

ABSTRACT

PAPER TITLE: An Examination of **Pre-Activity and Post-Activity Flexibility Practices of Cross Country and Track and Field Distance Throws Coaches**

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The purpose of this study was to determine whether coaching certification courses in track and field and cross country are effective in promoting proper pre- and post-activity stretching practices in NCAA division I, II, and III cross country and track and field distance programs. Questionnaires were sent to 770 NCAA Division I, Division II, and Division III programs in the United States. 108 coaches (84 males & 24 female) participated in the study. Chi Square analysis ($\chi^2=21.582$, $p=0.0174$) revealed that non-certified coaches reported greater usage of static stretching alone (18.9%, $n=9$) versus their certified counterparts (1.8%, $n=1$). In addition, certified coaches reported higher usage of dynamic flexibility only during the pre-activity period (47.4%, $n=27$) versus non-certified peers (32.4%, $n=16$). Coaches were also asked if they allowed for static stretching between interval work and events in track and field, and as expected ($\chi^2=11.948$, $p=0.0177$), a higher percentage of non-certified coaches (45.5%, $n=23$) reported allowing athletes to perform static stretches between intervals at practice than

certified peers (37.9%, n=22). Results indicate that even though coaching certification courses are an effective tool for communicating current information about stretching practices, there are still many certified coaches who are not implementing the practices into in pre-activity routines.

KEY WORDS: dynamic stretching, static stretching, warm-up, cool-down