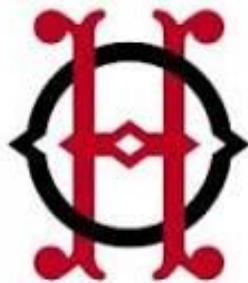


BRANSTON

E-comm strategy & finance

Getting our lost young athletes back into the sport

Phil Branston introduction



ORION HARRIERS



Great athletes who wavered then returned



Henry Rono

Matthew Hudson-Smith

Steve Prefontaine

Sha'Carri Richardson

Roger Black

Kelly Holmes

Why does an athlete's commitment falter?

Physical

Injury & illness

Performance plateau

Loss of coordination during growth

Pressure

Training discipline

Approach to competition

Other sports

Social

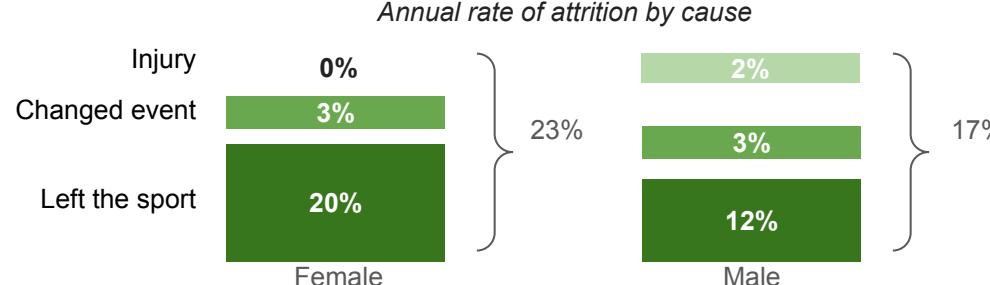
Social distraction / University

Home & work life

Training group dynamics



A problem worth solving ?



Wavering athletes 'coaching the coaches' session

Agenda

Assess your case studies *2 minutes*

Your coaching actions *3 minutes*

What happened next? *1 minute*

Learning review *2 minutes*



Learning outcomes

Customise to
the growth stage

Set periodisation
& progression

Fine tune strength
& conditioning

Elicit athlete
feedback & buy-in

Our exercise - three case studies

1
Illness

2
Competitive
pressure

3
What's
my event ?

Now...study your athletes for 1 minute, looking for...

Growth stage
(chrono & body)

Strength &
Coordination

Response
to load

Motivation &
social background

Then...recommend actions to respond, including...

Feedback &
consultation

Progression &
periodisation

Event &
technical focus

Mix of interval &
other sessions

Case study 1

Stuttering comeback from glandular fever

The Challenge

Highly committed 1500m & 3000m athlete struggled with growth and illness

Track & country county champion under-13 & -15

Committed to future English Schools success

Growth spurt & glandular fever interrupted training

Coordination weaker now that he is 8 inches taller
Key track sessions not completed

Returned to training too early

Race results poor and confidence hit

Training issues



Case study 2

International steeplechaser doesn't like racing (female)

The Challenge

Accomplished female steeplechaser reacted badly to competitive pressure, even while succeeding

Steeplechase convert; won under-17 GB vest

Very good barrier technique and power to weight ratio

Heavy racing schedule

Started dropping out of races; voiced doubts about the event

Lightweight body ill-suited to heavy training

Started missing training; poor attendance at long off-road runs

Training issues

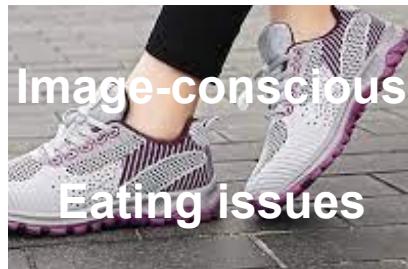


Image-conscious
Eating issues



Crowded
race
programme



Neglected
strength &
conditioning

Case study 3

Young growing 800m runner, dislikes cross-country (male)

The Challenge

Am I in the right event group?

Dominated under-13 schools cross country
2:06 800 at under-15

Talented football player

Sporadic attendance and performance at
long continuous runs and long intervals

Unrivalled sprinting speed...but struggled to complete 8 x 400m
Poor cross-country results

Late physical development

Slight build

Training
issues



How did we do ?

Actions we recommended

Case	Event & Technical	Consultation & Feedback	Periodicity, Load & Mix	Strength & Conditioning
1 Illness	✓ / ✗	✓ / ✗	✓ / ✗	✓ / ✗
2 Competition	✓ / ✗	✓ / ✗	✓ / ✗	✓ / ✗
3 Event	✓ / ✗	✓ / ✗	✓ / ✗	✓ / ✗

What happened next ? # 1

Stuttering comeback from glandular fever



Solutions ?

