Specificity of adaptation to alactic-anaerobic direction training loads
by S. Vovk

In: Modern Athlete and Coach 39 (2001), 2, 11-14

Long-term specific loads, which are directed to the development of certain movement capacities, have definite limits. These loads fail to have a developmental effect when the limits are exceeded, leading to a useless waste of time and energy. In the training process, the optimal duration of specific loads and the length of time required to achieve a training effect have to be planned carefully because the faster they happen the sooner a plateau is reached.

An experiment with 13 qualified sprinters was set up to give more information about specific adaptation to alactic-anaerobic loads within the preparation period. The training and test regimes comprised different 30m sprints, various jumping tests and 150m runs. According to Petrovsky, four sprint training sessions a week over 60m repetitions at 96 to 100% intensity and with a total volume of 400 to 480m, leads to a wave-like performance improvement in maximal running speed and acceleration. The highest results were reached between the eighth and tenth training session. A continuous use of the same programme fails to produce further improvements in speed capacities and leads to stabilisation, or even a slight deterioration in performances. The programme must therefore be changed before it is repeated some time later in the training cycle.

A psychological application for distance runners
by Scott Christensen

In: Track Coach (2001), 155, 4955-4959

DALDA is a stress awareness test developed by Rushall (USA) and it was administered by the author on a distance champion of Senior High School Level. DALDA stands for ‘Daily Analyses of Life Demands for Athletes’ and was designed to develop a self-report inventory of life stress faced by the athlete. It can be used to determine the nature of an athlete’s response to training, particularly his/her capacity to tolerate training loads, and it provides valuable information that is not normally available in the athlete-coach relationship.

In the article the author gives an overview of DALDA and stresses its value in helping to determine:
1. Training responses that are either too stressed or understressed
2. The ideal amount of stress to promote the optimum level of training effort
3. The influence of stresses outside sport that interfere with the training response
4. Preliminary signs of overtraining
5. Reactions to travel fatigue

Utilising the example of one athlete, the successful practical application of DALDA is shown within a training season.
Assessing coaching performance: competency, competition and common sense
by Wayne Goldsmith
In: Modern Athlete and Coach 39 (2001), 3, 38-41

Is a coach as good as the performance results of his athletes? The author discusses the problem of whether success in coaching is driven by the success of the coaching programme or by the talent of the athletes involved. Several of the most important coaching needs are mentioned, such as:
1. The ability to work with athletes of all ages
2. The ability to work with males and females equally well,
3. The ability to coach all aspects of technique and skills effectively
4. The ability to give and receive feedback

The author goes on to stress the importance of using sport science and sport medicine effectively for training and emphasises the importance of working with the parents and families of the athletes.

The following widely accepted four phases of an athlete’s development are put forward by the author:
1. Fundamental phase
2. Training to Train Phase
3. Training to Compete
4. Training to Win

The author then identifies three main requirements of the coach:
1. To help the athletes make the transition from one phase to the next
2. To possess the self-reflection skills to realise that whilst they do not currently have the technical knowledge necessary to help athletes make the transitions between phases, they are prepared to learn them
3. To possess the maturity to accept that they do not have the coaching skills, time, experience and facilities etc. to help their athletes make the transitions and the professionalism to refer them to another coach who does.

In the paragraphs that follow the author illustrates these statements from practical experience and concludes that great coaches provide the opportunity for all athletes to learn, develop, grow and improve as part of the process towards winning.