

SPRING-ing into Action the Correct Way

April is now here and it's time to think about what your Spring training should look like for the G2G. Trails are starting to clear although anything high in the alpine may still be months away from providing good run access. Hopefully you have been hitting the gym through the winter, working on your core strength, leg power and addressing any old nagging injuries. As I suggested before, nothing wrong with lots of cross training and mixing in new types of activity during your off season. You will now want to emerge from hibernation and those dry training environments such as spin classes, treadmill runs and elliptical sessions. Time to put the shoes on, dress for the weather and get going.

I follow some basic rules with my athletes when I start to transition them into the next phase of development.

PATIENCE

Many people are so excited to get back outside and start running that they jump right into high intensity training, doing intervals and hill work and then wondering why 6 weeks down the road they are injured. It is critical to begin back outside with a gradual plan, focused initially on just getting some time on feet with good form. At least 80% of your training time should be done at talking pace. Focus on your technique and your breathing. The upper end, more taxing workouts will come soon enough but this is not what the majority of your time at this time of year should be.

GRADUAL

Steady state running where the distance is gradually increased week by week will keep you healthy and allow your body to develop muscle rigidity. Going from a 1hr run one week to a 5hr run the next is a sure way to get injured. Increase mileage in small increments and use non impact sports such as cycling to get added training time while still developing your aerobic system. Run-bike-run's are a perfect way to increase training volume. I also encourage steady state miles with lots of power walking mixed in. You will for sure be power walking LOTS of the G2G so we better start training it.

DON'T FORGET TO REST

Rest days are equally as important as your training days. Athletes are so quick to by-pass quality rest in exchange for more and more training. You need rest and failure to allow for it on a regular basis only leads to bad things. Pay attention to your energy levels and how well you are sleeping. Use a training log to identify patterns of sleep, irritability, weight gain/loss, unusually elevated heart rates etc if you are not working with a coach. And most importantly, all athletes require different amounts of rest to work ratio's. It's critical that you provide your body with adequate time to recover each week.

ONWARDS with the STRENGTHENING + STRETCHING

Continue your strength development through the Spring. You will need strong legs and a very strong core to be able to run 6 days with a pack on. Functional training is the best way to accomplish this. Don't forget to take the time to stretch on an ongoing basis. If this means ending your workout 5-10mins early in order to allow time for this, please do. I'm a huge fan of the foam roller for athletes, learn how to incorporate fascia rolling techniques into your stretching in order to really tackle all those big muscles that are working hard for you. Consider a yoga class 1+ times a week to learn some new movements for opening up the joints.

CONSISTENCY

Consistency is the key now. You should have good structure to your weeks that are progressive. Plan ahead and don't skip training sessions. What you do now is setting the platform for success at the G2G. Tackle some smaller races in the months ahead, this will keep your training on track and keep motivation high with smaller goals along the way.

ONWARDS and ENJOY SPRING TRAINING!