

To all Coaches, Parents, and Athletes:

We are living through unprecedented times. Most of us have never experienced anything like the COVID-19 pandemic in our lifetime. While everyone has different access to parks, facilities and equipment for training and skill development, when it comes to sports performance, the reality is that most of us will detrain, and we will see a decline in performance.

There are ways to mitigate decline by getting creative and using what is available to you. Although coaches would love to think that athletes are still training every day and completing all of the at-home prescribed workouts we are sending, the reality is they aren't. In a best case scenario, athletes are doing half of them with the intensity or intent that coaches are looking for. We need to face the reality that we won't get back the same athlete we had before the start of COVID-19. It takes only five days to begin to lose speed and power adaptations.

Coaches:

We understand the urge to “make up lost time” training and practicing, but **the end of this pandemic is going to be a critical window where injuries can and will occur.** A historical example of this was during the NFL lockout in 2011 – there was a **240% increase** in Achilles tendon ruptures when athletes returned. We need to progressively reload our athletes when we get the green light to begin sports and training. This means no extended practices, no extra conditioning, and no added homework/training/etc. Scale back and allow physiological adaptations to happen over the course of a few weeks. Obviously all athletes are going to show back up with different levels of “readiness” but the smart thing to do is to start up again with high quality and a lower quantity (volume). Otherwise you will be left with a broken team at the end of the season when they need to be performing their best. Have a plan for how you are going to progress your athletes when they return.

Parents:

Encourage your athletes to stay in a daily routine, practice healthy habits, stay active and get enough sleep. Continue to support them. Give them an outlet for their frustrations with sports and training, and continue motivate them to excel in school. Train with them! You have been looking for a good reason to get back in shape.

Athletes:

Times like this are going to reveal a person's true character and coaches are going to be watching how you approached this period of time. Do what you can to take care of yourself and reduce injury risk. This is a time you can use to work on your movement deficiencies, increase your relative strength and athleticism, and learn a couple new skills (cooking) or pick up a new hobby (woodworking). Take care of your body and your mind and have some fun!

If you have any questions, concerns, or need some guidance please reach out to Sanford POWER and we will be happy to give you some pointers to keep you on the right track. Keep a look out for tips, programming, and more from the POWER team. Stay safe and stay well!



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