

Football

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ule, no workouts can be held between 11:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. to avoid activity during the most intense temperatures of the day.

For schools following a one-a-day practice schedule, that single session is not to exceed three hours.

Supporters of the move stress that any changes won't take away from the double-session practice concept still prevalent today, but merely complement it for schools that have opted for single sessions.

"As we're trying to acclimate the kids and be pro-concussion policy and help more kids play the game, the one thing we don't want to do is alienate the coaches who have developed a culture in their programs that works for them," said Dan O'Connell, head football coach at John Baptist Memorial High School of Bangor and the Maine Football Coaches Association's liaison to the Maine Principals' Association's football committee. "You want to help the programs that need it, but you don't want to upset the apple cart for the programs that have something working pretty well that want to leave it the same way."

Balancing work and football

At Oceanside High School, head football coach Wes Drinkwater and several of his players work on the ocean as lobstermen, with the summer a lucrative time of year that runs head-first into the start of football practices.

"Coach is a lobsterman who back in the day was a kid who was a lobsterman, so he sees that if he's going to get those kids out for football, he needs to be flexible in how he approaches what kids do in the beginning of preseason," said Bishop, who in her high school days also held a lobstering license.

As a result, Oceanside holds single-session preseason football practices to accommodate the maximum number of players.

"Every kid that's working is trying to balance sports and school and work and family, and it's difficult for coaches to determine what's the best time to have practice," Bishop said.

"But half of the kids on the team who work are probably working day jobs, and that makes it difficult for them to get there in the



Members of the Brewer High School football team are shown going through workouts in August 2015. Football teams' frequency and length of practices are limited to protect the athletes' health by Maine Principals' Association guidelines.

morning, and then with the number of kids who work in the restaurant industry, chances are they're working night jobs, so it really is sort of split," he added.

"And for those kids who need money or it's their first taste of money, sometimes it's hard to pull them back into sports," Bishop added.

Bucksport, a traditional hotbed of small-school football in eastern Maine, also schedules single-session preseason workouts.

"More and more kids are working," said Ed Hatch, the Bucksport athletic administrator and chair of the Maine Principals' Association football committee, "or there are younger kids who don't have their [driver's] license because those requirements have changed over the years and they're not getting their license as early as they used to, so it's tougher for them to get to and from practices."

Guidelines in the annual Maine Principals' Association football bulletin cover double sessions through the first six days of practice. That schedule is followed by controlled scrimmages on Monday of the second week of workouts, leading to exhibition games the following weekend and then another week of practices leading to season openers, this year Sept. 2-3.

Double sessions may continue after the initial six-day period, but the frequency of scrimmage/exhibition games and the start of the school year often limit the number of subsequent double-session opportunities.

The idea to add single-session standards to the double-session regulations

stems from the executive committee of the Maine Football Coaches Association, which has shared its suggestions with the Maine Principals' Association's football and sports medicine panels.

"You can go doubles, and it will be very similar to what it is now if not the same," O'Connell said, "and then having a one-session option that doesn't violate the acclimatization process or the contact process but allows the team that can only get there one time a day to be able to still teach and execute what they need to do like they were having doubles."

The football committee, with support from the sports medicine committee, hopes to develop a proposal for consideration by the Maine Principals' Association's general membership next spring. If given final approval, any additions could be included in the Maine Principals' Association's football bulletin for the 2017 season.

"Many of the coaches I've spoken to, all around the state and at schools of varying sizes, are having a harder and harder time of getting kids to commit to football because of the nature of double sessions," said O'Connell. "It's not because of the physical nature of them necessarily, but just getting them to commit to two sessions."

O'Connell and Hatch said the Maine Principals' Association's sports medicine committee will be a critical resource in developing the complementary single-session guidelines before any final proposal is presented.

