

Freelap (Freelap Timing Systems)

NSA © by IAAF
30:4; 121-123, 2015

URL: <https://www.freelapusa.com/>

Freelap is a company that sells electronic timing systems for any sport that involves speed training (i.e., track and field, American football combine, downhill skiing, downhill mountain biking, and swimming). The company sells to schools and clubs as well as to individual consumers. The website also hosts a blog with new articles posted weekly or bi-weekly by international athletes, performance, and strength and conditioning coaches.

This review will only focus on the training and coaching articles that appear in the blog. The articles posted are not concerned solely with electronic timing, but on all aspects of training, recovery, sports psychology, and nutrition.

The primary audience reading the blog are athletes, coaches, and self-coached athletes at the high school, university, post-university, elite, and Masters level. The primary language is English, with a few articles translated into other languages, such as Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, and Italian.

The Freelap Timing System is an easy-to-use, fully automated timing system that is designed for a wide variety of training scenarios including track and field, football combines, downhill skiing, downhill mountain biking, swimming, and virtually any sport that involves speed training.

Figure 1: Homepage

The website can be viewed on a computer or laptop, a tablet, or a mobile phone. The design is mobile responsive, so there is no sideways scroll, as it automatically adjusts to your viewing device. There is no mobile app to date, but the content is fully readable and functional through Safari on iPhones or iPads, and Google Chrome on all Android devices. There are no annoying popup or interstitial ads that require an additional click to continue.

Overall, this website is easy to navigate, easy to find menus, with plenty of whitespace which makes it aesthetically appealing for the eyes when reading. The “Recent Articles” are easy to find on the right sidebar on every page.

Loading the webpages and downloading images is extremely fast.

There is no newsletter, so if you if you want to get notified of new articles, you can check the website every week or use a Really Simple Syndication (RSS) reader to be notified when new articles are published.

Unlike other blogs, there are no ads other than its own Freelap Store page and the sister company SimpliFaster.com. All the articles are free of charge, as there is no paywall or membership. It is not mandatory to use Freelap as your choice of electronic timing, as you can use any timing device you prefer.

The website was registered over four years ago. According to Alexa, a company that provides commercial web traffic data and analytics, the website is ranked 589,000 in the world, and 221,000 in the USA (as of June 11, 2016). 57% of the visitors are from the USA.

All of the blog articles are written by athletes, strength & conditioning (S&C) practitioners, and coaches from various sports, mostly athletics. In addition, Freelap has partnered with ALTIS, an elite training group based out of Phoenix, AZ, USA, to provide an insight to the elite world of athletics.



Figure 2: Page of an article



Figure 3: Sample page showing the recent sidebar of past articles

Most of the articles are in written format. There are some instructional videos, and the rare podcast. A comments section is often included at the end of the articles, but it is rarely used as the content is also posted and shared on social media, usually Facebook and Twitter. Some of the articles are extremely popular with over 10K social shares per article.

These articles are not light reading or “headline news” articles. The quality of the content is very rich in content and well-researched with reference citations. Coaches and athletes who wish to maximise their performance should visit often and read these timeless “evergreen” articles as they are published.

To enhance the service, I think a weekly or monthly newsletter would be helpful if you prefer email as your main communication. You can subscribe to Freelap through their Face-

book, Twitter, or Google+ pages. It is truly a shame that all the comments and discussions from the FreelapBlog articles, coming from other coaches and athletes, are scattered in various social media.

A downside to Freelap is the lack of a menu enabling you to quickly search and find material from a particular coach or author you might be following. However, the Category link posted at the end of every article may provide you with some access.

For example: <https://www.freelapusa.com/category/articles/jimson-lee/>

This link would list all articles by Jimson Lee.

Reviewed by Jimson Lee