



Fairlands Valley Spartans Running Club

Affiliated to UK Athletics and the Association of Running Clubs

'Catch a Coach' ~ newsletter

Issue 2

February 2010

Catch a Coach newsletter

Welcome to the second edition of the new publication from the coaching team. This is designed to give the coaching team a chance to give you news on training events within the club, how the coaching team are taking forward their development and new features to look out for to help in your own training. It also supports the material that you will already find within the 'Catch a Coach' feature from within the club's own website. Please let the team know what you think – your feedback is a big help.

In this edition we are looking at the key areas of the February schedule with our top 10 things to do as well as an update on the development activities that have been taken up by members of the coaching team. There is also a new feature where we focus on training goals for some of our members and the advice the team have provided them.

I hope you find the newsletter helpful. Remember if you have any questions about the material in it or on the 'Catch a Coach' section within the club's website just CATCH A COACH or send an e-mail to the team at catchacoach@fvspartans.org.uk

We would love to receive your feedback and ideas for features in future 'Catch a Coach' newsletters.

Finally, please remember that we are still running in dark evenings. It is important that all runners wear bright clothing, ideally with reflective strips and/or one of the LED bands available from the club. The kit guys have a great range of club kit available, including the fluoro tops. Just see Ian Larman, Jamie Drackford or Simon Harris at training or e-mail them at kit@fvspartans.org.uk

Cheers

Chris 'Coach' Leigh



What's coming up - 10 of the best for February

After the disruption of the snow, ice and cold weather during much of January, we are now moving into our regular training and getting back up to speed.

So much is happening over the coming weeks! Here are 10 activities to either make a note of for your diary or to do.

1. Be there for the final cross country league fixture on 21st February at Watford. Our ladies team have done well so far and the men are trailing slightly behind them. By getting a big turnout we can really finish the league fixtures off in style and ensure we have our best finish for a number of years (so far we are sitting in a combined position of 6th out of 17 teams).
2. Make sure you have your place booked for the Presentation Evening on 5th February at the Odyssey Sports Club, Old Knebworth Lane. It promises to be a cracking event and a great chance to celebrate the many individual achievements as well as the terrific year the club have had. Don't forget to submit your vote for Spartan of the Year by e-mailing to spartanoftheyear@fvspartans.org.uk
3. For those that are spring marathon or half marathon training there will be long runs scheduled each Sunday during February. These will cover between 6 and 10 miles as standard but will also offer additional mileage for those that are marathon training and looking to complete runs of up to 17 to 20 miles.

4. Don't forget Valentine's Day on Sunday 14th February but remember that as runners our runs and races come before the romantic celebrations!!
5. Our main Tuesday training sessions start with our first pyramid of the year on 2nd February and then have a series of sessions during the month where we progressively shorten the time of the efforts, continuing to develop your speed endurance.
6. The 25th February sees the second 5K handicap in 2010. This is a superb opportunity to get in a timed 5K run with the added attraction of trying to beat the handicap you have been set by our resident club statistician, Paul Holgate.
7. If you feel the need for speed then we have a selection of sessions to suit both on Thursday evenings from Marriotts and Saturday mornings from Ridlins Athletics Stadium. This kicks off with a bang with a 200m shuttles session on 4th February – a chance for all abilities to feel the wind in their hair!!
8. The half marathon season starts in style at Watford on 7th February. This is a County race and there is sure to be a good Spartans turn out. Silverstone half will soon be on us (14th March) and entries for this are full. However, there is still chance to get your entry in for Milton Keynes half on the 7th March. There are also 10K, 5K and relay options at the Milton Keynes race – so give it a go!!
9. If you haven't already renewed your membership fee for 2010/11 please complete your application with payment ASAP as you will not be insured to train and race with the Spartans until you have completed that.
10. Note for diary. Don't forget to book your races for the coming months. Look at the race guide in Runners World magazine or on their website and set up entries for the races you want to run.

2 min/2 min, 4 min/2 min, 6 min/2 min, 6 min/2 min, 4 min/2 min, 2 min/2 min

What is this session known as for short??

The answer was A PYRAMID. Look out for the ones we will run on the February schedule!!



Training Clinic – case studies

Pretty Rich!!

In this edition we are turning the spotlight on a selection of the club's runners who have specific goals in sight and of the advice they have been receiving from the coaching team as they work towards those goals. We will update you on their progress over the coming months as they progress with their training and ultimately see how they fair!

In the first of these case studies we will be looking at Sam Pretty and Richard Hazledene as they train for the Brighton marathon on 18th April 2010.