"We're looking to make [single sessions] more of a

viable option, to leave alone what's already there but have another option for schools," said Hatch, "That's especially for schools of our size, but you can probably make the argument for a lot of 'C' schools and even some 'B' schools that are struggling to get kids to school at a certain time of the morning and then getting them back to practice again in the evening."

"Really it boils down to trying to have competitive fairness, but whatever is written obviously has to take safety as the priority," he said.

Once the football committee develops an initial proposal, it will be reviewed by the sports medicine panel.

"We want to do what we can to work with the football committee to make sure we can offer an alternative for those situations, but we want to make sure that from the standpoint of science that rest, recovery and refueling time is allowed for and that it's adequate to maintain the safety of the athletes," said Semmentelli.

O'Connell said the last thing the coaches want to do in encouraging a single-session alternative is to endanger the players, adding that there's been a general reduction in contact at practices throughout the season in recent years.

"When the sports medicine committee tells us that no matter what we present for change that first and foremost we have to get the kids acclimated to the heat and we have to take care of the kids physically, I don't think there's a coach in the state who would balk at that," he said.

Workouts for the last three months have shown he could do that. You never know about these races. You need them to go out fast, because the Kenyans can kick so fast."

Jager took care of the pacing himself, and it paid off.

He said afterward, had he executed his game plan and run to his potential, he could live with the outcome, whatever it was.

He won't have any problem living with this one.

"I just wanted to make sure I focused on having a good race," Jager said. "I think I had the perfect race today."

Pats' Butler still learning lessons

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

FOXBOROUGH — Cornerback Malcolm Butler is a Super Bowl hero and a Pro Bowler. He is established as New England's No. 1 left cornerback in just his third season. But the young player continues to take his lumps at times on the practice field.

Last week he admitted that Saints speedster Brandin Cooks got the better of him in joint practice action with New Orleans. This week, Chicago Bears big-bodied pass catchers Alshon Jeffery and Kevin White both found success against Butler. The Patriots host the Bears in a preseason game Thursday at 8 p.m.

According to coach Bill Belichick, the challenges Butler and the rest of the Patriots cornerbacks have faced over the last two

weeks will only help the team in the long run.

"It's been great. It's really good for our pass defense to see the quality of the two passing games that we've seen here in practice; the quarterbacks, the receivers," Belichick said. "New Orleans had very good receivers. A guy like Cooks, who's a smaller, quick, fast guy, is a different style than say a guy like Jeffrey or White that we're seeing this week. It's good for us to see all of those guys and the skill of the quarterbacks that we've seen the last couple of weeks. It's great work for us and the schemes are a little bit different, too. What New Orleans does and what Chicago does in the passing game is a little bit different than what we do. So, we got good work against that from a scheme standpoint, too, so that's been really good in that area."

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Johnson played 11 minutes of an exhibition game for the Plymouth Whalers of the OHL, which is a Major Junior league.

Major Junior players receive stipends and, which the NCAA deems professionalism, so players aren't eligible to play college hockey without a lengthy suspension: One full season and the number of games they played.

UMaine unsuccessfully appealed the one-year ban, so Johnson would have had to sit out a full season plus one game.

The 6-foot-3, 185-pound-

er spent most of last season with the Topeka Roadrunners of the North American Hockey League where he posted a 2.56 goals-against average and 0.906 save percentage in 33 games.

UMaine head coach Red Gendron had "no comment" on Johnson's decision to sign with the Knights but said they will be recruiting a goalie for 2017-18.

"I think our goaltending is going to be great," said Gendron. "Matt Morris is a fifth-year senior, [sophomore] Rob McGovern showed flashes of being an outstanding goalie last year, and we have a 6-foot-8 freshman in Stephen Mundinger."

Olympics

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He has held the U.S. record since 2012, and reset it last year. But Jager disappointed himself with a sixth-place finish in the 2015 World Outdoor Championships.

There was nothing disappointing about what unfolded Wednesday at Olympic Stadium.

"There were a lot of years of hard work and daydreaming and dreaming about that moment all coming true," Jager said.

