

SYSTEM OF GENERAL GYMNASTICS IN THE CZECH ASSOCIATION SPORT FOR ALL

Viléma Novotná

*Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Physical Education and Sports, Prague,
the Czech Republic*

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Abstract:

The paper deals with the concept of general gymnastics in the domain of Sport for All. This concept has been realized for the Czech Association Sport for All as a physical-educational programme for members of this organization and as an offer for the wider public. The concept is in agreement with the directives of Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique FIG, the European Union of Gymnastics (UEG) and others that deal with the development of the movement Sport for All. General gymnastics is an open educational system of gymnastics, all-round development and fitness for all. This movement programme results from the national tradition of physical education and it has developed in the Czech social environment.

Key words: general gymnastics, movement programme, system

DAS SYSTEM ALLGEMEINEN TURNENS IN TSCHECHISCHEM SPORT-FÜR-ALLE-VERBAND

Zusammenfassung:

Dieser Artikel befasst sich mit dem Konzept allgemeinen Turnens als einem Teil des Breitensports. Dieses Konzept wurde im Auftrag vom Tschechischen Sport-für-Alle-Verband entwickelt, und zwar als ein Sportprogramm für die Mitglieder dieses Verbands. Dieses Programm wurde auch der breiteren Öffentlichkeit angeboten. Es ist im Einklang mit den Anweisungen der Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique, Union Européenne de Gymnastique, sowie anderer, die sich mit Breitensport befassen. Allgemeines Turnen ist ein offenes Erziehungssystem, das die allgemeine Gymnastik, eine ganzheitliche Entwicklung und Fitness für Alle umfasst. Dieses Bewegungsprogramm beruht auf nationaler Turntradition, die sich im tschechischen Sozialmilieu entwickelt hat.

Schlüsselwörter: allgemeines Turnen, Bewegungsprogramm, System

Introduction

The well-known Olympic motto of Pierre de Coubertin "It is not important to win, but to take part", which is more and more becoming a mere proclamation in the world of top-level sport, has its real significance in the domain of Sport for All. Generally, there is a lack of natural movement in contemporary society. One of the consequences is the alarming growth of "civilization" diseases. That is why we seek movement that will improve our health and fitness and increase our joy and beauty, relaxation and pleasant experience. We are search-

ing for our roots and inspiration and for the positive influence that movement has on a person. We are looking for the movement that comes from our emotions. We have chosen gymnastics from amongst various activities or sorts of exercise that may help one to achieve and preserve the good state of body and mind and its functions so as to cope with all the job demands successfully and to make the best of one's free time by fulfilling the needs of motion.

The term general gymnastics (GG) is the translation of French "gymnastique générale".

The Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG) has defined general gymnastics as a branch the goal of which is to attract further participants to its activities in non-competitive forms of gymnastics and other activities in the most part called *Sport for All*. In the Czech Republic we classify among the basic activities of general gymnastics only those activities that include gymnastic movements.

If we respect the structures of the FIG, we should divide the branches of gymnastics into mainly competitive-sport branches and other, mostly, non-competitive branches of gymnastics. Competitive sports branches are artistic gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, competitive aerobics, trampoline, sports acrobatics and acrobatic rock'n'roll. From the contents of sports branches and non-competitive variants of gymnastics we choose suitable exercises and design programmes for GG according to our goals and aims. We draw incentives and inspiration for the GG programmes creation from various historical systems, from sport branches of gymnastics and from gymnastics-dance systems based on music - motion relations such as rhythmic gymnastics, dance gymnastics, jazz gymnastics, dance aerobics and others. The basis of the general gymnastics motion programme is formed of the systems of gymnastics called basic, fitness and health gymnastics. According to professional literature, it also includes purposeful exercises like stretching, compensatory exercises, strengthening, aerobics gymnastics and others.

General gymnastics is an organizational form of gymnastic activities. It uses the system of gymnastics to achieve the goals aimed at the sphere of Sport for All. It concentrates on the health and social aspects of movement activities. Within the collective group active use of one's leisure time it is offered in the form of attractive gymnastic exercises performed mostly to music.

Programmes of GG are on offer for those who are interested without any age limit or limit of expertise. It is possible to organise exercise programmes for groups as well as individuals.

Starting points of general gymnastics programme

In the Czech Association Sport for All we concentrate on forming the programme of GG as a suitable exercise programme for everyone, as a chance for all to move in order to be healthy, to move in order to live.

Physical education and sport are present more and more in today's society, which is good because it opens many opportunities to individuals, but it also alienates and isolates them from the natural environment, society, sharing experiences, culture, fun and also motion.

Nowadays it is necessary to have a positive influence on life, to create the conditions which in-

spire and cultivate creative potential and to allow oneself time for reflection.

