

Book Review

VOQ Training, by Dan Kaplan

Years ago I visited Fred Wilt (the founding editor of *Track Technique/Track Coach*) at his home. During my stay Fred let me page through his vast track and field library. It was extensive to say the least. There were books from all over the world, in every language with a little note from the author to Fred. Nonchalantly he said, "I get these all the time."

Sometimes I do too. Recently I received and read Dan Kaplan's *VOQ Training*. In this compact book Kaplan details his trials and tribulations of coaching. But this little gem is far from a gripe session. In an upbeat way he details how he surmounted many of the challenges high school coaches face today in building a successful distance running program.

The book is frank about successes Kaplan has had and equally frank about some of his missteps. Kaplan writes with an engaging style so that the reader is left experiencing the "rush" when it all goes right and the anguish when it doesn't.

VOQ is an acronym for volume of quality training, a method that preaches an incremental improvement over time. He goes out of his way to detail the various components of daily, weekly, seasonal,

yearly and career development plans. I feel this focus would be a particularly valuable approach for a new coach or a non-running coach working with distance runners.

For the experienced distance coach there are some creative workout patterns and training thoughts (based on actual practice plans) that may give a different perspective for coaches steeped in one of the more common running schools of thought.

It is evident that Kaplan has read and researched extensively in an effort to integrate complimentary and alternative thoughts on health and fitness into his program. As his narrative details he was forced to develop his program with special attention to injury prevention as he produced successful teams with a minimal amount of distance runners. It's situations like these where a coach learns how to coach.

While both innovative and comprehensive I feel safe recommending *VOQ* to any and all trying to flesh out their library, especially those who need to inject some different perspectives into stagnant thought patterns or philosophies. For those who see my point you'll get Kaplan's point that coaching track and field is about "never settling," but rather continually expanding the

knowledge base, the circle of light.

This review is followed by a portion of the book's first chapter which will give you a good taste of what Kaplan is about.



The coach's best friend

Coach, *TRAINING GAMES* will be a lifesaver for you in helping to keep your team motivated, fresh and enthusiastic. Eric Anderson offers a number of running exercises and diversions that will enliven your daily workouts and will help to build team cohesiveness.

And there are discussions of various other topics that will make your day more productive and your athletes more effective: dealing with pain, visualization and mental games, racing tactics, safety factors, counseling and communication, off-track activities, much more.

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Training Games: Coaching Runners Creatively, by Eric Anderson and Andrew Hibbert. 3rd ed., 2006, with additional games. 167pp. Paperbound. With cartoons by George Anderson. \$17.50 from **Track & Field News, 2570 W El Camino Real, Suite 220, Mountain View, CA 94040**. Add \$2.95 postage/handling for US delivery, \$12 postage/handling for foreign delivery. CA residents add 7¼% sales tax. Visa/MC/AMEX orders welcome; call 650/948-8188 M-F 9-5 PT.

Dozens Of Diversions To Keep Your Team Motivated.

By Russ Ebbets

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