

UNIT 12

The Hammer

Aim: To achieve maximum distance within the rules of the event.

Full Technique: See table 13.1.

Basic Technique: (for a right handed student)

To achieve any distance it is important that a turning throw is used, and whilst this requires a degree of skill, it can be fun and most students enjoy learning to master it.

1. The initial momentum is gained by swinging the hammer round the head.
2. The arms are straight at the front of the body.
3. The knees are flexed.
4. As the hammer rises, the legs extend.
5. At the low point, the hammer is off the right foot. (See Fig. 12.1)
6. At the high point it is over the left shoulder. (See Fig. 12.1)

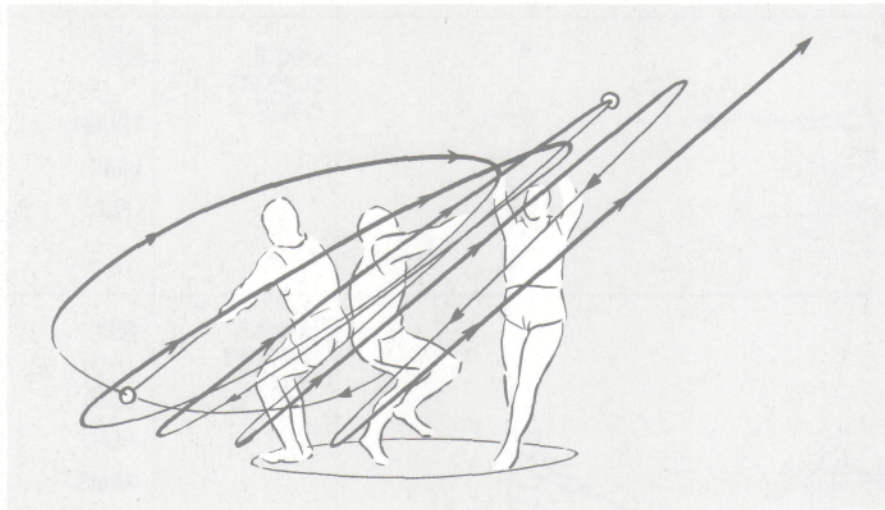


Fig. 12.1

7. There are 2-3 swings taken to set up an initial rhythm.
8. With the arms straight, there is a series of heel-toe runs used to move across the circle.
9. At the end of these turns the arms and back lift to release the hammer over the left shoulder.





Table 12.1



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HAMMER		PHASE	OBSERVATION POINTS		
A			INITIAL SWINGS	2 SWINGS	At low point, hammer is pointing to right foot.
			LEGS/HIPS	Use legs/hips and trunk to counter-balance weight.	
			ARMS	Hands to forehead, not over head.	
B			ENTRY	HEAD	Looking at hammer head.
			TRUNK	Upright.	
			LEGS	Weight moves over to left leg; heel turn long.	
			ARMS	Shoulders, arms and hands form triangle.	
			HANDS		
C			SINGLE SUPPORT PHASE	FEET	Turning rotation on left heel and right toe.
			TRUNK	Upright.	
			HEAD	Eyes looking at hammer.	
			LEGS	Weight on left leg.	
D			DOUBLE SUPPORT PHASE	FEET	Right knee is picked up and moved down as soon as possible.
			LEGS	Left leg pushes away.	
			HEAD	Eyes on hammer.	
			ARMS	Long.	
			HANDS	Keep hands low.	
			The sequence B, C and D is repeated twice more; as this progresses, the Hammer is accelerated and the angle (of the hammer-wire-arms) steepens. The right foot on turns 2 and 3 comes off earlier as more speed is generated.		
E			DELIVERY	LEGS (1)	Left leg quickly pushes in direction of throw.
			LEGS (2)	Active lift with legs.	
			FEET	Pivot together to allow release before striking.	
			ARMS (1)	Hammer goes through low point.	
			ARMS (2)	Release hammer high.	
			HEAD	Follows hammer.	

Key points:

- long rhythmic swings
- low point off left foot
- arms straight
- back straight, head up
- balanced turns
- stretch release

THE HOLD

1. The hammer handle is held in the left hand so that the grip lies along the 2nd and 3rd joint of the fingers.
2. The right hand does likewise.
3. The left fingertips fit into the base of the fingers of the right hand. (See Fig.12.2)
4. In the initial stage, work with a shortened handle.

