TRAINING PLANS

The following points come from a talk given to the club about training programmes by John Skevington. It's also what Di will tell you or you'll read in your running magazines.

Most of you are probably doing these things already (maybe without realising) but it might help to see some ideas written down.

1 – THINK OVER A YEAR

Identify ONE or TWO RACES or DATES (if you don't race) when you want to peak.

You **can't** run at 100% all year round, it's not possible. Choose a few specific races or times during the year to target for peak performance.

2 – DON'T DO THE SAME THING ALL THE TIME

After the initial improvements gained by simply running more you'll hit a natural plateau. Once the plateau is reached you HAVE TO VARY what you do to improve.

It's boring doing the same stuff all the time.

2 – THINGS TO INCLUDE IN YOUR TRAINING

SPEED / SPEED ENDURANCE

Speed work improves the effectiveness of muscles fast twitch fibres. Fast twitch fibres become less effective, compared with the slow twitch fibres used in distance running, as you get older.

Speed endurance increases your ability to run faster for longer. This training is important for distance runners, not just sprinters, because you are training your muscles to tolerate a build up of lactate and slow down the rate at which it accumulates in muscles.

TEMPO RUNNING

Tempo running increases the point at which your body gets tired enabling you to use Oxygen more efficiently.

During exercise metabolic activity produces lactate and Hydrogen ions which turn the muscles acidic - leading to tiredness.

Tempo running trains your muscles to tolerate and use higher concentrations of lactate – enabling you to run faster for longer.

ENDURANCE

Long runs build **endurance** but they **don't** help you run quicker for longer. **Speed work** helps you **run faster**. **TEMPO RUNS** bring the two elements together and are considered to be the **MOST IMPORTANT** type of training for distance runners.

3 – SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

SPEED TRAINING
Short Distance – up to 60M
Intensity – 95 to 100%
Reps – 3 to 4 per set
Sets – 3 or 4
Recovery – 2 to 3 mins between reps and up to 10 mins between sets because YOU SHOULD be working HARD.
The whole session should be **short** (maybe only 400M total) and **sharp** but you should feel knackered.

SPEED ENDURANCE
Short Distance – up to 150M
Intensity – 95 to 100%
Reps – 4 to 5 per set
Sets – 2 or 3
Recovery – 5 mins between reps and 10 mins between sets
Again you might only run a couple of Kms but you work HARD.

Remember if you're short of time these sessions are over a lot quicker than a long run and ARE definitely beneficial.

INTENSIVE TEMPO
Middle Distance – up to 1000M
Intensity – 80 to 90%
Reps – 4 to 6 per set
Sets – up to 3
Recovery – up to 5 mins between reps and 20mins between sets but DO NOT recover completely between reps or sets

These sessions are longer (up to several kms) and take more time but are also definitely beneficial.

EXTENSIVE / CONTINUOUS TEMPO – some ideas
You could incorporate **intense periods** of running (up to 80% of max pace) in a long run. E.g. jog for 15 mins to warm up then work hard for 10mins before jogging for 15 mins to cool down.
You could do the first part of your run at **normal** pace then **pick up** and **maintain** a **faster** pace during the second half.
You could incorporate several **quicker Kms** or **5 min runs** in to a long run.

ENDURANCE
This is what most people do anyway. **Build up** the **distance / time** your out for over a period of time.   Try to **vary** the **route** and **topography** as you feel your endurance improving.

4 – RECOVERY

You can't run all the time **make sure you have rests between sessions** and think about having **a complete break** during the year.

5 – WARMING UP AND COOLING DOWN

Very important – dynamic warm ups are currently the in thing before running, with some static stretches thrown in. Static stretches after running help you recover for the next time.

6 – FOOD AFTER RUNNING

Very important – apparently you should try and get some protein back in to your system within an hour of running (even just a glass of milk or a handful of nuts), to help your muscles recover.

HYDRATION

It is very important to keep hydrated to prevent muscles getting tired. If you are doing an intensive session for example a speed endurance session, make sure you have had plenty of fluid prior to the session. Always have a bottle of water taking continual sips throughout the session. Always continue to drink after the session.

7 – THREE OTHER THINGS

One – If you can run with other people it's usually more enjoyable and you usually work harder.

Two – If your style is good you run more efficiently.

Three – The stronger your **CORE** muscles are the better you'll run and less prone to injury you'll be.

If you need more advice there are plenty of helpful experienced runners in the club you can talk to.