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## **Basic Technique For Discus Throwing**

By: Mark Harsha

Portage High School (IN) Girls' Head Coach

### **Goal One: Discus grip and release**

#### 1. Holding the discus

- ▶ Place discus in your throwing hand
- ▶ Spread fingers out with index finger inline with wrist
- ▶ Place fingers first knuckles over the disc



#### 2. Release the discus

- ▶ When releasing the discus have your palm down
- ▶ Squeeze the discus out (bar of soap)
- ▶ The disc will come off the index finger
- ▶ The disc will spin in a clockwise direction for a right handed thrower

#### 3. Drills used to teach the grip and release – excellent time for a competition

**Arm swings** – Use this drill to teach about centrifugal force

- The thrower stands with feet shoulder width apart
- Place the disc into throwing hand
- Swing the disc level with the shoulders back and forth catching it in your left hand
- The athlete should feel the discus pushing out on the hand



**Discus bowling** – Use this drill for proper discus release.

- The thrower will place the discus in his hand with proper placement
- The thrower will bowl the discus to his partner that is standing 15 feet away
- Remember to squeeze the discus out making sure the discus rolls off the index finger and does not wobble
- Once the thrower becomes proficient at 15 feet move the partners farther away from each other or have the thrower bowl at a target



**Throws for height** – Use this drill for proper release of the discus

- a) The thrower stands with feet shoulder width apart
- b) Place the disc into throwing hand
- c) Swing the discus forward and back next to your body two times
- d) After two swings throw the discus straight up with a proper release remembering to squeeze the discus out. Make sure the throwing arm is straight



**Skip throws** – Use this drill for proper discus release.

- a) the thrower stands with feet shoulder width apart and facing perpendicular to the throwing direction
- b) place the disc into throwing hand
- c) swing the disc level with the shoulders back and forth catching it in your left hand
- d) After two swings throw the disc close to the ground with proper release remembering to squeeze the disc out and keep the palm flat



## Goal two: Power Position

### 1. Body position in the power position

- ▶ The thrower will stand perpendicular to the throwing direction
- ▶ The feet position will be shoulder width apart with left foot slightly behind the right foot
- ▶ The thrower needs to be in an athletic position
- ▶ The thrower will shift 80% percent of his/her weight onto the right leg
- ▶ The thrower will twist his/her upper body completely opposite the throwing direction. This position from up above will look like an X
- ▶ The chest, knee and toe should be in line
- ▶ The thrower extends the right arm out from the side of the body



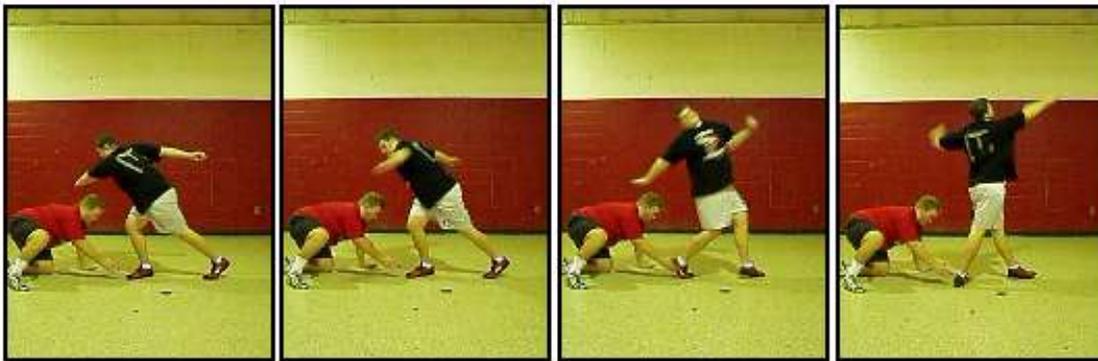
- ▶ The left arm will be extended out from the body with a right angle relationship to the right arm