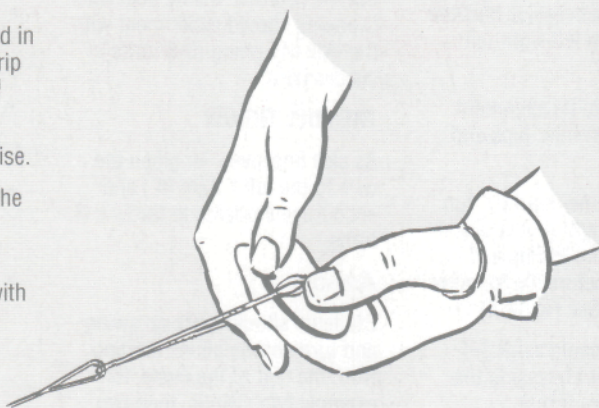


Fig 12.2

TEACHING POINTS

As with the discus use modified equipment, e.g. medicine balls, slingballs, podium medicine balls used with rope. (See Fig. 12.3)

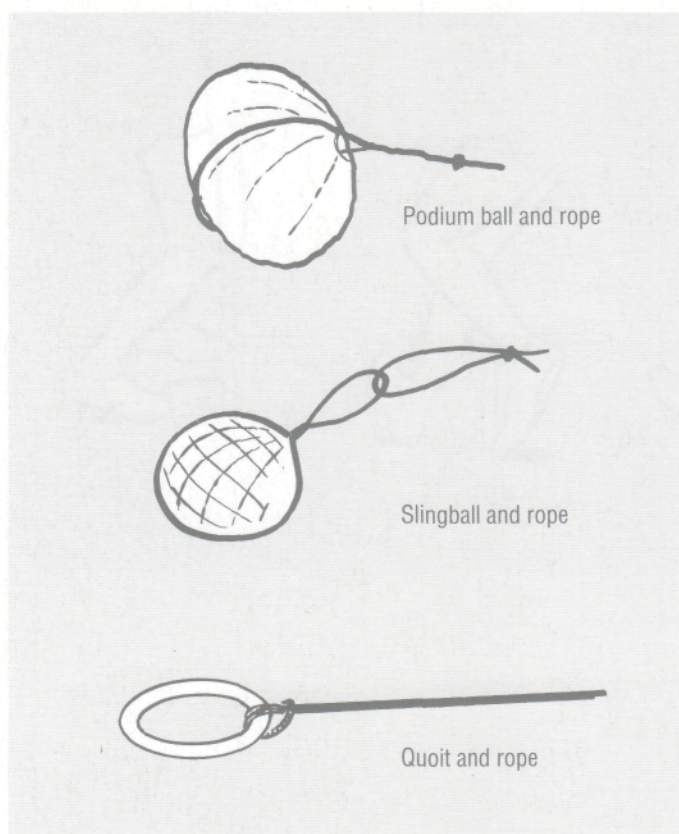


Fig. 12.3

THE STANDING THROW

1. The start is with the back to the direction of the throw.
2. Feet shoulder width apart.
3. Knees slightly flexed.
4. The hammer is slung over the left shoulder from a starting position low right.
5. The finish is with arms long and high over the left shoulder.
6. Develop this to include 2-3 preliminary swings with a release high over the left shoulder.



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Turns



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1. These are successive heel/toe actions from left-right-left foot.
2. There should be alignment between hammer, hips and shoulders.
3. As the hammer starts to "run away" the right foot is quickly lifted over the left leg and is grounded before the hammer "arrives". (See Fig.12.4)
4. Students should work 3-4 turns without releasing the hammer (dry turns).
5. Link together preliminary swings with a turn.
6. Develop this to swings plus two turns before the delivery/release.

At this stage work with and without the hammer will be beneficial. Students should experiment with the skill of turning (3-6 turns in succession).

The Full Throw

As skill improves, lengthen the wire to the full 1.22m (4') and encourage students to throw 2-3 turns.

Activities:

Students should work on swing and turn combinations starting from the rear of the circle, for example two swings, then two controlled turns, followed by two swings, followed by two turns.

Practising this skill can be fun; students normally find it a rewarding activity, and hence are prepared to work at it.

Simple Rules:

- the throw is made from a 2.135m (7') diameter circle into a 40° sector
- there is no restriction on the style of throw except it must be started from a stationary position, and the thrower must leave by the rear of the circle, and be under control
- for a valid 'throw' an exit from the circle may not be made until after the hammer has landed

Safety

- This is a potentially dangerous event and great care must be taken in teaching and when practising.
- With right-handed throwers the most vulnerable area is to their right.
- Whilst it is obviously safer if a throwing cage is used, this is an event which, with or without a cage, requires the **STRICTEST SUPERVISION**.
- Always ensure that non-throwers are positioned to the rear of the thrower, and are paying attention to the whole action.

Fig. 12.4

