

**UEG International Training Camp
Tirrenia 2008
(9th to 19th July)**



**Educational Camp for Coaches and
Gymnasts**

**National Coach Report
By
Evelyn Burke
(*Old Bawn Gymnastics*)**

UEG Training Camp - Tirrenia 2008 (9th July to 19th July)

National Coach Report (Evelyn Burke)

Irish Delegation:

Coaches: Evelyn Burke (Old Bawn), Stanislav Sevyostanov (Excel)

Gymnasts: Ali Kavanagh (Old Bawn), Emma Lunn (Excel)

Introduction:

The UEG training camp is an annual training camp aimed at coaches from across Europe with a view to teaching and sharing coaching knowledge amongst all the different delegations within Europe. In this report I have outlined the general set-up of the camp and the experiences of the Irish delegation throughout the duration of the camp.

Travelling:

Outbound: Dublin to Pisa:

Unfortunately due to radar failure in the Airport on 9th July we were delayed by a full day and did not make it out until 10th July. The camp organisers were very obliging and had a car there to pick us up from the airport and bring us to the camp. As it was extremely late by the time we arrived we were assigned our rooms and went straight to bed. We missed the first day of camp as a result but this did not impact on our stay too much.

Inbound: Pisa to Dublin

All went smoothly for the trip home. UEG organised a bus to collect us from the camp and bring us to the airport and flight was on time.

Accommodation:

The two Irish girls were put in a room with the 2 gymnasts from Great Britain. This suited well as it avoided any communication/language issues. I shared with a coach from Holland. I found the accommodation to be very clean and functional. The girls did not have any complaints.

Training Schedule:

The training schedule took one of two formats and alternated each day as follows:

Schedule 1 – Training 9.00–12.30, Lunch, Choreography 3.00– 4.30, Beach, Dinner

Schedule 2 – Choreography 9.00-10.30, Beach, Lunch, Training 3.45 – 7.15, Dinner

The training sessions also alternated each day between 2 formats:

Expert led sessions - where the elements to be worked were chosen by the expert on each piece, preps were shown and coaching tips given by the expert.

Coach led sessions - where the coaches could choose what elements they wished to work with the gymnasts and could seek advice from the experts if they wished.

Each session began with warm-up followed by conditioning.

Warm-up: The warm-up was a dance style, choreographed warm-up led by the beam expert Zsuzsa Kalmar (HUN). Each day she added a new section on to it and by the last day it was quite an extensive impressive warm up.

Conditioning: Conditioning was led by the bar expert Josef Lukacs (HUN) and Tumbling expert Giorgio Colombo (ITA). A number of stations were set up generally focusing on one muscle group per session with 30 secs per station. A huge amount of time was spent perfecting the handstand shape in many different exercises. (See Appendix 1)

Irish Gymnasts performance and Standard:

The Irish girls trained in a group with a gymnast from Hungary and a gymnast from Serbia. I found both of their coaches to be friendly and eager to help with spotting for our gymnasts also. While the other two gymnasts had better body condition and strength, their skill level was similar to our girls and so the group worked well.

The main area our girls struggled was with the strength conditioning. Their flexibility was good and was to a similar standard of the other gymnasts on the camp.

It was noted that the standard of the Irish gymnasts had improved a lot compared to past years and Emma was particularly noted by Zsuzsa for her strong abilities on beam.

A couple of days into the camp Ali complained of a sore knee which had been bothering her at home before the camp on occasion. As it was quite swollen I asked the camp doctor to take a

look at it. He advised that it was Osgood Schlatter's and said there was no problem continuing to train provided she iced it for 5 mins every hour and took anti-inflammatories if it got very bad. She trained hard regardless and any time she found it too painful (generally following extensive tumbling or vault) she worked on bars or conditioning. It did not hinder her week too much.

The noteworthy delegations within our training group who impressed all the coaches were the Welsh (GB), the Swedish and the Swiss.

