

Training Parameters for Middle School Distance Runners (8th Grade)

Principles of Training:

If you are training with Whisper 2-3 times per week, then what you are doing in practice will certainly build your speed-endurance base. If you wish to perform additional running on the days between training, you may create a greater cardiovascular base, so long as the runs are longer than 20-continuous minutes. A greater base will allow you to train longer and stronger during our times together.

During our group practices, we will run approximately 5-7 accumulated miles. If you are training with Whisper three times per week and choose to add a fourth day, be mindful that you are increasing your bodily stress load by 20-33% than normal, based on the amount of work you are doing at practice, and performing on your own. If you are running four days in a week, then you will have at least two consecutive days of running each week. Consecutive days running begins to callus the body and mind, strengthening both all the while. Proper shoes, adequate sleep, quality foods, and appropriate rest will be essential for your growing body, so listen to your body and work into a fourth and/or fifth day steadily and mindfully. If you need help with this adjustment, specifically how much you should run, please ask Coach Dave.

Side notes:

- *Unless you've spoken with Coach Dave, general weekday OYO runs should range from 4-5 miles, but remain in a zone of comfort and continuous running – no walking.*
- *Weekend OYO runs are generally longer and should make your weekday runs feel rather brief. Once you have run a few consecutive weeks of running OYO throughout the week, a weekend run of 5-6 miles should do you well.*
- *If you have to walk, you started out too fast.*
- *Headphones: A Whisper Running “no no” for both safety and running efficiency.*
- *Always run with someone. Always. If by chance you have to run OYO, tell a guardian/parent and use Life360 so they can track you.*
- *Team Up! Reach-out to a Whisper teammate for a run at a local park or trail. Doing so will hold both of you accountable, and it's generally more fun running with a friend than running alone (safer, too).*

Training:

We train in eight to nine-week segments, then take a break. In general, our Monday & Tuesday workouts are similar, as well as our Wednesday & Thursday workouts. It is recommended that runners attend practice on MWF/MWS or TuThF/TuThS. Back-to-back workout sessions are ill-advised and will actually break you down more than build you up. If you wish to attend on back-to-back days, the second of the B2B will be an easy run or a dose of cross-training if equipment is brought to practice.

Training Considerations:

Performing various types of cardio training is important and highly encouraged. In other words, don't always run. Ride your bike, rollerblade, swim, or play games like tag, kickball, kick the can, or anything else that moves you. This is especially true if you are finding it difficult to run on your own. Never feel like you have to run – except when you're at Whisper practices 😊.

If you have been training with Whisper for at least 6-months, then you might feel inclined to run longer on the weekends. On these weekend runs, feel free to play with speed in the middle of your run in one of your runs

per month. Being playful means performing longer tempos than we perform at practice. Here are a few examples:

- At mile 2, perform 3x1 mile w/400m jog between miles
- At mile 2, perform 4x1k w/300m jog between sets.
- At mile2, perform a 2-mile, 1.5-mile, 1-mile tempo w/400m between each.
- Anything, as long as you are changing up the workout from previous experiences.

This sort of work should not be performed each week, but again, one time per month. The remaining runs should be simple runs at an honest effort pace, with a heart rate between 140-160 beats per minute (bpm). If you have questions or concerns about training using heart rate, please contact Coach Dave.