Coach actions

Reduce intensity during growth spurt

Step-forward / step-back return plan



Update

The comeback is still stuttering; athlete is considering longer distances



Coaches stayed in communication during illness breaks



Returned too early
Growth spurt recognised too late

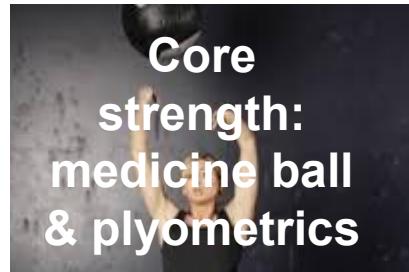
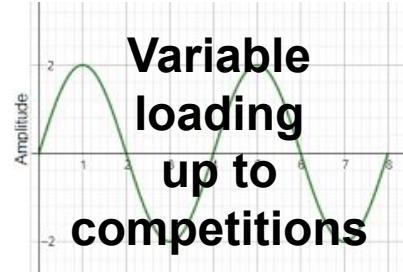
What happened next ? # 2



International steeplechaser dislikes racing (female)

Solutions ?

Coach actions



Update

Started finishing races again but then dropped out of the training group



Athlete learned how to race again



Coaches never confronted doubts about the event choice

What happened next ? # 3

Young growing 800m runner, dislikes cross-country (male)



Solutions ?

