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# Jacksonville Athletic Club

- Who are we?- Year-round track and field club.
- Why did I start it?- When I was a high school athlete, I didn't have a coach, and figured there were other people in the same boat as me.
- As time went on, our focus stayed the same, we just evolved to offer more services
- Most of what we do now, and what we mainly profit from, I had no idea how to do 10 years ago.

# How Did I Get Here?

- Loved sports as a kid
- Ages 4-10, baseball- got too boring
- Ages 8-14, basketball- game wasn't ready for me
- Ages 12-25- track and field- can't explain why I liked it
- All sports, very focused at getting better
- Not much of an excuse person, just always tried to get better
- Loved the individual sport aspect, as you are 100% in control

# My Passion

- Triple jump, 96' Olympics
- No explanation why I became passionate about it
- Driven to get better, slight obsession
- Not very good, but enjoyed it, and felt like I could be good with the right instruction
- Especially with the triple jump, I loved that there was so many moving parts, so that (in theory) meant there was the potential for many opportunities for improvement





# Collegiate Experience

- Freshman year- very bad, quit team, still thought I could be better than I was. Needed to find a good coach
- Sophomore year to senior year- transferred schools, found a good coach, became a 3 time NCAA Championships qualifier in the triple jump
- My experience with a great coach got me into the profession of coaching
- Extremely lucky to have had my collegiate experience. I was driven enough to just stick with it, and it really paid off.

# Coaching Background

- Focus shifted from trying to become the best athlete, to trying to make athletes become the best they could be
- How would I do that?
- Just because you were a great athlete doesn't mean you will be a great coach
- Coaching education
  - USATF Certifications
  - Emailing coaches
  - Shadowing coaches
  - Calling coaches
  - Any means necessary to learn

# How I Got Started with the Jacksonville Athletic Club

- Needed to make money to help provide for my family, so took a teaching job just to help pay the bills
- 1 week in, realized that was not the job for me
- Liked the idea of a track club, because had the vision that 1 day could do that to pay the bills
- Started out as trying to get a few kids to college.
- Figured there were at least a few kids at local high schools that wanted coaching outside of the school season.
- Offered our services to local athletes, mainly in lesson form
- We were good at what we did. Word quickly spread.

# First Few Years (2013-2015)

- About 10 high school athletes to start with
- No youth athletes or programming
- Tried to make a name for ourself by doing “unique events”
- Traveled to summer meets (AAU, USATF, “Junior Olympics”)
- Gave lessons all over, driving a scooter all of Jacksonville
- Took any lesson that was available, both for the money, and for the “customer experience”
- Only way we expanded was by word of mouth, no actual advertising
- By 2015 were able to send 20 athletes to college for track and field

# 2016-2020

- Things below ended up being the biggest money makers for the club:
- However, all three we had to learn how to do.
- Added a youth program- averaging 15-20 athletes
  - Had to learn how to run a youth program
- Started hosting our own meets (make and save money)
  - Had to learn how to run and host successful track meets that people would actually attend
- Bought a timing system to time our own meets
  - Had to learn how to use a timing system

# 2021-Present

- After pandemic, youth program really took off (2 reasons, parents and change in leadership)
- Post-Collegiate Decathlon Group
- Cross Country Program
- Summer Track Camp Programming
- Fall Pole Vault Clinics
- Timing Company took off (2021 timed 5 meets, 2023 timed over 50)
- Financial Focus on the Summer- do as much as you can in 8 weeks

# 10 Years Later....

Afterschool Programs

Pole Vault Clinics

Homeschool Group

Private Lessons

**High School Club**

Internship Program

Youth Club

Post-Collegiate Group

Long Distance Group

Hosting Track Meets

Timing Company

# Typical Day for Me

- Seasonal in nature
- Summer- Busy mornings and early evenings, gap in middle of day
- Fall- 4pm-7pm
- Winter- 4pm-7pm
- Spring- Due to coaching a high school team and timing track meets, it is a busier season for me, but still almost no travel, and no crazy hours

# Positives of Being an Entrepreneur

- You can be your own boss!!
- You can make your own schedule
- You can do things the way you want them done
- If done properly, you can train the right people to do the things that you aren't the most passionate about, but are still important to your vision / bottom line
- The challenge of having to kill to eat. Each day and each season.
- The challenge of branching out to see what else you can do

# Negatives of Being an Entrepreneur

- Starting out you might not make any money. Like no money.....
- You have no real safety net
- You have to pay for a safety net
- At times it can be very time consuming
- Not a steady income
- Growing pains of having to train someone
- You have to be good at what you do or you will not last very long

# Characteristics for Success

- Stubborn- Get it done
- Optimistic- Always look for a solution
- Driven- Athlete background, wanting to be the best
- Focused
- Organized
- Big Picture Thinker

# Advice for Potential Entrepreneurs

- Find 1 thing you are passionate about. Go all in on that to start.
- Become an expert in what you are trying to do
- Take calculated risks
- You need to spend money to make money
- Be nice to people
- Be firm in your core beliefs / foundation. [Make it something public so people can see before they buy or commit](#)
- Only spend money when you need to
- If you can do something yourself, or train someone to do it, do that
- Be creative / do the best with what you have

# Advice Continued....

- Cater to your target audience- people are weird, find your audience, ignore the rest
- Location thoughts- Jacksonville
- If you are good at what you do, you will welcome competition
- Talk to people who have done it before!!
- Try to do one thing that will set you apart, OR one thing that will make it easy to spread the word (ex. domain names)

# Domain Names!

- Inexpensive but effective way to tell others about your product
- We own right at 100....
- Summertrackclub.com
- Track4kids.com
- Polevaultclinics.com
- Falltracktraining.com
- Jacpayments.com
- Trackmeetsignup.com
- Homeschooltrack.com
- Hurricane-info.com

# Come Up with a Smart Business Model

- Kids needing service hours
- College / grad school interns
- Have people pay you entry fees instead of paying someone else entry fees
- Youth satellite locations
- Summer camps at different locations

# Final Thoughts

- Frederick Buechner Quote- “Vocation is the place where our deep gladness meets the world's deep need.”
- Try to be better than everyone else in your space
- It won't be easy, but 100% will be worth it
- Find what you are passionate about, become an expert in it, hire great people, and always stay positive.

# “Entrepreneurial” Influences / Interests

- TV Shows

- Shark Tank
- The Profit
- The Apprentice
- Undercover Boss
- Bar Rescue

- Books

- [The Art of the Deal](#)
- [Rich Dad Poor Dad](#)
- [The \\$100 Startup](#)
- [Quitter](#)
- [Start](#)
- [Sell It Like Serhant](#)
- [The Sell](#)

Questions?

# Presentation Link

- [Developingthestudentathlete.com](http://Developingthestudentathlete.com)