Jager executed the race plan perfectly. He wanted an honest pace. If the race started to drag, Bowerman Track Club coach Jerry Schumacher and assistant Pascal Dobert thought Jager should take it over himself.

Which explains why Jager went to the front with four laps remaining.

"I wanted to keep it in my hands, and keep control of the race," Jager said. "I definitely wasn't planning or thinking about taking the lead from that far out and controlling the whole thing. But in the moment I thought it was something I needed to do."

Kipruto and Kemboi both jumped Jager at the bell, but Jager held his composure and stayed in third place.

"I didn't want to get flustered if anyone passed me in the last two laps," he said. "When Conseslus and Kemboi went around me I just tried to stay as relaxed as I possibly could, and not tighten up — just hang on to Kemboi."

Kipruto was disappearing into the distance, but Jager had Kemboi measured.

"He kind of looked back at me, took a glance on the back stretch," Jager said. "I thought at that moment I might have him. I stuck with him, tried to have a

good water jump and came up on his shoulder. He didn't respond."

Jager accelerated into second place, cleared the final barrier, eyed the finish line, and took it home with a flourish.

And like that, Jager's lingering hangover from 2015 and the 32-year-old U.S. dry spell in the steeple was over.

"I think we've all known for a while Evan has been on the level to do it," said U.S. steepler Donn Cabral, who finished ninth. "It's a testament to him he was able to conquer his nerves, conquer his bedevilmments, and really run the style of race that works for him."

Canadian Matt Hughes, part of the deep and talented crew of steepers Schumacher and Dobert have put together for the BTC, came across in 11th.

"I'm elated for Jager," Hughes said. "He has put in so much hard work. ...

Daigle

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"I wasn't a great shot putter in high school but I knew the form and I knew how to teach her," said Laci.

Laci, who was also an all-conference softball player at Mattanawcook Academy, said they changed Chloe's form before the state meet when she was an 8-year-old and it made a significant difference.

Chloe Daigle and her family were vacationing at Moosehead Lake before last Saturday's meet, but Chole practiced throwing with an eight-pound shot, which is two pounds heavier than the one she throws at meets.

That made the six-pound shot seem lighter to her.

"Before the meet when she was an 8-year-old, we had her practicing with a six-pound shot. They used a four-pound shot in the 8-and-under class," said Laci.

Laci and husband, Brandon, have given Chloe shots for Christmas.

Chloe Daigle says she loves competing and acknowledged that she "practices a lot."

Laci said her daughter will sometimes throw the shot in the snow in February before taking a break and picking it up again in May.

Viani said Daigle is good friends with Isabel Allen, who won the state championship in the javelin.

"They throw against each other. They have a friendly rivalry," said Viani, who noted that Daigle also throws the javelin and Allen throws the shot.

"It's good to have those kinds of athletes on the team pushing each other. Neither one likes to lose," said Viani.

Chloe is actually the third shot putter in the family. Older sister Nevaeh won the state championship in the 9-10 age group at the same meet Chloe took the 8-and-under title.

Nevaeh has since switched over to softball.

Chloe also is a good softball player who also plays soccer and basketball. She loves all sports.

"She'll have to make a decision sometime," said Laci.

SEA DOG BREWING CO.

CALENDAR of Events

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Men's Night <i>Corn hole tournament. Mens give away.</i>	Taco Tuesday <i>\$2 tacos & \$5 margaritas</i> Lip Sync Battles from 9-11 P.M.	Ladies Night <i>with Margaritas, Martinis, & Makeovers (door prizes including salon gift certificates & designer handbags)</i>
THURSDAY	FRIDAY & SATURDAY	SUNDAY
8-10 P.M. Trivia Family Night <i>kids eat for \$2</i>	Live Music	Watch for the return of Reggae Sunday

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207-947-8009 | 11:30 AM- 1AM
SEVEN DAYS A WEEK