



## TRAINING PROGRAMME (February 2019)

3 Feb	Tues	Long Run	upto 90mins hilly off road steady pace with an option to run full and partial parts of the heath ~ include loop(s) of Royston cross country course	An opportunity to adapt to the RACING our unique XC course demands
5 Feb	Tues	2 <sup>nd</sup> LR Tempo run efforts	60mins to incl. easier longer grp w/u of 12mins plus <b>33mins [2min fast:1min slow active runx10]</b> plus 15min easy c/d	Ensure these faster runs at appropriate 10km speed and recoveries are at an rolling easier pace
7 Feb	Thurs	VO <sub>2</sub> Max	[4-6] x 600m parluf relay at a <u>controlled</u> pace	At King James Way - 6.45
10 Feb	Sun	RACE	<b>*** Sunday Lge X-Country - (Race 5) ***</b> #BLACK&REDARMY	Royston
12 Feb	Tues	2 <sup>nd</sup> Long Run	60 mins: easier recovery Group Run Boundary run of Royston incl. 5x200 strides	keep pace slower post demands of those that raced Sunday
14 Feb	Thurs	VO <sub>2</sub> Max	<b>Short tempo run followed by [6-12] x 400m ~</b> run as hard efforts with full recovery of run time plus fast strides (@ 3k-5k <u>race</u> pace)	At King James Way - 6.45
17 Feb	Sun	Long Run	<90min Longer progressive run [include 2miles of quicker progressive pace towards end of run) <b>** each week build a negative split running to this LR</b>	
19 Feb	Tues	LT interval + Tempo efforts	Longer 'sandwich' LT session: 10min w/u + <b>4mins/8mins/8mins/8mins/4mins</b> 2mins@slower pace btn efforts/10min c/d.	Tempo efforts to be performed at $\frac{1}{2}$ Mar pace
21 Feb	Thurs	VO <sub>2</sub> Max	Pyramid session:600>800>1000>1200>1000>800>600	At King James Way - 6.45 4800m or6000m @5k
24 Feb	Sun	Long Run	<90min Longer progressive run [include 3miles of quicker progressive pace towards end of run) <b>** each week build a negative split running to this LR</b>	
26 Feb	Tues	2 <sup>nd</sup> LR Recovery Run	60mins to incl. <b>12mins</b> (Mar pace) 6mins easy <b>10mins</b> (1/2 Mar pace) 5mins easy <b>8mins</b> (10 mile) 4mins easy <b>6mins</b> (10k pace) 3mins easy <b>4mins</b> (5k pace) 2mins easy <b>2mins</b> (3k pace)	Focus on performing the <u>correct</u> pace per set pace for each effort
28Feb	Thurs	VO <sub>2</sub> Max	Pyramid session:600>800>1000>1200>1000>800>600	At King James Way - 6.45 4800m or6000m @5k
03 Mar	Sun	RACE / Long Run	Herts & Middx Vets County Champs or <90min Longer progressive run [include 4miles of quicker progressive pace towards end of run) <b>** each week build a negative split running to this LR</b>	Trent Park
05 Mar	Tues	2 <sup>nd</sup> LR Tempo run efforts	60mins to incl. easier longer grp w/u of 15mins plus <b>30mins [90sec fast:90sec slow active runx10]</b> plus 15min easy c/d	Ensure these faster runs at appropriate 10km speed and recoveries are at an rolling easier pace
07 Mar	Thurs	VO <sub>2</sub> Max	[3-5 x1500m] TEAM relays @5k-10k pace	At King James Way - 6.45

\*Supplement these sessions with easy/steady 35-45 min **RECOVERY** runs, cross or circuit training, faster leg speed drills and lots of stretching\*

In the event of any possible snow over the next few weeks and therefore likely snowy / icy slippery conditions Thursday's **SPEEDWORK session will still go ahead** but reverting to the seasonal favourite of '**ODDS & EVENS**' at Greenway school on the SNOW!!!

more details t/f on the Nite as necessary. Still meet at 6.45pm at King James Car Park.

