

STARTING TIPS

At the ATOM Clinic, Mike Van Dyke gave a great presentation on Best Practices of Starting Races. Here are Mike's "Top Ten Tips for Successful Race Starting":

1. **Clear Communication:** Provide clear instructions to all participants before the race, ensuring everyone understands what to expect.
2. **Individual Instructions:** Tailor instructions for runners not using starting blocks, ensuring they understand their specific starting procedure.
3. **Optimal Starter Position:** Position yourself where you have a clear view of all competitors, ensuring fairness and safety during the race.
4. **Starter Mechanics:** Utilize consistent whistle signals, voice commands, and arm signals to maintain control and clarity throughout the starting process.
5. **Be Ready to Stop:** Know when to halt the starting process if any issues arise, prioritizing a fair start for all competitors. Restarts are ok!
6. **Sprint Race Considerations:** Quickly address common issues such as starting block problems, crowd control, or false starts promptly to maintain race integrity.
7. **Distance Race Considerations:** Watch for issues like unsteady runners, toe placement, or falls during the first 100 meters of distance races.
8. **False Start Recognition:** Understand the criteria for identifying false starts and distinguish between legitimate movements and infractions. A flinch is not always a false start.
9. **Consistency after Recalls:** Maintain consistent mechanics and commands even after a recall to ensure fairness and avoid unintentional advantages.
10. **Fair and Professional Conduct:** Prioritize fairness and professionalism in your role as a starter, communicating effectively with athletes and coaches while ensuring a fair and legal race start for all competitors.