

BROCAW BLAZERS CROSS COUNTRY TRAINING PROGRAM

PHILOSOPHY

My training philosophy is based on a three(3) day on and one(1) day off training program for younger runners. I firmly believe that a drastic increase in mileage is unnecessary and is in fact harmful to the physical, mental, and emotional well being of younger runners in the United States. It has and will continue to be my goal to gradually increase both volume and intensity as each runner matures from year to year. I therefore suggest the following guidelines for a fall/cross country training schedule.

Age Group Minute Amounts per day and 3 day cycle

6-8 - 18-22 min/54-66 minutes

9-10 - 25-27 min/75-81 minutes

11-12 - 30-32 min runs with one run per week of 35 min/90-100 minutes

13 - 35-40 min runs with one run per week of 40 min with a four day cycle

14 - 40 min runs with one run per week of 45 min during the four day cycle

Sept. 1-14. Easy runs of no more than minutes listed above. The 11&12 group may run one (1) run during the 2nd week of 35 minutes. Always follow the 3 day training/on and 1 day no running/off cycle. Heartrate should only be between 160-175 bpm to accomplish this easy/aerobic training.

Sept. 15-30. One day of the 3 day cycle should be a type B workout and the other days easy/aerobic. By now the runners should be at the minute rates suggested per day and per cycle.

October 1 - Nationals. Continue the 3 day on 1 day off cycle as follows:

<u>Day 1</u>	<u>Day 2</u>	<u>Day 3</u>	<u>Day 4</u>	<u>Day 5</u>	<u>Day 6</u>	<u>Day 7</u>	<u>Day 8</u>
Type A	Type B	Easy	Off	Easy	Type A or B	Easy	Off

Any variation of this sequence may be used for scheduling conflicts except the following. Type A workouts may not follow a type B workout during a 3 day cycle. You may have 2 x type A and 1 type B workout **per week** or 2 x type B and 1 type A workout **per week**. Always allow one(1) off day and at least one(1) easy day following the last type A or B workout of the previous cycle before attempting the next type A or B workout. All other runs must be easy/aerobic or heartrate(HR) of 160-175 bpm. That's all!

IMPORTANT NOTES

All Type A & B workouts should have a 5 minute warm-up (WU) and cooldown (CD) for the 10 & under group, a 7 min WU and CD for the 11 & 12 group, and a 10 min WU and CD for the 13 & 14 group. **Include** 4-6 build-ups at the end of the Type A WU! All Type A & B workouts should be done **with the wind if possible!**

HIGH SCHOOL ADAPTATIONS

Many coaches and parents have asked me to continue my program of development for age group runners to reflect the basic needs of a high school program. It is with this goal in mind that I provide the following recommendations in order to continue to improve a runner's performance. These recommendations should allow adjustments for individual/team needs and differences while at the same time improving the chances of a running career beyond the high school level.

General Minute Recommendations by Age

Age	Weekly		Age	Weekly	
	Volume	Long Run		Volume	Long Run
9	125-150	27	14	200-245	45
10	125-167	30	15	240-275	50
11	150-182	32	16	265-305	55
12	160-195	35	17	290-335	60
13	175-215	40	18	320-365	65

I would suggest that adding five minutes to the above general weekly recommendations for high school boys would in most cases be appropriate due to three factors;

1. General physical strength differences with girls.
2. Many high school boys races are 5K while many girls races are in the 2 mile - 4K range with some 5K races.
3. Men's collegiate cross country races are 5 miles or 10K in length while the women's race does not go above 6K.

Obviously the biggest challenge for a coach next to getting the best athletes out for cross country is the need for their athletes to run before actual school practices are allowed. My suggestion would be to target August 1st for everyone. Any running the athlete does before that is gravy! In general the three(3) day on one(1) day off training cycle is impractical due to high school practice times. I suggest one(1) day be taken off each week. I would not recommend two(2) rest days back to back except for illness or injury.

Aug. 1-14. Always follow the six(6) day training/on and 1 day no running/off cycle if possible. Easy runs of no more than 30 minutes the first 3 days. Easy runs of 35 minutes the next 3 days. Take a rest day. Easy runs of 40 minutes the next 6 days. Then a rest day. Stay at 40-45 easy minutes the next six days. One of these days may be a 50 minute run. Generally heart rates **need only be** between 155-170 bpm for girls and 150-165 bpm for boys to accomplish this easy or aerobic training! These heartrate zones should be slowly attained by about 6-7 minutes and maintained for the duration of the easy and/or long run. After the run, allow the HR to reach 90 bpm before going inside to stretch.

Aug. 15-31. Two days of the next seven(7) should be a type B workout with at least 2 easy days between the type B workouts. The other days are easy/aerobic days with one day off for the week. The next week you may change the second type B to an A. Continue the volume progression suggested above until the weekly volume and long run goals are attained. I would suggest a 10-20% decrease in total volume in all training areas every 4th week for needed regeneration before starting to increase the volume again.

