

Climb Strong Multi-Sport Integration

Introduction

There are no good Doctor/Lawyer combos out there. You are either an expert or just mediocre at everything (A mile wide and an inch deep syndrome). An athlete in this predicament has to choose if they want to combine multiple sports with climbing or focusing on climbing alone. If they do want to do multiple sports, the athlete needs to be warned what integrating multiple sports will do to their climbing (Read - It will hurt it) There is no compromise, only sacrifice. If focusing just on climbing isn't your bag though, there are ways to integrate other sports, but you have to be smart about how you plan your training. You can still have solid peaks, but it takes some discipline.

Reasons Why for Multi-Sport Integration

There are a few reason why an athlete may want to integrate another sport.

- Injury
- Burned Out
- Really Enjoys Competing or Doing Another Sport (Running, etc)
- Seasons (It's too hot or cold to climb - Doesn't like the year round training)

Whatever the reasons, an athlete needs to plan out their year accordingly. It needs be based around when they want to climb and do other sports. Just doing them all at once won't cut it. Remember, sacrifice, not compromise.

Where The Coach Comes In

This is when you have to have a very serious conversation with your athlete. You have to nail hard and fast dates to when to peak and how the year is going to be set-up. You need to help decipher when is it time to come off of climbing and transition into running, skiing, biking, etc. And then back into climbing.

Bo Knows! (But He's Doing It)

Don't let other people's success in multiple sports fool you. There are athletes who can perform at high-levels in multiple sports, but you can't fall into this trap. These people are outliers. Bo Jackson was an amazing athlete. Guys or gals like this only come around every once in awhile. What you should be saying when you see an athlete like that is, "Wow, imagine what he could do if he just focused on one sport."

Triathlon Athlete Example - The times triathletes turn in are nothing compared to top level athletes in the individual sport. Even if a triathlete did just one discipline they wouldn't even have a chance with the top bikers, swimmers, and runners. They sure are good, but they can't compete with the elite.

Common Theme In All Sports - Strength Training

It doesn't matter what sport you do or how many you do. Strength is a common theme and must always be trained. Keep this up, ALWAYS!

Strength In-season (1-2x per week)

Strength Off-Season (3x per week)

Keep Climbing Simmering In The Background (If you can)

Depending on the athlete you may be able to keep the climbing simmering in the background. Integrate it in the strength training if you can. Remind your athlete this is the path they have chosen and they have to be OK with letting go of the climbing.

Bottom Line

This is a conscious decision. Be OK with the reset or start over if transitioning for sport to sport. This is the ultimate, "You can't have your cake and eat it too."

However, I do think with proper planning athletes can make this work and have success in many facets of their chosen sports.