Moves worked with experts:

Bar (Josef Lukacs) – Stalder (Loops), Giant (Loops), Tkatchev (See Appendix 2)

Beam (Zsuzsa Kalmar) – Switch leap, Johnson Leap, Aerial, Flip Layout, Free Walkover (See Appendix 3)

Tumble (Giorgio Colombo) – Round off, straight front, Straight Back (Trampoline) / with twist. (See Appendix 4)

Vault (Donatella Sacchi) – Yurchenko prep, Tsukahara prep (See Appendix 5)

Choreography:

The choreography sessions were led by Larissa Efremova (RUS) who has a background in ballet. She did lots of work on basic dance movements – leg kicks and holds, arm movements and simple step sequences along with work on leaps spins and jumps always focusing on grace and beauty with no rigid movements. The girls really enjoyed these sessions and improved a lot over the course of the camp. Also as one side of the hall was completely open to the outdoors it was very bright and stopped the feeling of being cooped up all day in gym halls while the sun was shining.

Coach Education:

Every evening following dinner all coaches attended lectures on different aspects of the sport as follows:

Bars with Josef - Giants, Tkatchev and Jager. (See Appendix 2)

Beam with Zsusa – Free walkover, Side Somi, Onodi, Spins (See Appendix 3)

Tumbling with Giorgio – Twisting – front and back (See Appendix 4)

Vault with Josef (we missed this as it was on the first night)

FIG Code of Points – Donatella – 2009 code and main implications of it.

Evolution of Gymnastics through the ages.

Ballet (afternoon) – Larissa (this was more of a demo than lecture)

I found these lectures generally to be informative and interesting. All lectures were given through English however sometimes the level of English was weak which could be a little exhausting for a fluent English speaker and as a result the lectures seemed to drag a bit. Most of the speakers used videos and diagrams to illustrate their coaching tips which were very useful.

Social Activities:

Coaches:

There was an excellent rapport between all the coaches on the trip. It was noted by the camp organisers that they were really impressed this year to see such good relations amongst coaches from all different delegations. In the evenings there was a lot of socialising and chat in the gardens amongst all the coaches and with the beautiful warm weather it made for a great atmosphere.

Gymnasts:

The gymnasts were also very friendly with one another. I noted that our girls particularly gelled with the two Welsh girls (GB) and with the girls from Norway who had excellent English. There seemed to be lots of positive attitudes amongst the gymnasts. Emma and Ali got on very well and neither reported any issues over the duration of the camp.

Trips to Florence & Pisa:

We had a fabulous day in Florence and though it was extremely humid we welcomed the break from the gym to wander the beautiful streets. We spent the day with the coaches from Denmark (they did not have any gymnasts with them) and had lunch and did some shopping before heading back to the train station for return to the camp. The day was well organised by the camp organisers giving lots of information about places to visit and interesting sights to see.

The trip to Pisa was organised in place of going to the beach on one of the afternoons. The girls really enjoyed this trip, not because they were delighted to see the leaning tower but mainly because there was an abundance of tourist stalls with all sorts of souvenirs for them to bring back home!!

The Gymnasts Show:

On the final evening all the gymnasts were asked to give a small performance in the dance hall for everyone to watch. This was a great show and everyone really got involved. The Irish girls performed a short dance which they made up themselves over the week which was well received

by the other gymnasts. Even the coaches got involved and had a handstand competition (The Irish girls were proud when both myself and Stas made it to the final!!)

Conclusion:

All in all I found the trip to be a fabulous experience. I learned an abundance of coaching techniques and found it very interesting to see how other countries conduct their training sessions. The level of knowledge of the experts was excellent and they were always very willing to help and give advice. The location is beautiful and encompasses everything you could want from a camp with clean accommodation, good facilities, nice food, beach nearby and beautiful weather. The girls had no complaints over the week and were a pleasure to travel with. In general I would recommend it to any coach to go should the opportunity arise and I believe it is certainly a camp that Irish Gymnastics should continue to attend on an annual basis.