Sept. 1 - State. As most meets take place on either Thursday or Saturday I would recommend the following schedules with those race days in mind;

Sat Race	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Generally	Off	Long	Type A	Type B	Easy	Easy	Race
Perfect	Long	Easy	Type A	Type B	Off	Easy	Race

Thur Race	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Generally	Long	Type A	Easy	Easy	Race	Type B	Off
Perfect - Same							

Food for Thought

I think it is extremely important that your runners can see variety and improvement which is why I would show them the same workout one time every 3-4 weeks. They are getting in shape and will usually notice drastic improvements from the same workout before. What a psychological benefit! All Type A & B workouts should be done **with the wind!** **Stretching** should take place after the CD or easy run. No stretching before the workout! You may stretch a bit after the WU. I would recommend 25-30 easy min the day before the races and then 6-8 X 180 meter build-ups with easy 20-30 meter walk between. I also think mimicking race WU/CD is extremely important. That is why on Type A days I would always suggest the same WU/CD of 10 minutes with 6-8 strides at the end of the WU. Whatever you choose to use on these Type A days should be exactly what you do on race days! Type B workouts should have about the same 10 minute WU/CD without the need for strides. I would substitute a pool WO for an easy run one day a week if you have access to a pool. I would also substitute a pool WO for all secondary runs for any two a days. Every 3-4 weeks you must have a regeneration week with a reduction in volume and intensity.

Racing Comments

The schedule above would suggest that I prefer meets on Thursday. Nothing could be further from the truth! Having races on Saturdays allows the runner to become accustomed to racing on the exact day of the week and around the same time as their most important races of the year, the regional and state meets. Racing on Saturday also allows you to have a bit more say in their weekly schedule. The need to have fun and enjoy running is very important. I do not believe in racing more than once a week. Racing more than once a week is very taxing both mentally and physically. Therefore, if more than one race is scheduled for the week I would use one as the workout that should be scheduled that day and really have fun with it. I wouldn't care about the individual or team placement. In fact not racing a week around midseason would be wise in my book. I would also only emphasize 1 or 2 races to use as benchmarks during the season along with the regional and state meets.

Parting Thoughts

Of all the recommendations that I can make the most important is for coaches and parents to have a positive attitude at all times. Always find something good about the workout or race to emphasize. Secondly, they are just kids let them have some fun! Running can be fun!

Type A Workouts

1. Races

2. **2.5-3 x 5 min runs of A.** A. 2 minutes hard/1 minute easier/2 minutes hard or

3. **5-6 x 3 min runs of** B. 60 seconds hard/60 seconds easier or

B or C. C. 40 seconds hard/20 seconds easier or

4. $\frac{1}{2}$ Mile – 1000 m Loop with a Flat or Slightly Undulating Terrain:

A. 10-12 x 80-90 sec runs with each effort at the same/equal pace with the same recovery between each run or 2 Sets of 5-6 x 80-90 sec runs or 3 Sets of 4 x 80-90 sec runs. Allow with 3-4 min between sets:

1. First time run 80-90 sec and allow 90 sec recovery between each effort.

2. Second time run same 80-90 sec run but only allow 75 sec recovery between each run.

3. Third time run same 80-90 sec run but only allow 60 sec recovery between each run.

B. 5-6 x 3 min runs with the same recovery between each effort:

1. First time run 3 min runs and allow 2:45 min recovery between each effort.

2. Next time run 3 min runs but only allow 2:30 min recovery between each effort.

C. 2 Sets of 5-6 x 60 sec runs. Rest 60 sec by walking around and repeat back to start **or** 3 Sets of 4 x 60 sec runs. Full recovery between sets and then repeat. **These should always be done with the wind** for the 60 sec effort if possible.

D. As in 2 & 3. A, B and C above these runs can be done on the track only if it is too muddy or wet to be done on the grass, path or roads.

5. **2-3.5 Sets of 4 x Hills** (8-14 Total). If possible, find a hill approximately 150-200 meters in length. Start on the flat at the bottom and run up the hill and at the top continue running for another 50 meters. This teaches the runner to finish the hill and to continue the pace. Too many runners are satisfied with having made it up the hill that they get beat on the top and lose the race at this point. Walk/jog back down and start again.

Notes: A whistle works the best for 2, 3 and 4 above. Full recovery (HR to 120-130 bpm) between each effort before starting the next set. The hard part needs to be a touch faster than race pace and the easier part should be a touch slower. In other words they slow down but not much! The distance run during each effort should be almost the same for that particular WO and should gradually get longer as the season progresses. These workouts are designed to replicate what actually happens in a race. They also allow you to keep better track of all of your runners and get them back together so you can monitor as well as help them more. I also prefer out and back runs for any effort shorter than three (3) minutes. The total volume of the all Type A workouts except the hill workout and 60 sec runs should be close to race duration.

Type B Workouts

1. **Fartlek** - 10 sec hard, 10 sec easier, 20 sec hard, 20 sec easier, 30 sec hard, 30 sec easier,... up to, 80 sec hard, 80 sec easier, and then 70 sec hard, 70 sec easier, 60 sec hard, 60 sec easier, 50 sec hard, 50 sec easier,...down to, 10 sec hard, 10 sec easier and then CD. Total time is 21:20. At first just do this one up to 70 sec hard then 70 sec easier and go back down.

2. **Cruise Intervals** - 3 or 5 min runs at a pace 30-45 seconds slower than mile race pace. Take a 30 sec break (3 min) and a 60 sec break (5 min) then repeat enough for a total of 20-25 minutes.

3. **Tempo/Lactate Threshold Run** - 20 minute run at 85-92% of HR Max or no faster than a pace that increases breathing to the point where conversation stops and focus shifts from passing time while running to the actual work of running. This is usually slightly slower than 10K pace.

4. **Indian Running** - In groups of 4-6 get in single file and start running. The last person in line surges to the front and becomes the leader. As soon as they get there the new last person surges to the front.

5. **Hill Repeats** - Find a course with some hills and run everything easy except for the uphill and the tops.

6. **Speed Sandwich** - Run 20 sec blazing and 2 min easy for the entire workout.

Remember to WU & CD for all the above!