In both formally and informally created groups, where it is possible to allow people to develop a functional-health movement activity, an individual takes part in group exercises based on the elements of cooperation and friendship. How this need is manifested and what expectations from the sport activity are real, has been illustrated in the nineties by the research of the Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic with regard to the attitudes towards sport, which was realised by Novotný and Bečvář, and done in the Reutlingen region (Novotný & Bečvář, 1992).

Gymnastic exercises to music intended for the whole population also belong to the forms which are not aimed at developing endurance. Their purpose is to help in keeping healthy, achieving and maintaining the correct posture and motion of the whole body and its parts as the basis of the body's whole aesthetic formation.

It is obvious that the development of movement conditions and abilities is not the main aim of the activity for participants, but it is a mean of physical experience in accordance with their ideas and their needs.

This hypothesis about the convenience of gymnastic exercises as health programmes was proven by the results of the research work done by the Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic (Novotný, Novotná, & Votruba, 1993). The participants accepted gymnastics as a part of their life-style.

Main problems

In the branch of gymnastics we are trying to increase the knowledge of the possibilities of GG from the point of view of Sport for All and we are looking for an adequate answer to the basic question:

“How can we address the non-active part of the population and what kind of sport activity should be offered to attract them to sport?”

“What sports activity should we offer to the non-organised as well as organised sports people to fulfil their expectations and interests and at the same time have the required physical-educational effect?”

For this it is necessary to aim at the basic problems set by the questions:

- Are the programmes of GG a suitable leisure time fulfilment?
- Do general gymnastics' programmes develop creativity?
- Do general gymnastics' programmes make self-realisation possible?
- Do general gymnastics' programmes fulfil the expectations of non-organised and organised athletes?

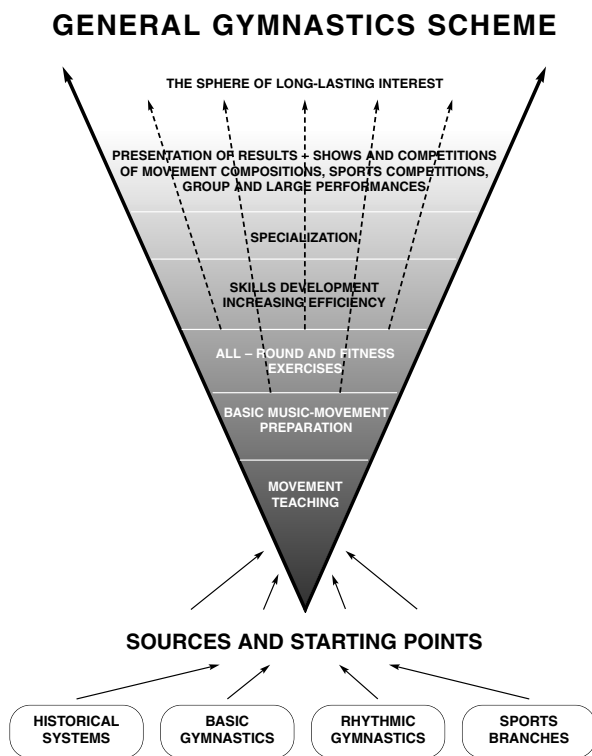


Figure 1. General Gymnastics system.

For the answers we must look at the physical-educational surroundings, at the offer and realisation of programmes, at the system of educating instructors. Our information has been taken from the public opinion research results concerning the relation of different branches of sport activities.

Movement programme of general gymnastics

In the organization the Czech Association of Sport for All the programme of GG is intended not only for members of this organisation but also for the general public without age or ability limitation. Through the individualisation of methods it is possible to create GG programmes for groups and individuals.

The concept devised is based on well-tried good traditions and verified experiences, it chooses the most suitable contents and at the same time it develops the branch of gymnastics.

From a collection of gymnastic exercises and dance elements we have created intentionally purposeful movement programmes of GG which support health, increase fitness, develop creativity, enable emotional aesthetic experiences leading to self-consciousness. The programme is organised for individuals or groups. For individuals we have designed individual programmes of development or a previously used programme, which may be adapted to individual needs. For groups a specialised programme may be prepared according to the specialisation of GG, a specific programme aimed

General Gymnastics is an open educational system of gymnastics, all-round development and fitness for all. It offers movement programmes from basic movement preparation to the forms that enable motion self-realisation through a movement. It leads to the development of a lifelong interest of the performers in movement activity. General gymnastics have curative effects. It effectively contributes to: - gaining correct movement habits, - optimal growth of movement abilities, - gaining new skills, - becoming fitter, - development of aesthetic movement expression, - relaxation, refreshment, gaining experience, - development of creativity and esthetic feeling, - valuable leisure time, - gaining better self-confidence and social positron. That is why it is an important part of a healthy life-style.

