

Scarborough Track Program Hurdle Drills

Explained by Steve Ross

Trail leg wall drill: Stand facing wall. Place palms, arms straight, against wall. Swing leg back, bent at knee. Bring knee forward high, hip height, lower leg bent at knee and foot carried as high as possible. As knee comes in front of body, bring lower leg down so foot comes directly under knee. As foot comes directly under knee, knee will appear to pop up. Repeat motion 10-20 times. Do the same with other leg.

Lead leg wall drill: Stand parallel to wall. Balance with nearer hand on wall. Bring knee of leg nearer wall higher than hip joint. Snap lower leg straight out in front of knee. Pull straight leg down vigorously. Repeat 10-20 times. Do same with other leg.

Knee over hurdle drill: Stand with leg on either side of hurdle bar. Hurdle should be set as high as is comfortably possible. Bring knee as high as possible toward chest. Swing lower leg and foot under knee and over hurdle and put down on floor on same side as other leg. Step with one leg and then other to other side of hurdle, same motion. Repeat back and forth across hurdle 10-20 times.

Step over trail leg drill: Stand to rear of and alongside of hurdle on your right (assumes trail leg is right leg). Step forward with left leg so left heel is on ground beyond upright plane of hurdle. Bring right knee across hurdle as lower leg tucks in behind thigh. Continue right knee beyond front of hurdle in high position. Rapidly pull foot down directly under knee. When knee is as far in front of hurdle as possible step down onto right foot and step off onto the left.

Arm motion must balance leg action. Throughout the hurdle race elbows are bent at roughly a 90% angle. As the left leg is advanced past the upright plane of the hurdle, the right lower arm, from a right angle elbow bend, is brought across chest. As the right leg is pulled over and in front of the hurdle the right arm is pulled to rearm elbow at or nearly at shoulder height. The right wrist is pulled under the elbow in a paddling motion. When the right knee is fully forward and the right elbow back as far as is comfortable, the right elbow is pulled in to its normal swinging position parallel to the trunk. The point is that the right arm never comes out of its sprinting position, which is more or less at 90% bend at the elbow.

The left arm swings with a sprinter's motion throughout the hurdle race, in coordination with the right leg.

Run-over lead leg drill: Start a few steps behind hurdle and with the hurdle slightly to your left (assumes lead leg is the left leg). Run to the hurdle. As hurdle is

approached, bring left knee sharply up and snap lower leg straight in front as push-off is made with right leg. Straight left leg goes over hurdle and is pulled sharply to the ground. Contact is made with ball of foot and pull from foot continues until center of gravity passes over foot, when pull becomes push. Right knee is carried high throughout this drill, and is allowed to swing forward. Arm action as explained in step over trail leg drill is worked on for balance.

Run-over trail leg drill: Start a few steps behind the hurdle and with the hurdle slightly to your right. Run to the hurdle. As hurdle is approached left leg is extended straight past and outside the hurdle. Right leg pushes off and goes over the hurdle with the motion practiced on the Step over trail leg drill. As the left [lead] leg pulls-pushes, concentrate on bringing the lower leg directly under the high right knee, and step sharply down ready to push forward. The arm motion should be practiced as outlined in Step over trail leg drill, with concentration on coordination with the leg movements and balances.

Run over the hurdle drill: The Run over lead leg drill and the Run over trail leg drill should be practiced until each can be done at a moderate run and balance maintained throughout the drill. Then the two drills are combined and the hurdle is run over. When this can be done smoothly and powerfully it is time to begin work on the steps from the start to the first hurdle and the steps between hurdles.