This will be Sam's first road marathon and she wants to run in at least sub 3 hours 45 minutes to achieve a qualifying time for next year's London marathon. Ultimately Sam is looking for a sub 3 hours 30 minutes performance. This will be Richard's first road marathon after his terrific achievements in the spring of 2009 when he completed three road marathons (Paris, Rome and London) in the space of 5 weeks. He is looking to dip under the 3 hours 30 minutes bracket for the first time.

Do you know the training terminology???? – answer from last month

In January's edition we posed the question:

What would you be doing if your group were running:

So, a similar ultimate target time for both of sub 3 hours 30 minutes. How have they been training for this? For both it was a case of ensuring that their training schedule contained four quality run sessions each week, including the important long, slow run. Because of their social lives the tradition of the long run being on a Sunday was tossed out of the window in favour of using the Saturday instead. Sunday then becomes a rest day with a chance to recover from the weeks training as well as the Saturday night hangover!! A training schedule was constructed for them that laid out the amount they should be running, the frequency of the runs, & the pace at which they should be run. Also the important REST days!!!!

Sam was a self confessed gym junkie and the single biggest change in her training has been to replace some of those gym sessions with quality runs instead to develop her aerobic base and fitness. Richard was looking for a structured approach and ensuring he was completing the correct mileage and with the correct progression.

They are both well into their training now and it will be interesting to see how this progresses. Their first big training milestone comes up when they both run the Bramley 20 mile race on 14th February. More on their exploits in the next edition!!

Hayley Andrews

Hayley joined the Starter Group in May 2009 as a complete beginner, and was delighted to completely run her first 5k race in 40 minutes in September 2009. She now wants to increase her distance and fitness, and train for the BUPA 10k on 31st May 2010.



As it is her first 10k, Hayley's' goal is to complete the run without stopping to walk. Hayley currently runs with the Starter Group on a Monday and Thursday (which covers approximately 5k), runs with her sister at the weekend and plays netball on

a Tuesday and Saturday. On alternative Mondays she also plays netball, so is limited to running twice one week, and three times the following week.

A holiday, Christmas and the recent bad weather, has meant that Hayley has been unable to run consistently recently. Hayley's goal in February is therefore to run consistently at least twice a week. In future months she will look to increase her distance, as well as to slightly increase the intensity of some of her runs.

If you have a goal or target that you are working towards and would like to be featured in Catch a Coach then please speak to a member of the coaching team.

The Coaching Team's objectives for 2010 – an update

Last month we summarised the objectives the coaching team are focussing on in 2010. Included below is a short update for each.

1. Make sure that all runners in the club know the structure of the training sessions, the groups they will be running in and the objectives of the sessions.

Included in the January edition of 'Catch a Coach' were full details of each of the club's training sessions, the coaching team and how the sessions are structured. We will continue to share more information on the objectives of different sessions within the schedule as part of the training briefs and within 'Catch a Coach'.

2. Develop at least a further 4 UKA Level 2 coaches and a further 5 UKA Level 1 assistant coaches during 2010.

Following UK Athletics releasing further training dates at the Level 1 coaching award there has been a great take up. On 13th February Andy Jay, Paul Carter, Richard Sidlin and Marie Colucci will attend the Level 1 course at Loughborough. On the same date Jo Laing will attend the Level 1 course in Banbury. On the 20th February Sean

Thompson and Jamie Drackford will attend the Level 1 course at Warwick University.

At the time of writing we were still waiting for dates to be released for the Level 2 courses. Three of the Level 1 assistant coaches have already expressed an interest in attending.

In addition to the above, Katrina Doyle, Lisa Potter and Angela Moore attended the England Athletics Leadership in Running and Fitness course on the 23rd January. This delivers training for individuals to coach and manage a group of runners. Further details of how the ladies got on are included in this edition.

3. Ensure that the coaching team are organised to support all of the club's sessions and provide targeted coaching support for key events and club activities during 2010.

This continues to be a challenge for the team given the huge popularity of the club and the numbers training but it is a great challenge to have! The planned training and development will grow the coaching team further so that we have greater resilience across all of the sessions we support.

4. Continue to encourage runners to progress from the Starter Group to the Tuesday and Thursday interval and speed work based sessions as they continue to develop their running.

This is progressing well with a growing number of members coming along to the Tuesday training and even progressing through the training groups. The attendance at the Thursday speedwork training is also growing.

5. Incorporate off road running into the training schedule in the summer months, particularly on the main Tuesday session. Off road/trail runs will also be offered on a Sunday and can incorporate the selected XC routes so that runners can grow more familiar with them.

