

Sports Medicine and Physical Activity

Periodization of the Training Process in Equestrian Sport

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Summary

Training for a particular type of equestrian discipline for both rider and horse is a multi-year, focused activity.

Improvement to the maximum extent possible of useful sports habits is only achieved when training begins at an early age (for a horse of 1 year and for a rider of 9-10 years of age). Before these ages, both the horse and the child should be given slight fatigue movements. With special care and suitable horses or ponies, an experienced trainer can also train with children under 9 years of age.

Each training year has its own goal to achieve - subordinated to the ultimate goal we strive to achieve through years of activity.

The one-year training activity, as noted above, has three periods: preparatory, competitive (basic) and transitional. For equestrian sports, in our climatic conditions, both for the rider and for the horse, the following distribution of periods in the training year is appropriate:

- Preparatory - December, January and February
- Competitive (basic) - from March to October
- Transitional - November

This distribution can only be specified when one knows exactly the annual sports calendar, in which the date of the most important event (events) will approximately coincide with the highest load during the base period.

Through purposeful science-based activity, the horse and rider will balance and work together to achieve the goal of each plan period. What are the goals that the individual training periods pursue?

Keywords

Equestrian sport, Periodization, Training

Preparatory Period

Its very name indicates that through it we prepare the body of the horse and the rider to be able to start in good starting condition training during the basic period. The load is not so much the amount of effort, but the nature of the training activity is consistent with the goals that are set in the basic period. If some of the four qualities (endurance, strength, agility or speed) need to be developed to the maximum, then the body is trained in the preparatory period to prepare for this task. In the preparatory period, in all cases, the body prepares itself for "endurance" and for building a "strong organism". Work is also being done to develop agility of the whole organism, but without heavy workloads.

During the preparation period, no work is done to adjust the body to speed!

Injuries to the horse's legs that would occur during the training of the horse to develop speed may be the reason that he may not be able to continue the work during the basic period. During this period, the main training efforts are directed at eliminating in the rider and horse any weaknesses that would interfere with the work during the basic period. For example: the rider's mistakes in jumping are corrected, the horse is made in the support of the occasion and he exercises to approach the obstacle calmly and evenly. During this time, the body must first and foremost be in good physical condition, but not with much nutrition, but with an increase in its vitality, if required by special digestible and vitamin foods.

During the preparation period, special care should be taken to create a habit of calm and focused work - a guarantee of success during busy training days in the basic period.

Competitive (basic) Period

During this period, the training of the horse is characterized by complete focus in view of the upcoming racing activity. The dynamics of this period stems from the progressively

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increasing maximum effort exerted on the body by both rider and horse. The main period can be divided into three parts:

1. Constructive - in which the horse and rider adapt to the effort that will be required of them in the race itself. It ends one to two weeks before the first race.
2. Pre-race - allows the body to accumulate strength and focus for the moment before the race. In this period can be held and called impact microcycles. This part does not have the nature of rest, but it does not increase the load (only maintain, refine and smooth the motor habits). Through this part, the body gains confidence in its capabilities, through which the speed and accuracy of the reflexes associated with the most important moments in the race must be maintained. These reflexes should be fully automatic.
3. Competitive - in which the horse demonstrates the fullest ability to work, and the rider shows mainly his technical, tactical and mental qualities. The rider with confidence and calmness directs his horse so that he can make full use of the already useful motor skills.

It must be emphasized that the racing part is physiologically indispensable to elevate the rider and horse to excellence. The competitions have high training content.

World statistics show that the top riders in the show jumping discipline are normally able to have 350-450 competitions in international competitions in one year. Of course, these competitions are made with different horses (at least 3-4 pcs.), but it is extremely important for the rider to participate in a large number of races in order to accumulate a routine, to maintain his technical, physical and mental training at altitude. This cannot be achieved if he has only one racehorse. If we are unable to participate in a large number of competitions, this can be offset by a weekly jumping of courses at the horse base where we train, as well as at other horse

bases under different conditions, which are also very important for the horse's sports training (loading in trailer, traveling, jumping various obstacles, racing environment, stress factors for the horse and the rider).

If too much effort is required in the racing part of the horse (too many races, competitions in excessively difficult competitions for which he is not prepared), much larger than he can bear, instead of obtaining useful results, we may get negative consequences, traumas, fatigue, no desire to race and compromise on preparation. This should not be tolerated, though some overly ambitious, self-confident and self-righteous riders can afford to disregard the horse's current state and preparation.

Transitional Period

It is rare for trainers and riders to treat their horses responsibly and consciously during this period.

During the transitional period, the acquired sporting qualities must not be lost. A proper active rest preserves valuable sporting quality - the body does not lose its motor habits. This also retains the ability to quickly recover to an even higher level when re-training.

During this period, there is no rigorous purposefulness that guides the work during the basic period, and through active rest enables some of the bodies to rest and others who are left behind in their development to develop further. This creates a prerequisite for greater success in the next sports year.

Riding in the field, walking and riding discharge are recommended - so the rider has 100% control of his horse. Longing, putting a horse in a padlock, or in a machine (carousel) is not recommended, as leaving the horse free can injure itself and this will fatally disrupt our work program.