What to do on a Saturday?? Why not try a parkrun or a weekly/fortnightly of the following:-

**Leg Speed: incorporate a XC session of fast strides, i.e. 10x100m,7x150m,5x200m,4x300m on & off hills**

**High tempo Cross Country time trials 10-25min** runs should be sensibly built into at least a monthly programme (race fitness tests). Balance the inclusion of **ALL** these above sessions within the priorities of the monthly schedule and into your personal programme that suits yourself, consider your own level of fitness, experience and weekly time commitments in planning these sessions but if sensibly placed across the month **YOU** will reap the rewards!!



## Circuit Training

**When: Monday evenings at 6.15pm - 7.15pm**

For those interested I will be running a **Bleep Test** at 5.50pm each week prior to the circuits

**Where: Meridian School, Garden Walk How much? £3**

All are welcome, members, non members, friends and family!!!

Circuit training is an efficient and challenging form of conditioning. It works well for developing strength, endurance (both aerobic and anaerobic), flexibility and coordination.

It's one of the best types of training for improving strength endurance be it for any running related sport such as x-country, road running, speed sessions or a classic endurance event like the marathon or triathlon.

## Coaching Corner

### Sharpening

As you move into the last 8-12 weeks of training towards a half- or full marathon your training should change to help you to be as ready as possible on the day. The aim of this phase is to bring your performance to a peak on race day. For these long races the focus of these weeks is on race speed, which can be greatly improved in only weeks of training, and race endurance, how long you can maintain that speed for. Crucially, this must be done without overtraining. This involves a careful balance and so a period of realistic evaluation is needed.

### Evaluate your condition and goals

Sharpening will only be effective if you have built up a strong base and so are comfortable running regularly, with a weekly distance of over 30-35 miles. If you are not, you are not prepared to train for a fast race and would be advised to postpone the race or continue with base building with more modest expectations for the race. Equally, if your goal is simply to complete the course, a good goal for a first marathon, increasing the distance run as I describe in the base building article, focusing on increasing the long run, would be enough without further sharpening. In these cases a taper before the race is still needed, as described in my third article.

### A lot does not change from base building

While sharpening is an important phase in preparing for your best possible race, and receives the most attention in running books and magazines, it is actually quite similar to base building. In particular, I advise applying the same limits to increases in your training. Thus in one week you can EITHER increase the total distance run (by up to 10%) OR the number of hard days (tempo, speed, hills, race) OR the number of runs in a week. You should also continue to build in recovery weeks, in the same pattern as you are used to.

### One thing is different during sharpening

While there are a lot of methods of training that could be used during the sharpening phase, I believe they can be summarised as a single difference. Base building is done at a level that could be maintained forever, gradually increasing as your fitness improves. Sharpening can not. This means that while at the end of every base training run you should finish feeling able to do more, during sharpening you may not. By training harder,

you can make your body able to move faster and for longer than at your base fitness. These gains are temporary, however. Train like this for too long or too hard and you will burn out, ending up less able to race than at your base level.

How long the phase lasts, and how hard you should train, depend on the individual. A typical guide is 8-12 weeks. It is important to watch out for signs of overtraining, since this could undo all your training so far. Some typical signs are that sessions you are used to doing feel harder, you lose interest in running or in other activities you normally find enjoyable (and, yes, you can read this euphemistically), difficulty sleeping or an increase in your heart rate of over 5 beats per minute. Illness and injury are more likely when you overtrain, so are also a late sign.

## **Training components of sharpening**

### **1) Rest and recovery (top priority)**

Remember that the training benefits come while you are resting and recovering. While sessions will push you hard, you should be able to do the next sessions a couple of days later as well.