More to come on this as we get into the lighter evenings and better weather!

6. Launch the Run 4 Fun group in January 2010 and continue to support that during the year,

looking for opportunities for members of that group to become full members of the club.

The Run 4 Fun group was launched on the 9th January as planned, despite the snow and ice!! Its early days but attendance is growing as the message is getting through, particularly to the schools and colleges.

Coach Development in Action – Leadership in Running and Fitness

On Saturday 23rd January, Katrina Doyle, Angela Moore and Lisa Potter attended the 'Leadership in Running & Fitness' course, which is a new course accredited by England Athletics. The course has also been developed in conjunction with the 'Run in England' project which is a national initiative to get more of the country 'up and running'!

After successful completion of the course and CRB clearance, participants are qualified and insured to lead a group. Angela and Lisa themselves started as complete beginners with the Starter Group, and now plan to assist with the leadership/coaching of the rapidly expanding 'Starter Group' section and Group 1 Tuesday training group.

The course had a good mix of practical sessions and theory, which enabled participants to deliver fun and safe sessions to multi-ability groups and give advice and support to the new runner, as well as developing pathways for those who want to progress. It also focuses on understanding and overcoming barriers to participation in running and how to increase participation by those not traditionally attracted to a running club.

The Run 4 Fun group

On 9th January 2010 the club launched a new initiative in conjunction with Stevenage Borough Council, Herts Sports Partnerships and Sport Stevenage. Called the Run 4 Fun, it involves supporting the coaching and development of 17-25 year olds who wish to undertake running as an exercise to improve their fitness and well being.

The sessions are held each Saturday at 9:15am at Ridlins Athletic stadium. Paul Holgate is lead coach

for the group, ably supported by the rest of the coaching team.

The bad weather at the start of the year delayed the distribution of information within the target schools/college sites but the numbers attending are picking up and there is already interest from some to come along to other club training sessions in the week and join as full club members.

If you know of any 17-25 year olds who would like to improve their fitness and have some fun with the group then just ask them to come along to Ridlins track on a Saturday morning at 9:15am. They are guaranteed a warm welcome.

Remember: if you are feeling unwell in any way during or after your run please make sure that you speak to a member of your groups coaching team. They need to be aware of this so that they can monitor the situation during training.

If you are feeling unwell before the training session then you are advised not to run.

What is tempo training?

Tempo runs are the simplest of all speed workouts. Just warm up, run at a challenging, steady pace you can hold for the set distance and then cool down. They are also known as lactate, anaerobic or fatigue threshold runs. When you go above your threshold, lactic acid builds up, breathing becomes laboured, running form gets ragged, muscles tense and tighten as fatigue sets in. With tempo runs, you train close to your threshold without exceeding it. As a result, you'll raise it, enabling you to run faster and farther before fatigue sets in. Holding a tough enough pace is the key to performance.

Tempo runs offer many advantages. Although your lactate threshold can be improved with shorter, faster intervals, tempo runs allow for a higher quantity of threshold training per workout, and at safer speeds. Since the pace of tempo runs is not as hard as other types of speed training, recovery is quicker and injury less likely. It's less stressful than intervals. Tempo running by its nature is controlled so it guards against the tendency to train as hard as you can. Tempo training will help you develop a feel for even pace

(hence the term 'tempo') so you'll run more evenly in races.

The key to tempo training is to strike the correct balance between speed and mileage. You should be aiming to complete runs (after warm up) between 3 to 5 miles at a challenging pace that you can hold for that distance. You can judge the required pace by 'perceived exertion'. You should be running hard enough for breathing to become faster but you should not be gasping for air. You should be able to think clearly and talk, but not in full sentences. You should be running in some discomfort but not so much so that it causes you to bring your run to an abrupt end. Tempo pace is usually approximately 15 to 30 seconds per mile slower than your 10K pace or 30 to 45 seconds slower than your 5K pace. If using a heart rate monitor the training should be at approximately 85% of maximum heart rate. A quick and easy rule to use is that of the '20:20'. Most runners will get a great deal of benefit from a 20 minute tempo run ran at 15-20 seconds per mile slower than their 10K pace. This is the type of run that you can fit into a lunch break!!

You won't get it right first time! Practice is the key until you find the pace that you can maintain throughout the tempo run that is hard enough for you to get the benefits in respect to your lactate threshold.

You can run tempo runs anywhere. They can be, for example, completed off road or even on a treadmill. Just ensure you follow the pattern of (i) adequate warm up (ii) timed tempo run with a focus on pace and form and (iii) adequate cool down.