Sidenote:

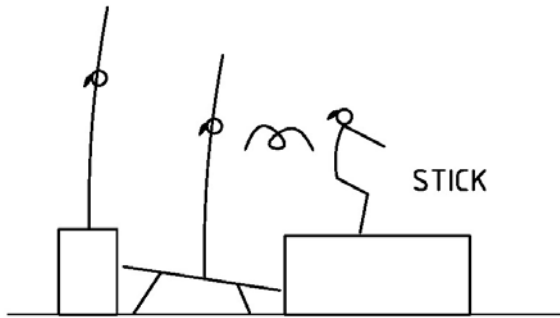
Originally gymnast Nicole Mawhinney from Salto was due to travel on this trip with Emma Lunn. She dropped out due to not feeling comfortable travelling without her own coach there. In my opinion this was the correct choice as following the camp, I cannot imagine how it would have worked had I not been there with my own gymnast. In the future I believe that it should be paramount that the gymnasts selected to travel have their own coach travel with them (or that the coaches selected to travel can bring their best gymnast within the age bracket).

APPENDIX 1

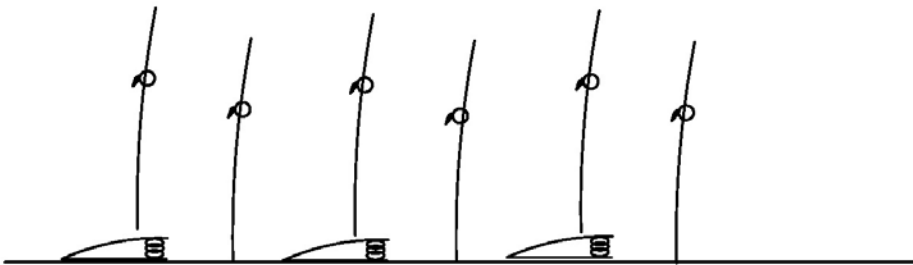
Conditioning

LEGS

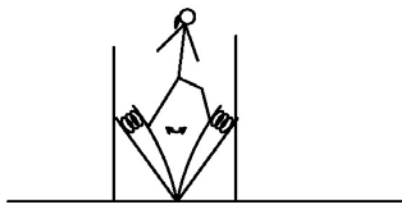
1.



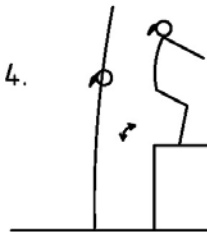
2.



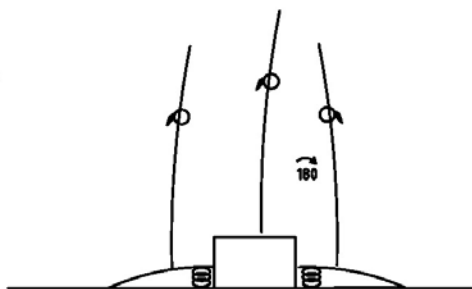
3.



4.



5.



6. PULSE LEG (FRONT AND SIDE)



**For some Core
strengthening exercises,
Handstand exercises and
Bar conditioning please see
the attached CD under the
conditioning section!!**

APPENDIX 2

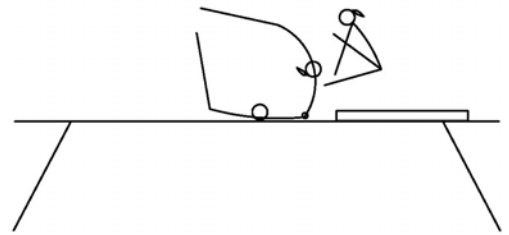
Bars

Tkatchev Preps:

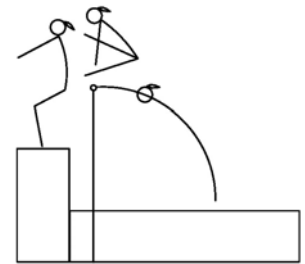
1. Backwards roll to pronounced open shoulder handstand



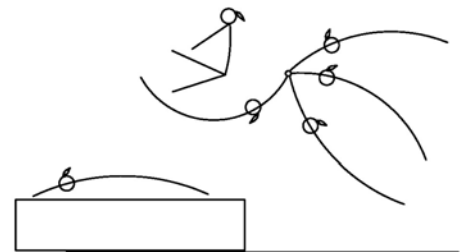
2. Using the trampoline bounce to an open shoulder handstand. As the gymnasts become confident with this they can then follow with a strong sit up and straddle over the bar to land on a safety mat.