Among the sources and starting points of GG belong also historical systems of the Czech systems of gymnastic exercises as had been designed by M.Tyrš, K.Hanušová, A. Očenášek and K. Pospíšil, J. Wála, L. Serbus, B. Kos, Z. Wálová and others.

Basic gymnastics includes anatomically and physiologically reasoned exercises leading to an aimed development of movement dispositions. Regarding their purpose they are divided into 3 groups: a) health-oriented programmes; b) performance-oriented programmes; c) profession-oriented programmes.

Rhythmic gymnastics is a form of movement - music education. From a functional point of view, the programmes are aimed at the development of appropriate fitness of the body (aerobics, dance aerobics, fitness, fitness exercises with non-traditional hand apparatuses). From an aesthetic point of view, the programmes are aimed at developing the movement of expression and creativity (rhythmics, dance gymnastics, jazz gymnastics, aesthetic gymnastics). Sports branches are adapted to the realisation in the sphere of Sport for All (artistic gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, sport aerobics, trampoline, sports acrobatics, acrobatic rock'n'roll).

Contents of the parts of the General Gymnastics programme:

1. Movement teaching - the way (technique) of exercising for movement, training of the conscious, functionally effective, the most perfectly performed aesthetically exercised movements, which lead to the control of the basic positions of body movements and its parts during gymnastic and dance movement performance (bearing in stances and movement, movements of the individual parts of the body).
2. Basic music movement preparation - understanding and acquiring the basic relations between music and movement (simple metro-rhythmic structures), harmony of movement with music, relation between rhythm of movement and music.
3. Complexes of all-round exercises and fitness exercises (programmes of basic gymnastics). Functional motor preparation.
4. Skills development, increasing efficiency, increasing the number of skills, developing performance. Training of the technique of exercises without hand apparatuses (gait, running, dance steps, leaps, balance positions, turns, waves, figures-of-eight, rotations), training exercises with hand apparatuses (using apparatuses for the correct control of movement, the technique of exercises with hand apparatus itself, effective usage of hand apparatus). Acrobatic preparation. Training in different dance techniques and dances.
5. Specialisation - collective or individual programmes aimed at encouraging motion creativity according to interests, age and performance ability. Sport branches realised in the sphere of Sport for All (routines for competitions), dances, and group performances.
6. Presentation of results - shows and competitions of movement compositions (group and large performances at the world gymnastics festivals called "Gymnaestradas" and shows), sports competitions (like gymteam, pink, aesthetic gymnastics).
7. Gymnastics - a lifelong motion activity of Sport for All - the sphere of long-lasting interest.

at the specific group of gymnasts, a special programme of GG for motion composition.

A movement programme of GG should, if possible, be accompanied by music, which stimulates positive emotions, helps to control the motion, organise it, multiply its effect and create a relaxed atmosphere.

Learning new skills may even lead to competition, mainly in younger categories. Even though top performance is not dealt with in competitions, the comparison of performance level is important. A person's effort to give his/her best possible individual performance is stressed. In this sphere of Sport for All we prefer to acquire positive experiences and emotions using movement activity.

Means of general gymnastics:

- 1) all-round development and fitness exercises
- 2) exercises with hand apparatus
- 3) exercises on apparatus
- 4) tumbling exercises
- 5) dance preparation

Directions of general gymnastics influence:

- a) educational
 - a system of physical education leading to all-round gymnastic skills
 - it leads to an optimum level of fitness
 - it develops movement abilities
 - it increases the number of skills
 - it leads to the development of movement expression
- b) health
 - prevention, everyone is responsible for his/her health
 - gaining resistance to the negative influences of civilisation
 - one of the possible health-restoring programmes
 - postponing the aging process
 - including motion into one's daily programme
 - motion as a component of life-style
- c) social
 - physical education (PE) and sport as a formative social environment
 - positive influence of exercising and gentle sports in the sphere of social communication
 - to be part of and identify with the programme
 - space for spontaneous expression of an individual
 - gaining contacts, positive relations to others
 - idea of friendship (meetings, groups, regions)
 - part of the prevention against toxicomania and criminality
 - growth of life-long interests

- d) psychological
 - relaxing the tension
 - increasing the resistance
 - development of the sense of safety, self-confidence
 - development of creativity and aesthetic feeling
 - improving the level of moral qualities.

The programmes are organised from the beginner's level to the advanced performer's level. The choice of exercises and the load intensity is chosen according to age and the present performance level of the performers.