### **2) Training for race endurance (high priority)**

This is particularly achieved through the long run. This run is especially geared to getting used to time on your feet. A trick used by elite athletes is to do this run, at its longest, for the time they plan to do the race in, no longer. This is harder for slower runners as the stress on the legs from running for long periods is high. A guide could be not to run for more than three and a half hours continuously, either limiting your run to the distance you run in that time or taking a break on the way round.

As you build up the long run I would recommend not adding more than 2 miles to the distance in any one week. In addition, runs over 16 miles are tough so perhaps should only be run every other week, with a run under 16 miles in the weeks in between. Within the limits above, a good goal is to reach a distance of 16-22 miles several times during sharpening. With the club this run could be done on the Sunday long runs.

A second training session to build race endurance is running at race pace, which can be done as all or part of a run (the rest being at a fairly easy pace). The distance of this run might be increased by around 1 mile per week reaching a maximum of around half the race distance. This could be done at our Wednesday or Saturday club runs.

Particularly on the Wednesday run, it is important to be aware of how your training fits with the other runs you do that week. Club sessions are on Tuesday and Thursday, which could be tough with a hard run on the Wednesday too.

### **3) Training for race speed (next priorities, in order)**

Preparing to run at race speed is done by sessions run at that pace or faster. These sessions will likely be the main new sessions added on top of your base training. If you add them you should follow the guidelines above - each of these sessions is added to

replace an existing session so that the weekly distance and number of runs do not change in the same week. Each session prepares a different aspect of your running speed. These are in order of priority and so of how often you should do them. An intermediate or advanced runner might run at race pace every week, tempo pace most weeks and faster intervals only a couple of weeks during sharpening.

- **Race pace running** - This is described above. Care should be taken to run at the correct pace, not faster, just as you will need to at the start of the race on the day. *It helps to improve your running efficiency and race pace judgement.*
- **Tempo pace running** - This is run at your 10 km to 10 mile race pace, as a continuous run or carefully planned long intervals. In either case a proper warm up and cool down are required. While faster than race pace, it is still using the same aerobic energy system and so training your body to use the energy sources it will need in the race. *It improves your speed endurance, how long you can keep moving quickly.*
- **Faster intervals** - Running faster than 10 km race pace trains your muscles to work without oxygen. This is only done relatively little in marathon running. However, it will be needed, for example on hills (even gentle ones near the end of the race) or to stay with a group during the race. An important goal of training for these efforts is to make your muscles able to recover quickly from these challenges and continue the race. This training also makes you more able to carry out the tempo and race pace training effectively. It is done as intervals at around 3-5km race pace with recoveries either standing or running at a slower pace. It can be done as coached session, fartlek running or in hill training. These runs can be used early in sharpening to get you used to running quickly and prepare you for tempo and race pace running. Alternatively you could use them later to prepare for faster running during the race. *Overall this training improves your ability to increase effort when tired and to maintain your aerobic training.*

### **Preparing for race day**

During this sharpening phase you should also be planning for the race day, both with mental preparation and practical planning. Long or race pace runs provide a chance to test nutrition and hydration strategies both before and during the race. You can prepare on routes similar to the course, or possibly on the actual course, to help with visualising the day.

You are also likely to be thinking about your target time and how realistic it is. A common approach to test this is to run a long race during the sharpening phase. However, this is probably not an important thing to do. If you are well trained for long distance running, a 10km race will provide a good guide of your likely marathon time (using calculators available online). If you are not trained for the distance, even a 20-

mile race will give you an unrealistically fast marathon time prediction. These long races also are tough on your body and a recovery time of 1 day per mile raced is recommended, meaning three weeks to recover from a 20 mile race. For this reason I feel that long preparation races are best done well away from you goal race, allowing you to gain experience in advance. Shorter races, such as 10km, will give you a good idea of your progress and practice at racing without needing a long recovery. During sharpening I would suggest that you set your race targets by being realistic with yourself about your condition and confidence, based on your past performance and how well your training has gone. The test of this appraisal must come on the only day that counts, your goal race.