Coach actions



Update

Switched to 400m hurdles, changed coach, built core strength

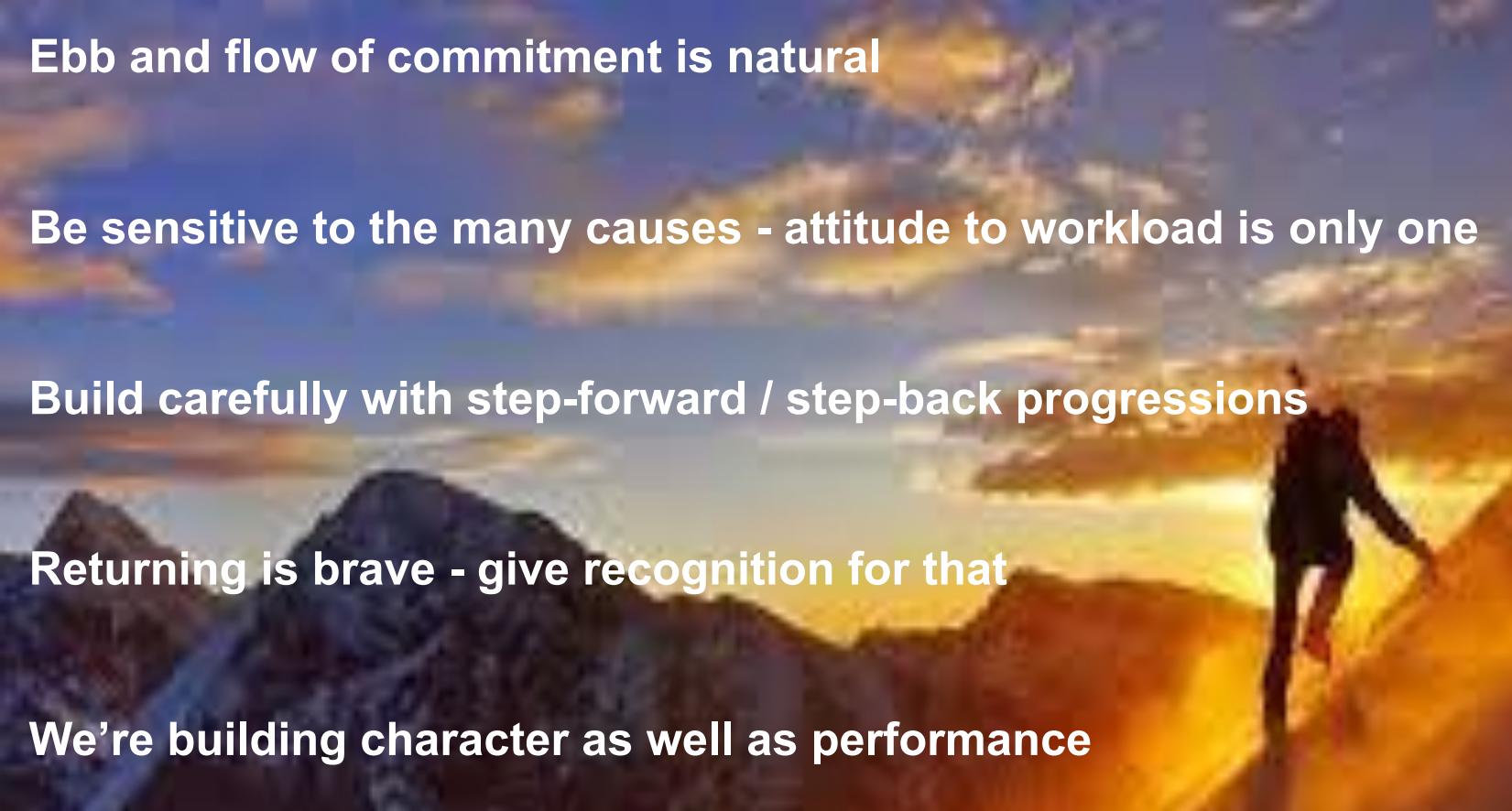


Built on a great natural sprint technique



Athlete and parents not engaged until late

Conclusion: supporting wavering athletes' journeys



Ebb and flow of commitment is natural

Be sensitive to the many causes - attitude to workload is only one

Build carefully with step-forward / step-back progressions

Returning is brave - give recognition for that

We're building character as well as performance

Appendices

Great athletes who wavered then returned



Henry Rono

*Social
distraction*

Matthew
Hudson-Smith

*Home &
work life*

Steve
Prefontaine

*Training
discipline*

Sha'Carri
Richardson

*Social
distraction*

Roger
Black

*Injury
& illness*

Kelly
Holmes

*Home &
work life*

How big an issue is it? Attrition analysis



Elite youth
middle distance
group

72 young athletes
Ages 11 to 20
April 2022 to April 2024

Injury

0%

Changed event

3%

Left the sport

20%

Female

2%

3%

12%

Male

23%

17%

Annual rate of attrition by cause

Losing 19% of
athletes per year

Most without a key
physical or event factor

Females dropping
out faster

Wavering athletes - coaching themes

Understanding the athlete

Enabling the mindset

Orchestrating the build back

Physical and energy
system development

Nurturing the
comeback

Periodisation
after lay off

Event & event group
choice

Race
day

Background strength
& conditioning

Case Study 4

Talented but distracted

The Challenge

800m & 1500m male runner aged 20

Fiercely competitive but trained sporadically

Periodic 'mini-comebacks'

Also engaged in body building

Always finishes sessions determinedly but upper body weight brings on fatigue

Disrupted home life

Transport not always available

Training issues

8 x 300m
in 45 seconds:
last 2 would be
challenging

Conflicts with
'GPE' strength
& conditioning

Missing sessions
in progression
to competition

Case Study 4

Talented but distracted

The Solution ?

Back to background fitness, while living away from the club, until lifestyle stabilises



Kept involvement in competition
and 'top group' track sessions



No consultation with athlete
over availability and attendance

Coaching
lessons

~~Tone down
strength &
conditioning~~

Liaise with
coaches in other
clubs

Liaise with
parents over
the appropriate
time to return

A life in athletics



1978

Rose challenge brings out the best in hero Branston

GOING into Saturday's Chingford League race, Walthamstow AC provided the two leading individuals - Danny Rose, the overall winner for three of the past four years and Phil Branston, the winner of the previous fixture by one point.

These two were well clear of Eton Manor's Michael Cates in third place so the confrontation at Walthamstow's home cross-country fixture over 4.5 miles at Highams Park could be decisive if either of them could score a convincing win over the other.

If there were any doubts over Branston's ability to maintain his winning ways

following his Trent Park victory, they were soon dispelled when he took an early lead which he maintained all the way to the line, winning by 30 seconds.

But this was not to be the title deciding victory, as Danny Rose battled through the field, from a low point of ninth midway through the race, to finish second.

To the home supporters' delight, Stow had gone one better than the previous race and filled the first two places.

Not only that, but with just two road-races remaining Branston and Rose are tied in the battle for the overall title with no close challengers.

It is difficult, however, to

see where Walthamstow will find the extra runner to fill the podium, as their next finisher was Kieran Denver, having a good race in 35th.

Roger Attwood, 70th, Terry Wellard, 79th and John Millson, 104th completed the A team who finished in eighth place.

It was particularly pleasing to see the latter back in the Walthamstow fold after a long break from the sport and he will surely improve quickly.

Completing Stow's runners were Julian Heard competing in his first cross-country race for some time, while Clive Ridley and Terry Mead followed up.



1997

2023