3. The gymnast starts standing on a block and does a straddle jump back over the low bar to land on a safety mat (while reaching for the low bar)

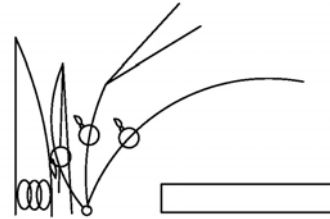


4. From handstand the gymnast completes a long swing on the high bar into a "Shushunova" action to land on her front on a safety mat or into a pit.

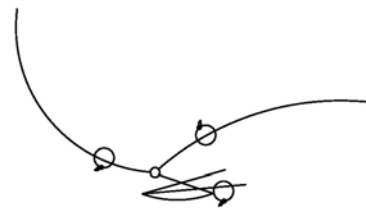


Stalder Preps:

1. Start in straddle position and swing legs up to join while pushing over the floor bar to land in hollow shape on mat.

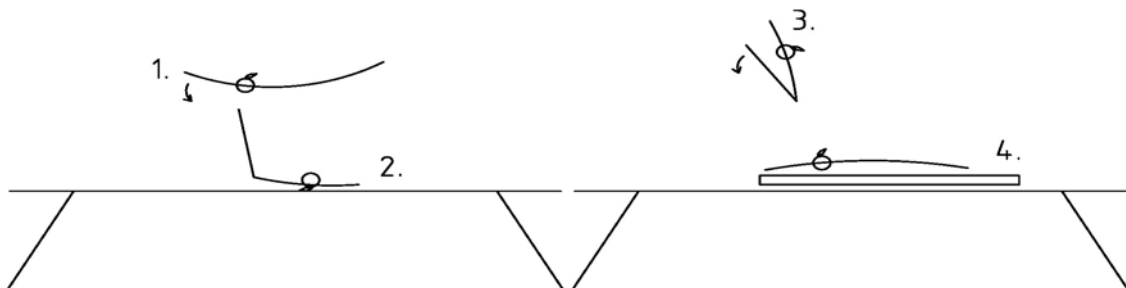


2. Swing in straddle position using loops. Coach can assist the swing by lifting the shoulders. Once the swing is strong the gymnast can begin to join her legs on either side of the bar.



Jager Preps:

1. Using trampoline the gymnast jumps to a hecht position (1) and rotates forwards to land on her back in a pike position on the trampoline (2). From this position the gymnast bounces to a "V sit" position (3) and swing her legs under to land on front (4). A spotter will need to push in a safety mat for the final landing phase.



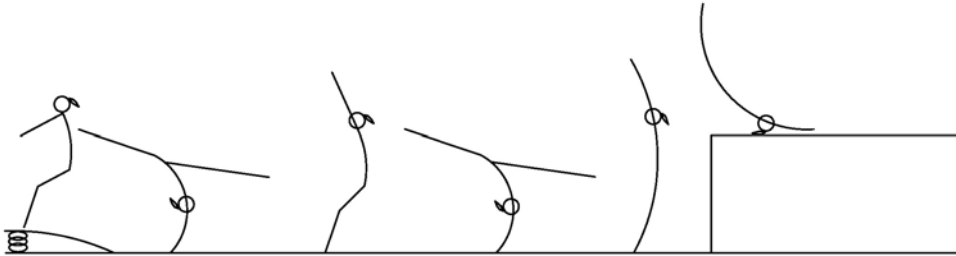
2. The gymnast completes a forward giant with a strong heel kick into a hop grip change and push off the low bar to land on a safety mat or in the pit

