

THREE C's OF COMBINED EVENT TRAINING

Cliff Rovelto
Head Track & Field Coach
Kansas State University

The process of designing training utilizing multi system and multi lateral training strategies can be a daunting task. A highly effective means is to utilize the “Three C’s of Combined Event Training.”

They are; identifying commonalities of events and making use of complimentary and compatible principles.

I. Commonality

Commonality is defined as that which share a common bond or trait. In the combined event world there are many obvious commonalities within and between event areas.

1. Within the throwing events the commonality of the power position in the shot put, discus and javelin is one example.
2. In the sprint events and jumping events, acceleration mechanics is an obvious commonality between these event areas.
3. There are also less obvious examples of commonalities in the combined events. Consider the high jump and javelin. In these two events the rhythm of the approach is very similar. In both of these events the movement of the hips over the penultimate foot is very important. Also, in both of these events the body posture at the point of percussion is similar.

The development of a commonality based philosophy of coaching makes the teaching of motor skills simpler and more efficient. Fundamental concepts and skills can be taught and brought to various events in appropriate ways, rather than approaching each event as a separate entity.

II. Complementary

Complementary work is best defined as that which completes or makes perfect; there exists an appropriate quality or quantity of work that completes the intended objective. Complementary components are those that produce enhanced results either by order within sessions or by scheduling on successive days.

Examples of complementary grouping considerations:

1. Prescription of rest.
2. Prescription of some recovery modality: ice bath, sauna, massage.
3. Prescription of some training unit geared toward restorative purposes.

- An example would be incorporating an extensive tempo session on a day following a session of high neuromuscular demand.
4. Going shallower into the same pool.
An example would be a session working on the initial drive phase following a day of acceleration sprints.
 5. Going deeper into the same pool.
An example would be a session of full out throws following a day of performing segmented drills.
 6. Exercising similar qualities or same body parts with a different hit.
An example would be a session of javelin special strength throws with a medicine ball on a day following a javelin throws session.

III. Compatible

Compatible is defined as existing together in harmony and/or consistent with. Within training sessions compatible training components are those that have commonalities that permit them to be done during the same session.

The following considerations are often used when grouping training units to form a session:

1. Grouping by similar neuromuscular demands.
An example would be performing underhand forward throws with the shot prior to block starts.
2. Grouping by similar metabolic demands.
An example would be performing general body weight strength circuits and aerobic power running workouts in the same session.
3. Grouping by technical commonality.
An example would be performing long jump takeoff drills prior to a pole vault jump session.
4. Grouping by ground contact times.
An example would be performing long jump approaches and ins and outs training in the same session.
5. Grouping by the rhythmic demands of the activity.
An example would be performing high jump and javelin approaches in the same session.