

## **BOB MASSON – Some thoughts on coaching beginners in shot and javelin.**

### **Some basic principles of throwing first.**

#### **Move the implement**

- 1) from the back to the front (e.g. of the circle)**
- 2) from low to high**
- 3) from slowly to quickly**
- 4) and get the hips ahead of the chest at delivery.**

## **SHOT PUTT**

### **INTRODUCTION TO A STANDING THROW**

Strangely, maybe we should START at the END

- Stand with both toes up against edge of exercise mat (the “stopboard”) and face forwards.
  - Using a lighter shot than your competition implement.
  - Hold the shot in your fingers (don’t cup shot putt in hand). The saying is “dirty neck, clean palm” The shot rests in the hand at the base of the fingers at the top of the palm, with the thumb supporting the shot from the bottom, pinkie at the top. You should be able to put a finger from your other hand on the palm of the throwing hand without it getting squashed! Form a strong flat platform with your hand. Tension in fingers will be needed.
  - Press the shot against your neck. Keep it in contact until you throw.
  - Your elbow should be slightly below shoulder level and also slightly behind the level of the shoulders. The palm should face forwards and also slightly upwards.
  - The put is a PUSH from the shoulders.
  - Stand tall and using ONLY your arm, push the shot outwards and upwards at a slight angle.
  - **POSE FOR A PHOTO JUST AT THE POINT THE SHOT HAS JUST LEFT YOUR HAND**
  - **You score 10/10 ONLY if the photo shows -**
  - **your arm fully extended (no bend in the elbow), AND the elbow well above the shoulder AND the hand well above the elbow AND the thumb pointing DOWNWARDS.** (You are trying to block out the sun from your eyes, not say “Hello” to a native American Indian (HOW?))
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  - The shot should go further if you do some of the following- (Try each separately before you try to combine them.)
  - Push the hips forwards and lean back slightly before you push or
  - Twist away and back again before you push or
  - Bend your knees and straighten them again before you push.
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- Next step could be a move to the side standing throw where you add a bit more distance by applying point 1 above.

Never forget that to throw far you must generate a lot of force. This is (not so technically) called “OOOOMPH”. The athlete in the photograph is NOT smiling. He does demonstrate very well the angle upwards that he is trying to push the implement.



- SHOT PUTT TECHNIQUE
- The explosive generation of power is partly produced by the extension of the hips, knees and ankles – This is the famous “Triple Extension”. It is essential to use the ground. Reacting against ground with your feet, force can come up through the legs especially the rear leg ultimately to the throwing arm. So try and keep the back foot on the ground for as long as possible.

## JAVELIN

### SAFETY

- Talk though **Safety Aspects** with athletes at start. **Both ends of the javelin are lethal.**

### HOW TO HOLD JAVELIN

- There are several ways you can grip the javelin. The javelin should sit ALONG (and NOT across) the hand and nestle in the groove in the palm at the wrist. Try to keep the palm always facing the sky.



- Always grip not just on the binding but on the back LEDGE of the binding (The picture shows the thumb and the index finger doing this). The other fingers should also be in contact, relaxed up until the release when a much firmer grip is required from all fingers.
- Another good grip uses thumb and long finger on the ledge and the index finger cradling the javelin but NOT pointing straight backwards along the javelin - a position which can result in much pain.
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- The rules of the event say that if the javelin lands tail first or flat, then it is a foul throw. It doesn't need to stick in, just land point first. BEGINNERS should throw INTO the wind as it makes a legal landing more likely.

### **OUTDOOR BEGINNERS JAVELIN THROWING DRILL**

Again, let's start at the end.

There are no long fouls recorded on P10 (at least in theory). So, let's firstly get the javelin to land point first. The key to this, and (also throwing far,) is **TO CONTROL THE POINT OF THE JAVELIN.**

(Force is a VECTOR quantity. The direction in which you apply it is CRITICAL. For a long throw, force must be applied through the point.)

1. Start standing facing forward with feet parallel, shoulder width apart. Hold your arm straight up but have the javelin pointing downwards. Throw and aim to hit a white line no more than 5 metres away with the point of the javelin. - a bit like "spearing a fish"... At this distance it may well be just a wrist action. The brain has to learn what to do with the arm and wrist in order to perform the task. With repeated success of sticking in on or near the line, move to
2. As above but a bit further way from the line. You may need to bend backwards, like a bow, aim the point a little less down, then throw. Always keep the hand high with the palm facing the sky, hips in front of chest in every throw. Are you doing OK? Then move to
3. A 1 step throw. From feet parallel, a right-handed thrower should step onto the left foot before throwing. Before the left foot hits the ground, the hips are pushed forward to make the bow shape. **The first contact of the left foot is with the HEEL.** You are still trying to hit the line which should now be slightly further away still.

### **SOME POINTS OF JAVELIN THROWING TECHNIQUE**

- Letting the javelin get away from the area of the head during the carry is a recipe for a poor throw. Keep it almost touching until you are ready to deliver.
- Always keep the elbow above shoulder level and raise it even higher when throwing.
- If the javelin is not coming down point first, try gripping further back on the binding as a sticking plaster remedy.
- Throwers who can only throw a short distance should be advised to keep the point down even when they are throwing the javelin upwards.
- If you find yourself bashing your head with the spear when you throw, you need to

- 1) keep your elbow above the level of your shoulders and your hand above the level of your elbow and
- 2) hold your wrist in such a position that the point of the javelin lower is than the tail.

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