APPENDIX 3

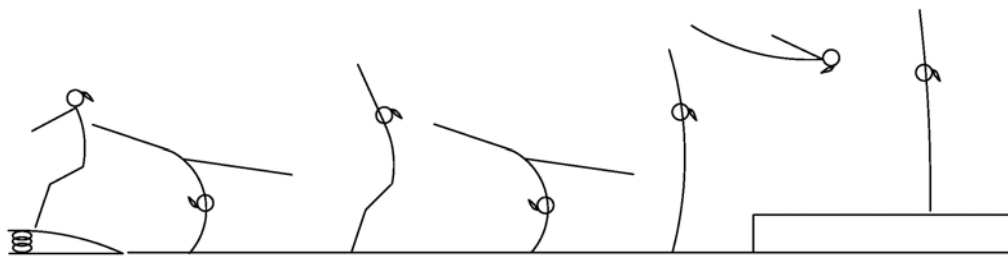
Beam

Flip Layout Preps:

1. Flip x 2 into jump to shoulder stand on piled mats



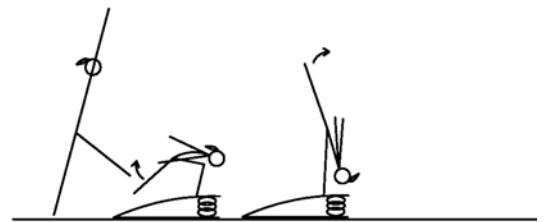
2. Flip x 2 into Straight Back Soma



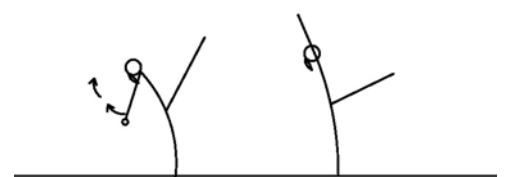
Aerial & Free Walkover:

1. Concentrate on getting chest down onto front knee with a strong arm action and fast flexible split position
2. The landing action for free walkover can be practised at a wall bar. Arms should lift in a forward circling motion to the ears and head should follow arms making a strong open position

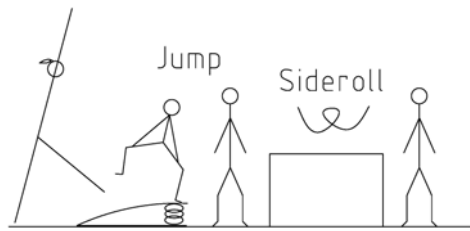
AERIAL & FREE WALKOVER TAKE OFF POSITION



FREE WALKOVER LANDING POSITION (AT WALL BAR)

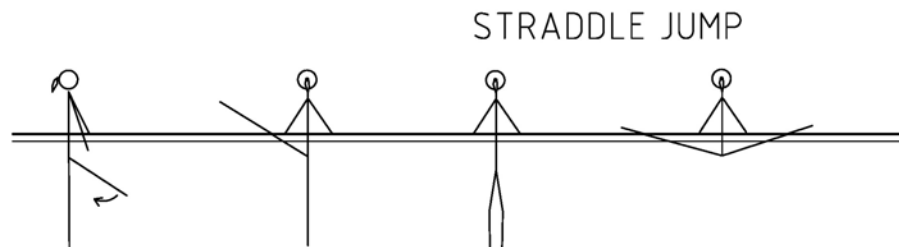


Side somersault Prep



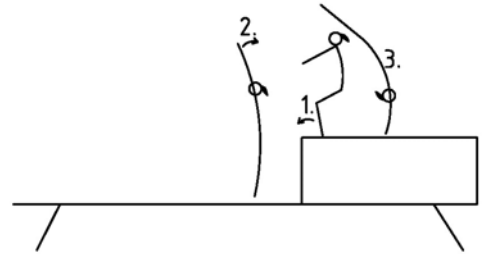
Johnson Leap:

This jump is a switch leg leap with a $\frac{1}{4}$ turn to a straddle jump position. Below shows a prep for this leap. The gymnast stands at the side of the beam. She swings her inside leg forward (to 45°) and then backwards with a $\frac{1}{4}$ turn to face the beam and follows this with an immediate straddle jump. Once the gymnast can perform this comfortably she can complete the full leap using the beam to support her, and finally without the beam support.

