

Session on Coaching and the Digital World: Tools for More Effective Coaching from the Digital World and Social Media Presented by Larry Eder and Adam Johnson-Eder

Coaching Track & Field and Cross Country is a sacred trust. You do not do it for the pay.

The average track and cross country coach works 46 weeks a year, six days a week, two hours a fifteen minutes a day with the 510,000 cross country athletes and 1.1 million track & field that are under their direction.

Coaches changes lives. Mine did. From Fr. Ralph Passarelli, Jim Marheinecke, Fr. Devlin, Steve Pensinger and Steve Polley to Dan Durante to Terry Ward, I was lucky. Coaches who took the time, and who did that with all of my team mates.

The late Sam Adams, the mentor at UCSB scared the hell out of me one time. In his booming voice, he told me, “Coaches are Educators, always remember that.”

At this time, there are just over 37,000 head high school track and cross country coaches across North America. The men and woman who perform those positions spend more time with their 14-19 year olds than the athletes’ own parents.

In the digital age, we have good things and challenging things. In this discussion, we would like to provide you with some ideas on how to harness the digital world as effective tools for your coaching.

Communications happen 24/7. You can find just about anything you can imagine and even what you can not imagine. Your athletes live on social media, they live on their mobile phones.

In this session, we will not only provide you some ideas on great content, but also how to communicate with your teams, via FB, twitter and other social media.

1. Coaching Tools

a. Cross Country Coaching Manual, from LA 84 Foundation, link here:

<http://library.la84.org/3ce/CoachingManuals/LA84CrossCountry.pdf>

b. Track & Field Coaching Manual, from LA 84 Foundation, link here:

<http://library.la84.org/3ce/CoachingManuals/LA84trackfield.pdf>

c. IAAF Medical: Nutrition in Athletics (great chapters on training, nutrition): <http://www.iaaf.org/about-iaaf/documents/medical#nutrition-in-athletics>

d. The Science of Running, a blog by Steve Magness, a thoughtful website on coaching,:

<http://www.scienceofrunning.com/>

e. RunningProductreviews.com, edited by Cregg Weinmann, a daily review of great running shoes, spikes and technical products: <http://www.runningproductreviews.com>.

f. Disciplines in Athletics: IAAF Resources: some nice videos on athlete performances, and basic info on events, <http://www.iaaf.org/disciplines>

g. USTFCCA.org, the association if you are serious about your coaching professions, <http://www.ustfccca.org/>

h. Track & Field News, rankings for high school marks, US lists, and great website, with daily news updates that are

fantastic! <http://www.trackandfieldnews.com/>

i. RunBlogRun, daily blog with coaching articles, sports ethics, and global coverage of the sport, free nightly newsletter, great archives on coaching articles, : <http://www.runblogrun.com/>

j. RunningNetwork.com, portal for 30 plus running websites in North America, Africa and Europe. Newsletters on most (all free): <http://runningnetwork.com/RNW/>

k. American Track & Field, print and digital title, free to coaches, 5x a year, archives, <http://american-trackandfield.com/atf/>

l. Coaching Athletics, going to monthly digital in 2015, free to coaches, published since 2004; free sign up for digital issues <http://coachingathleticsq.com/>

m. IAAF.org, governing body of sport, some great daily resources, wonderful app, <http://www.iaaf.org/home>

n. USATF, governing body of sport in US, some resources, <http://www.usatf.org/Home.aspx>

o. Pacific Association, new site of Pacific Association, a fine site, the largest USATF association, great resources, <http://www.pausatf.org/>

p. RRCA.org, Road Runners Clubs of America, largest running organization in US, great resource for event and club insurance, 2100 clubs, resource for high school coaches to have clubs in summer and off season, with great resources, <http://www.rrca.org/>

q. Lydiard Foundation, a developing site with great information on the late coach Arthur Lydiard, a New Zealand milkman who changed how we view distance training. <http://www.lydiardfoundation.org>

2. Developing Coaching Programs

During my sixteen years coaching, and my fifteen years as an athlete, I was fortunate to have great role models. My first lesson: Never bs the athletes. If you have an answer give it. If you do not have the answer, tell them and try and find the answer.

Here is a sample of the Cross Country Training Program I developed for 2014, download it, and we will talk about how to make a training program that works: <http://www.runblogrun.com/2014/06/16/images/500-MileCHALLENGE-Saucony-LORES-4.pdf>

Training programs give your athletes a map of how you think and how you coach.

I suggest programs that are provided a week before, giving out too much early can freak out some athletes.

Provide your email address to athletes and parents. We suggest that is a coaching only email. Do not give out your personal email.

3. Facebook

a. Develop a Facebook site for your team, with your weekly schedule, contact info and links for info for your team.

b. Facebook sites are pretty easy to develop, great places to post pictures for your events, great workouts, athletes of the week.

c. Find an athlete on the team who is a real geek. And have them work on making a site, that you can post on and

they can. As you have a team manager, consider a cyber team manager.

d. If you want to really develop something for the long term, consider developing your own website (again, find someone who knows what they are doing), where your favorite links can go, rss feeds (updated info from your favorite sites), and more long term approaches to athletics for those of your athletes who really get into the sport.

4. Facebook, twitter and Buffer.app.

a. Facebook can be conducted to twitter through an easy app, Bufferapp.com. It is one of my favorite apps, and I use it to manage my posts and get posts up to a week before I need them.

5. My ideas for FB and twitter:

a. By posting workouts up on FB and send daily via twitter (you can schedule through buffer), you involve your athletes more in their discipline.

b. Use buffer to post workouts up to a week early.

c. Post your comments on great workouts, and upcoming races.

d. Videos can be linked via Facebook and twitter. Subscribe to video list from YouTube you like, many track video opps, we suggest the Shoe Addicts (videos on athletes, events and interviews).

e. Twitter accounts can be followed, allowing you to communicate with your followers and they with you.

6. Social media and its value to you, the coach

a. Your athletes are on their mobiles nearly constantly.

b. 71 percent of Americans under 30 get their content off their mobile phones.

c. Videos, texting, communicating with friends are what they spend most of their time doing.

d. Reaching athletes in a way they are familiar.

e. Keeping the communication constant.

f. You are not trying to be their buddy, you are trying to be their coach.

7. Discussion