for an inspiring opening address from Steve Backley. Here are a few quotes.

There is a physical difference between those that try hard and those that succeed. If you can see the whites of their eyes, they will win. The trait to success is 1) Plan 2) Belief in yourself, especially under pressure 3) Know your weaknesses as well as your strengths 4) Deliver your maximum 5) Reach for the potential beyond what we perceive as our max. 6) Be passionate about our sport

He also stressed the validity of visualization for athletes, and for coaches to pre-suppose a question to our athletes, then analyse the answer.

Fuzz Ahmed, level 4 high jump coach to Kelly Sutherton and Julie Crane amongst others, gave an excellent workshop, but one or two of his theories are open to question There were sessions on mentoring, marathon training, strength and conditioning and Applied Biomechanics, the latter being very good but really needing more time to practice the camera work.

**SCREEN SAVER** The revamped UKA screensaver is well worth downloading. Not only does it have a series of pictures, but they keep being changed whenever you log on. Go to [www.ukathletics.net](http://www.ukathletics.net)

**GOAL SETTING** If you have not done this with your athletes yet, it is not too late. Remember that if you aim for the sky you may hit the trees, but if you aim for the trees you may hit the ground. So is it going to be ESAA and the National champs, or are you settling for the County champs as a goal.

### **COULD DISTANCE RUNNERS GO FASTER IF THEY CHANGED THEIR TECHNIQUE?**

I wrote an article in The Coach a few years ago based on my experience of coaching in Africa, the gist of which is as follows. If you look at African distance runners you will see that most of them run with a high arm carriage compared with the lower position of the average European. The fact is, when the lower arm swings like a pendulum is quite heavy, so if you can reduce its effective weight by holding it higher then you will use less energy. It is awkward to get used to, but it works, and is worth trying in training to compare your times over a known distance.

**COLAPSABLE CONES** These can be very useful and stack into each other. The best price I have found for these is a tad over £17 including postage for 20 cones from Gaiam Ltd in Warwickshire [www.gaiam.co.uk](http://www.gaiam.co.uk) A snip at that price

### **DYNAMIC VERSUS STATIC STRETCHING.**

Athletics is an action sport, so when we are warming up it makes sense to do active mobility of the joints and muscles to prepare them, whilst static mobility actually stretches the muscle fibres, making them thinner and momentarily weaker, so why do it? However, there is a place for static stretching after racing or training, to help bring the muscles back to normal after they have been under stress. In fact, in engineering terms it is called 'normalizing.'

**ESAA OR ENGLAND ATHLETICS.** Athletes aiming for the Sainsbury's ESAA Championships should be aware that achieving a qualifying time does not guarantee a seat on the flight to Gateshead, since each county has a limited entry, which is one reason why Cornwall Schools often insist on qualifying during a schools competition, where other counties may not be so stringent. Therefore athletes with the right potential should also target the England Athletic National Championships for their age group.

Any material for this monthly newsletter is most welcome. **DON'T FORGET THE CARN BREA RELAYS AND THROWS** on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> May from 6pm. The response so far is good.