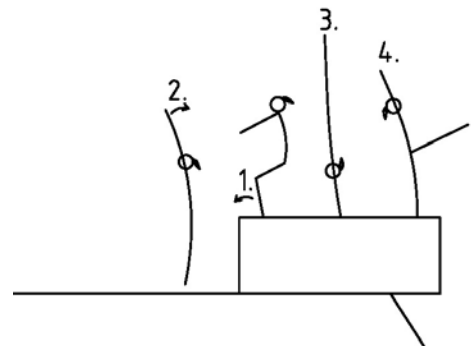


Onodi Preps:

1. The gymnast jumps from a height onto a fast track and does a backflip back up onto the height.



2. Once the gymnast has mastered this they can then do a $\frac{1}{2}$ turn off the track to land in a handstand on the height, followed by a walk out.

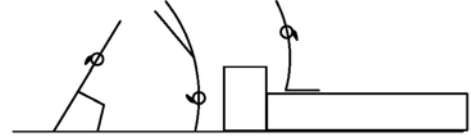


APPENDIX 4

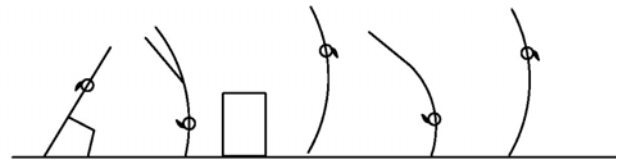
Tumbling

Round Off Preps:

1. The gymnast does a roundoff over a small height to land on her knees. Focus is on a constant forward travelling motion with the leading knee. And a fast snap up of the chest.

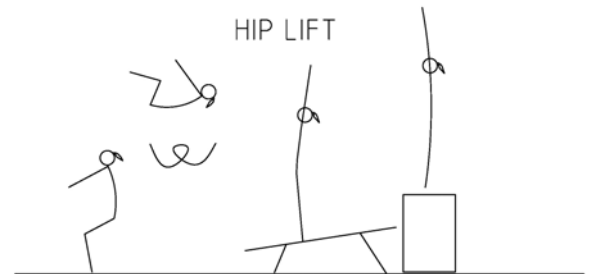


2. Once the gymnast has mastered this they can then do round off over a height (then followed by flip)

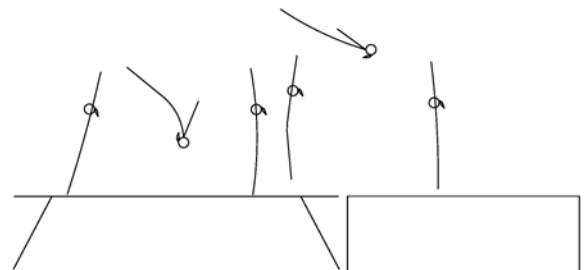


Back Somersaulting Preps:

1. The gymnast jumps from a block onto a trampoline and with a strong hip lift (no arch) does a back somersault to land on the floor.

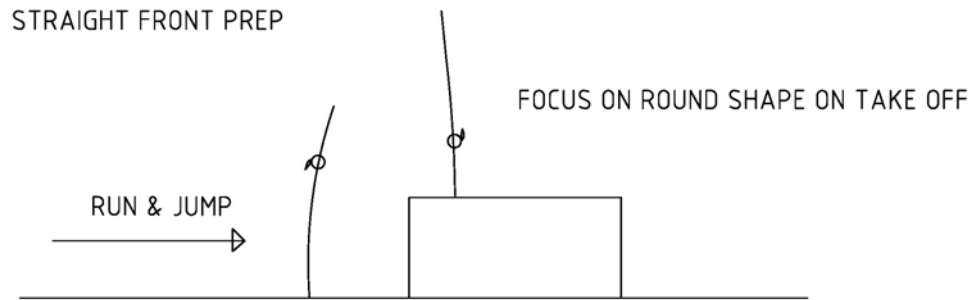


2. This can be transferred to a trampoline. The gymnast performs a whip back into a straight back (with a strong hip lift)