## 2. Throwing from the power position

- ▶ Use cones when first teaching to throw from the power position, so the athlete does not have to worry about the discus falling out of his /her hands
- ▶ Over exaggerate the use of the legs in the throw especially the hips
- ▶ The sequence of the throw will be hips – legs – arm
- ▶ Start the throw by turning the right hip to the front of the ring
- ▶ Once the hips start moving the legs will extend upwards
- ▶ Sweep the left arm out and around
- ▶ Once the left arm reaches the front of the ring bring it in tight to the body to form a block
- ▶ The left side of the body will stop to aid in accelerating the discus
- ▶ Release the discus

## 3. Drills used to teach throwing from the power position

- ▶ **Heel turns with partner** – Use this drill to over exaggerate the hips coming through before the shoulders. Surgical tubing could be used to add resistance.
  - a) The thrower gets into the power position without a discus
  - b) The partner will place his hand near the right heel of the thrower
  - c) The thrower will attempt to smack and drive through his partners hand with his heel – focusing on the speed of his heel



- ▶ Cone throwing –Use for any parts of the throw.
  - a) Use cones so athletes can concentrate on the throw and not the disc
  - b) Use cones for inside throwing
  - c) Use cones to produce a long pull



- ▶ 1-2 drill – Use this drill to teach the thrower to keep the disc back on the hip.

- a) The thrower gets into the power position with the disc held in the right hand
- b) On the command of "one"-he opens his left arm to the throwing direction and turns his heel out.
- c) On the command of "two" the thrower completes the throw – release the disc 5 feet in front of the ring



### Goal Three: Middle of the ring

#### 1. Body position in the middle of the ring

- ▶ Stand facing the throwing direction
- ▶ Take a step with your right foot
- ▶ Place 80% of your body weight on the right foot
- ▶ Put your body in an athletic position in relation to your right leg
- ▶ The alignment of your body should be chest- right knee- right toe

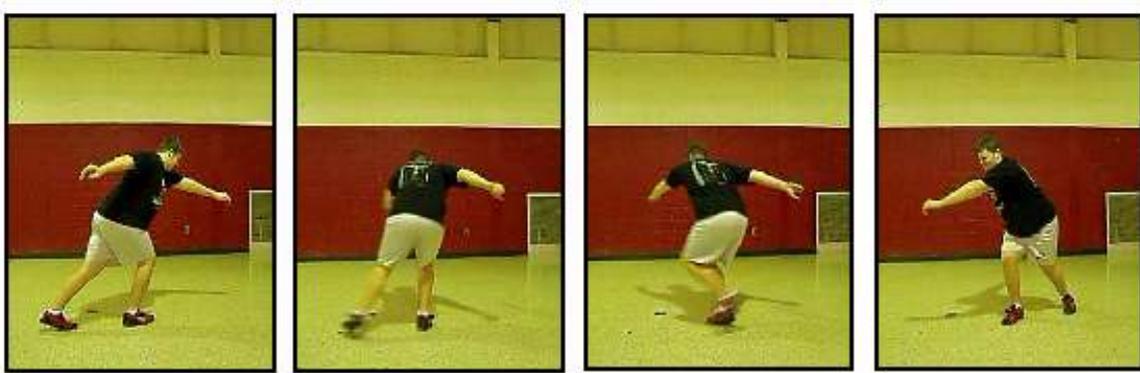
#### 2. Throwing from the middle of the ring

- ▶ Swing your right arm back where you can hit your right cheek of your buttocks
- ▶ Left arm will be pointed towards the throwing direction
- ▶ Start the reverse 180 by pivoting counterclockwise on your right foot
- ▶ The left leg will be picked up off the ground and driven to the front of the ring in a straight line as the right foot rotates
- ▶ The left foot should try to hit the right heel as it is being placed in the front of the ring (knee to knee)
- ▶ Complete the throw once you are in the power position

