

HOWARD COUNTY STRIDERS

Coach's Corner:
week of 4/1/07

Weekly Workout:
Tempo Run

Distance:

Easy Way – Take the first number in your weekly mileage
(EX: you are planning on running 43 miles this week, then your Tempo run should be about 4 miles, only 27 miles this week, then a two mile tempo run. Up to five or six miles tops even if you are doing 80 miles.)

Advanced Way – 8%-10% of your weekly mileage (ex: 25 miles this week x 10% = 2.5 mile tempo run)

Variation – instead of doing a tempo run by distance, do one by time. For low mileage runners I would suggest 16-20 minutes, mid-level mileage 20-24, high mileage 28-32

Pace:

There is a large misconception about the pace of Tempo Runs. The old school belief is to push the pace or enter races and use them as Tempo runs. The purpose of a tempo run is to prolong the time it takes your body to release large amounts of lactic acid into the bloodstream. This lactic acid is what makes you feel tired when you run and sore afterwards. In order to train your body to wait or to release less, you need to work within a certain pace, other wise you begin to work other systems and you neglect the purpose of the workout. I guess my point is no matter how you feel, **DON'T PUSH THE PACE.**

With that said, how can one regulate one's pace to stay within that range, here are a couple applicable ways, that are fairly easy to follow (Daniels suggests 80-85% of your VO2 Max if you happen to have scientific equipment):

a) Heart-Rate monitor – This is the most second by second accurate method. You want your range to be 175 beats per minute to 187 beats per minute, no more, no less. As you your age increases the more you would aim for the lower part of the zone.

b) 85% of your race pace – If you desire to run on a track or a trail that offers mile marks, you can translate your latest 5k race pace to your tempo pace. A chart is offered to find your race pace.

c) By Feel – You can expect your pace to be harder than a long run but slower than race pace. You have actually probably run the exact pace during long runs you feel you are pushing hard. However, if you begin to tire and lose form, or are breathing really hard, you are running too fast.

Workout Suggestions/points:

I feel that that tempo runs are the absolutely most important aspect of training. When I am asked what's a good workout or to suggest the best workout to improve times, my answer is going to be, do a tempo run. If you are just a slightly competitive fun run runner, then you really only need to do tempo runs to see marked improvement. Building your base mileage for the summer, then factor in at least one tempo run a week. However, the biggest trap, especially for former male collegiate runners, is to push the pace past the training zone. When I do a tempo run with my teams, the most common thing I need to say is "back off the pace."

The best place to do this workout is on a track, so you can keep almost every variable constant and provide for ¼ mile feedback. However, knowing that some cannot do that my next best suggestion is on the Columbia pathways so you can use the bagel run mile marks. I am also personally keen on using the available lakes in Columbia as they are perfect for tempo runs. Centennial is about 2.4 miles, Elkhorn is around 1.8 miles, and Wilde is about 1.3 miles.