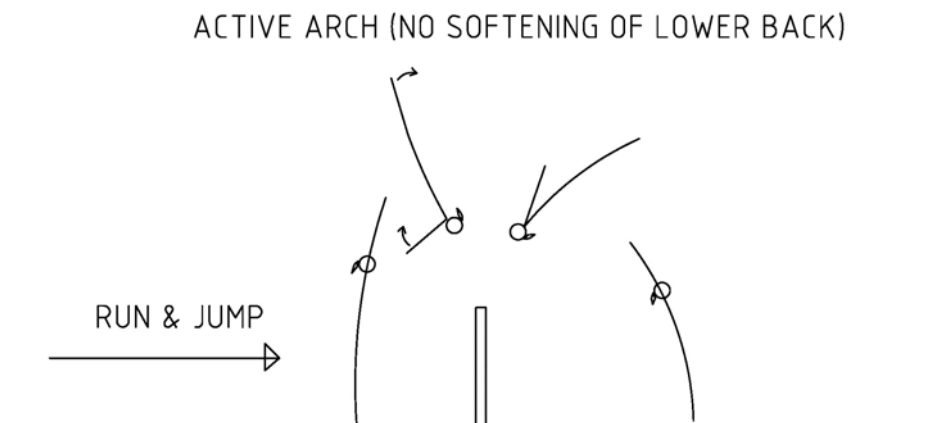


Straight Front Somersault:

1. The gymnast runs and jumps into a handstand on a height. The focus is on a rounded take-off position.



2. The gymnast performs a straight front somersault over a height. They must ensure there is no softening of the lower back but rather a very strong heel drive.

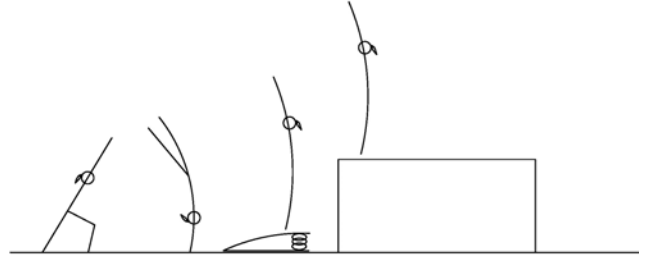


APPENDIX 5

Vault

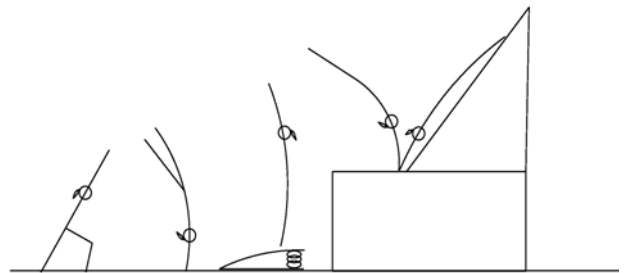
Yurchenko Vault:

1. The gymnast performs a round off to land on the spring board with a high straight jump onto piled mats. During the round off the head should remain in line with the arms and not look at the hands.



2. The gymnast performs a round off to land on the spring board with a high lift into a flip onto the pile of mats. Again the head should remain in line with the arms and not look at the hands through both the roundoff and flip part of the vault. Focus should be on a strong lift before the shoulders open onto the mat and coach should ensuring there is no softening of the lower back.

ACTIVE ARCH (NO SOFTENING OF LOWER BACK)



3. Once confident the vault can be added and the gymnast can perform a round off flip with a strong shoulder push and chest lift to land on her knees. (this can be further progressed to land on her back on the mats)