#### 3. Drills used to teach the middle of the ring

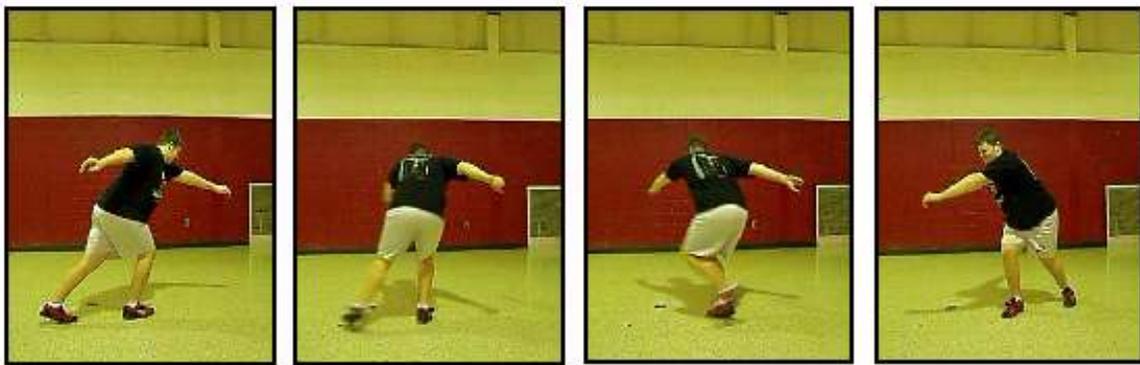
- ▶ **Reverse 180's** – Use for pivoting at the center of the ring.

- a) The thrower will start with the right foot in the middle of the ring
- b) The thrower will complete a reverse 180 concentrating on picking up the left foot and bringing both knees together (cue knee to knee)
- c) It is critical that the right foot does not stop turning



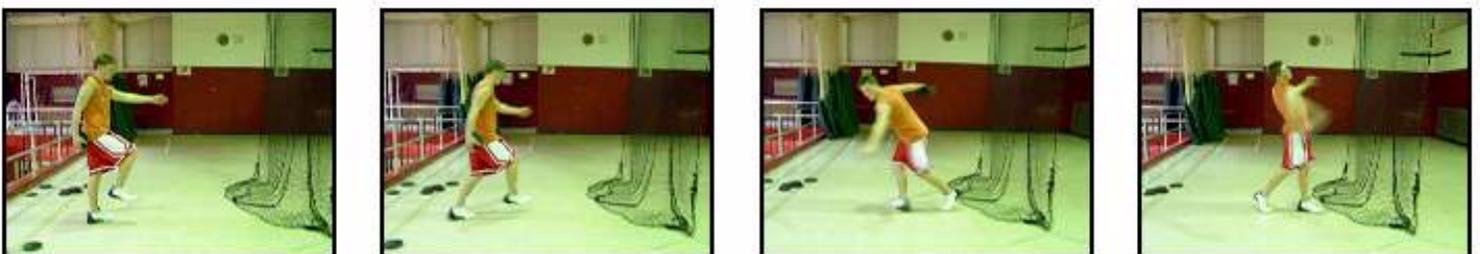
► **Wheels** – Use this drill to teach balance and continue turning of the right foot.

- a) The thrower will start with the right foot in the middle of the ring
- b) The thrower will complete a reverse 180 concentrating on picking up the left foot and bringing both knees together (cue knee to knee)
- c) It is critical that the right foot does not stop turning
- d) Continue for five repetitions



► **High knees** – Use this drill to teach the transition from back of the ring to the middle of the ring.

- a) Stand at the back of the ring facing the throwing direction
- b) Bring the right thigh parallel to the ground
- c) The right foot should be dorsiflexed
- d) The left arm will point towards the throwing direction
- e) Swing the right arm back where it will be able to hit the right cheek
- f) Fall into the middle of the ring – do not step
- g) Once the right foot makes contact start the reverse 180

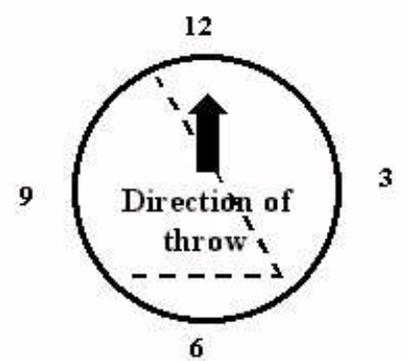


#### **Goal four: the drive through the center of the ring**

1. Drive or sprint across the ring

- This phase of the throw is a transition from the back of the ring to the middle
- The drive from the back of ring comes from a push off from the left ankle and a strong high knee punch from the right leg

- ▶ The thrower will not spend much time in the air
- ▶ Once the left ankle pushes off then the left leg is tucked close the right leg
- ▶ The thrower will drive down a straight line (backward seven)
- ▶ The left ankle will push off once the thrower reaches the 3 o'clock position
- ▶ The thrower will not step with the right leg but instead the right will be locked and let the ground come to them



Orientation of discus ring

## 2. Drills to teach the drive across the ring

- ▶ **South Africans** - Use this drill to teach the sprint across the ring.

