**The Importance of Midweek Training**

**Winter Season 2018**

The importance of your midweek training can’t be stressed enough. Depending upon your goals, they can be done with a minimum amount of time and effort, but that doesn’t mean they can be missed.

Two 30-minute run/walks during the week are the *minimum* for our Level 1 participants, and two or three 45-minutes training for our Level 2 members.

Why are these short trainings so important? It helps decrease the chance of injury and fatigue, and it maintains the conditioning you gain on your long trainings.

Other tips:

* Resting between training days is crucial for letting your muscles rebuild.
* Too busy? Break the workout into two segments.
* Don't "cram" and do all 60 minutes the day before your long, slow distance (LSD) run.
* Make sure the day before your LSD run is a rest day.

***Every Training Has a Purpose***

Whenever you lace up your shoes and head out the door, you should always have some idea of what you're going to do, other than just hitting the road and doing the same thing every time.

* **Easy run:** You go out because you know you need to get your mid-week training in, but you don't have a lot of energy, so you take it easy. Take longer and/or more walk breaks. Stop and look at the scenery, enjoy the beautiful weather. Just get those miles in!
* **LSD training:**Long, slow distance -- with the emphasis on SLOW. Your LSD runs are for endurance, not speed, and to get your body used to being out for a long time. **You can't go too slowly on your LSD runs.** You may be frustrated at how slowly we go on Saturdays, but as the mileage increases, you will realize the wisdom of it.

Our long trainings are also for you to try out many things: what breakfast you eat, what clothes work, what and how much nutrition you might need for these long distances. Everything should be noted in your food/training journal (more on that next week) so you don't forget everything that works and what doesn’t work.

* **Speed work:**  In order to get faster, you have to go faster. The wonderful thing about speed training is that, even though it's a tougher workout, you'll realize that you not only improve your speed and endurance, but you do it without any more exertion. Warning: speed work increases your risk of injury, so be sure to take it easy. Speed work is on your training schedule starting this week.

If you don’t want to do track and hill work, you can still get some valuable speed work in during your mid-week trainings. Here are some suggestions:

* Increase your pace during your run intervals, but keep your intervals the same; OR
* Increase the length of your run interval; OR
* Decrease the length of your walk interval.

Be sure to do only one at a time. You can switch it up, too. Warm up for five minutes, do your normal pace/intervals for five minutes; then increase your run speed for five minutes but keep the interval the same; then increase your run interval time by 10-20 seconds, but keep your speed at the slower pace; then keep your run speed/interval the same, but decrease your walk interval by 10-15 seconds.

After you’ve done these enough times to feel comfortable, you can combine any two, then all three. Not only do these exercises help with your speed, but they also relieve what can sometimes be a boring run.

* **Practicing race pace**

If improving your pace is your goal, it’s important to practice your race pace during the week. (Your race pace is given to you after each Magic Mile.)

**NOTE:** We will be practicing our race pace on our short Saturday runs starting March 10. If speed isn’t your goal and you choose not to practice race pace during the week, please go to a slower group on these trainings.