Floor skill 2: Handstand

Description
The handstand is the common denominator in gymnastics and it is imperative to develop the shaping and strength for this skill from the beginning. This will create a key foundation for the high level skills to be built upon in the future.

This skill transfers across all apparatus and ideally should be developed throughout a training session.

Skill progressions
The pictures below demonstrate some examples of basic shaping drills and progressions to teach a handstand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kneeling support</th>
<th>Front support</th>
<th>Raised front support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuck handstand with support</td>
<td>Open shoulder support</td>
<td>Walk up the wall to hold handstand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KEY: Develop the position of the shape through increasing the time and raising the support of the feet.

Physical preparation
Body alignment drills assist in developing the ability to maintain the correct body shapes through constant tension activities and strength exercises in the core area of the body.

As an Intermediate Coach, you will design activities to assist in the development of body alignment. It is good to conduct these activities in a fun way and incorporate them into your training program throughout the session.

The pictures below demonstrate some examples of physical preparation activities for a handstand.

| Dish and front support activities | Rear support hold | Side arches |
Body lifts | Tuck handstand activities | Body tension activities

Appropriate coaching points
Key coaching points are:
- Rounded back
- Stomach in, buttocks tucked under
- Straight arms and elbows
- Fingers spread with hands slightly turned inward
- Head neutral – look at thumbs
- In vertical the shoulders should be fully open with elevated shoulder girdle

Common errors
- Weak position in support, i.e. lack of shoulder strength
- Bent arms
- Poor body alignment – needs development of body alignment
- Chest or head out
- Arch in back

Evaluate when ready to move on
Your gymnast may be ready to move onwards if:
- They can demonstrate a strong handstand against the wall for approximately ten seconds.
- They can kick up to handstand, join legs and demonstrate a strong body shape.
- They can make body shape corrections when given by the coach.
NOTE: Additional physical preparation drills (to assist with body alignment)
At the Intermediate level you will need to utilise some strength or physical preparation activities to develop gymnasts’ strength.

The pictures below outline some additional alignment drills to assist with further development of handstand alignment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Front to rear support</th>
<th>Dish rolls</th>
<th>Heel extensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Back extensions</td>
<td>Front support games</td>
<td>Body tension games</td>
</tr>
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