- The thrower will face the front of the ring
- Place the left foot into the ring at the 5 o'clock position
- The right foot will be placed outside the ring
- The thrower will draw the discus back behind his hip allowing his body to wind up
- Drive off the left foot and make a wide arc while leading with the right leg
- Make sure the thrower drives straight down the line
- Once the right foot hits center the foot continues to turn while the thrower does a reverse pivot
- The left leg will plant in the front of the ring
- The thrower will be in a good power position to throw the discus



- ▶ Walking turns -Use this drill so the athlete becomes accustomed to turning.

- Do this drill walking around the track or walking to and from practice
- Step with the left foot
- Step with the right foot underneath the body
- Reverse pivot on the right foot
- Walk two steps and do another turn



## Goal five: Back of the ring

### 1. Body position in the back of the ring

- ▶ The thrower will face opposite the back of the ring
- ▶ The thrower will be in an athletic position
- ▶ The thrower will raise his/her arms to their sides at shoulder level
- ▶ The thrower will twist their arms and shoulders to the right forming an X with shoulders and hip axis
- ▶ The thrower will shift 80% of their weight onto the left leg



## 2. Pivoting out of the back of the ring

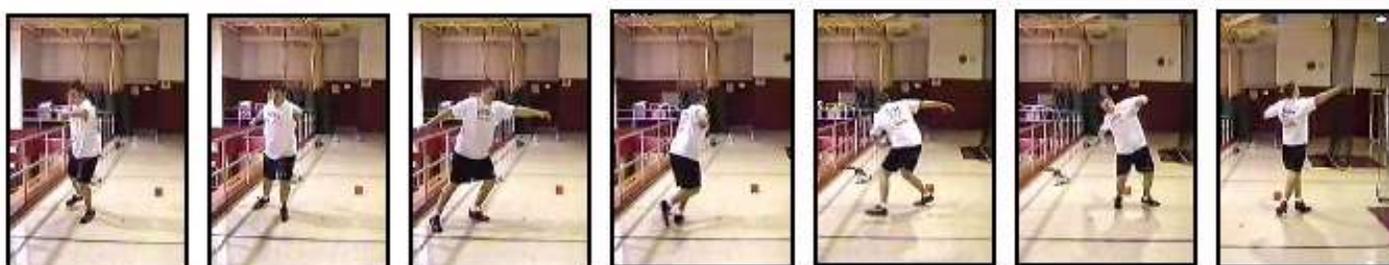
- ▶ Pivot the left foot (squash the bug) towards the three o'clock position
- ▶ Pickup the right foot as soon as the left foot is pivoting
- ▶ Work only the lower body, the upper body needs to stay back
- ▶ The right foot will take a wide and low path outside the circle
- ▶ Once the left foot reaches the 3 o'clock position drive and sprint to the center of the ring
- ▶ As the thrower is driving to the center bring the right leg in towards the center of the ring (high knee locked)

## 3. Drills to teach the pivot at the back of the ring

- ▶ **180's back of the ring** – Use this drill for balance in the back of the ring.
  - a) The thrower will start in the back of the ring in a good athletic position with arms shoulder level
  - b) 80% of the weight will be on the left leg
  - c) Turn the arms and shoulders to the right to form an X with the shoulders and hips
  - d) Lock the arm back and turn 180 degrees on the left foot - slow and balanced
  - e) Keep the right foot away from the left foot



- ▶ Small steps 180 and throw (step & go) – Use this drill to teach the back of the ring movement.
  - a) Start in the back of the ring with a discus
  - b) The thrower will touch the ground with his right foot while doing a 180 (small steps)
  - c) Once the thrower hits the three o'clock position continue the throw



Any questions? Email me at [mharsha@portage.k12.in.us](mailto:mharsha@portage.k12.in.us)



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