The principles of forming the GG programme are:

- to adhere to the health effect
- to influence the body's fitness appropriately
- to perform the movement purposefully and as well as possible
- to develop an aesthetic movement performance leading to a beauty of motion
- to achieve rhythmical links in motions and synchronise movement to music
- to gain experiences from the exercise skills
- to initiate one's own creation of movements and movement improvisation.

Conclusions

The system of GG contains exercises that may help a person to gain and preserve such a state of body and mind and its functions as to be able to be in control of all the demands of life. It is the exercise which leads to physical and mental balance.

General gymnastics means exercise for everyone and for all. Gymnastic exercises enable the formation of individually optimal posture as the basis for the correct execution of movement, acquiring basic movement skills, the best possible control of the body and its parts.

Gymnastics is aimed at the development of coordination and movement abilities – dexterity, flexibility, strength, speed and, consequently, also endurance. An important point of view is the aesthetic and developing influence on a gymnast and his/her surroundings.

It is important to have an interesting, attractive programme, aimed at the harmonic development of a personality, which is our main goal in GG, but also the process of making a person healthier in the wider sense - from the health effects to developing a person's movement expression and, as a result, to achieving physical fitness, positive self-confidence and improving one's social assertiveness.

The presentations of physical-educational GG activities in public are festivals of movement compositions, physical-educational performances or physical-educational sport programmes. Through such presentations of systematic gymnastic activi-

ties, which occur mainly abroad, national self-confidence of the performers is also strengthened. The greatest festival of movement compositions of GG is the World Gymnaestrade. Large physical-educational

festivals have been a part of the Czech physical education since the end of the 19th century. Movement compositions are traditional and have always received international recognition.

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Correspondence to:
Prof. Viléma Novotná, PhD
Department of Gymnastics
Faculty of Physical Education and Sports
Charles University in Prague
Martiho 31, 162 52 Prague 6
the Czech Republic
E-mail: vnovotna@ftvs.cuni.cz

SUSTAV PROGRAMA REKREACIJSKOG VJEŽBANJA U OKVIRU ČEŠKE UDRUGE "SPORT ZA SVE"

Sažetak

Ovaj rad donosi prikaz programa rekreacijskog vježbanja, nazvan opća gimnastika, koji se realiziraju u okviru češke udruge *Sport za sve*. Taj se program realizira kao edukacijski program tjelesnog vježbanja, a namijenjen je vježbačima članovima Udruge, kao i široj javnosti. Program je usklađen sa smjericama razvoja i provedbe ovakvih oblika kretanja Međunarodnog gimnastičkog saveza (FIG), Udruženja europske gimnastike (UEG), kao i ostalih udruga koje slijede načela pokreta *Sport za sve*. Program se razvio u okviru nacionalne tradicije tjelesnog vježbanja, a prilagođen je u češkom socijalnom miljeu. Program se ostvaruje u okviru grupnih, nekompetitivnih i rekreacijskih aktivnosti; usmjeren je na zdravstveni i socijalni aspekt tjelesnog vježbanja, a otvoren je za sve zainteresirane, bez obzira na dob, predznanja i sposobnosti. Rad se temelji na individualiziranom pristupu koji se ostvaruje pojedinačno, na razini svakog sudionika, ali i na razini grupa. Vježbanje koje se provodi u okviru programa najčešće se realizira uz glazbenu pratnju, usmjereno je na zadovoljenje različitih potreba vježbača i na

stvaranje pozitivnog iskustva tjelesnog vježbanja. Polazna pretpostavka za koncipiranje takvog rekreacijskog programa široke namjene jest tvrdnja da dobar program treba zadovoljiti očekivanja korisnika i ugodno i korisno ispuniti slobodno vrijeme, ostvariti svoju tjelesno-edukacijsku namjenu, ali i potaknuti kreativnost te omogućiti samoostvarenje korisnika. Konceptija takvog programa rekreacijskog vježbanja nastala je na temelju praćenja rada instruktora koji rade u raznolikim već postojećim programima, potreba korisnika i na temelju informacija prikupljenih u istraživanjima stavova o tjelesnom vježbanju dijela češke javnosti. Polazeći od temeljnog zahtjeva koji govori da vježbanje u okviru pokreta *Sport za sve* treba biti usmjereno na poboljšanje zdravlja i rezultirati pozitivnim iskustvom i emocijama kao posljedicama tjelesne aktivnosti, ovaj se program definira kroz nekoliko područja ciljanog djelovanja: edukacijsko, zdravstveno, socijalno i tjelesno područje.

Sudjelovanje u tako koncipiranom programu dio je zdravog životnog stila i vodi razvoju dugoročnog interesa sudionika za tjelesno vježbanje.