

Roadmap to Race Training

Avoid random acts of fitness with heart rate-based intervals.

Just when you can't stand that Lycra under-layer another minute, the days lengthen—and spring arrives. For many, the end of winter means the beginning of race training.

SET GOALS

Setting a race goal, whether it is to finish a 5K, 10K, half-marathon, or marathon, is a great way to reach your fitness and weight-loss goals. It puts you in a competitive mindset, teaches you

training takes place within certain heart rate zones. You can set your heart rate monitor to indicate whether you are within these pre-determined zones. By showing you how hard your heart is working, your monitor helps you pace yourself, and gives you a benchmark for progress. Those with cardiac risk factors can use a heart rate monitor to help guide them through a safe training program with the support of their physician. (See box for a Web quiz for assessing cardiac risk; if you already know

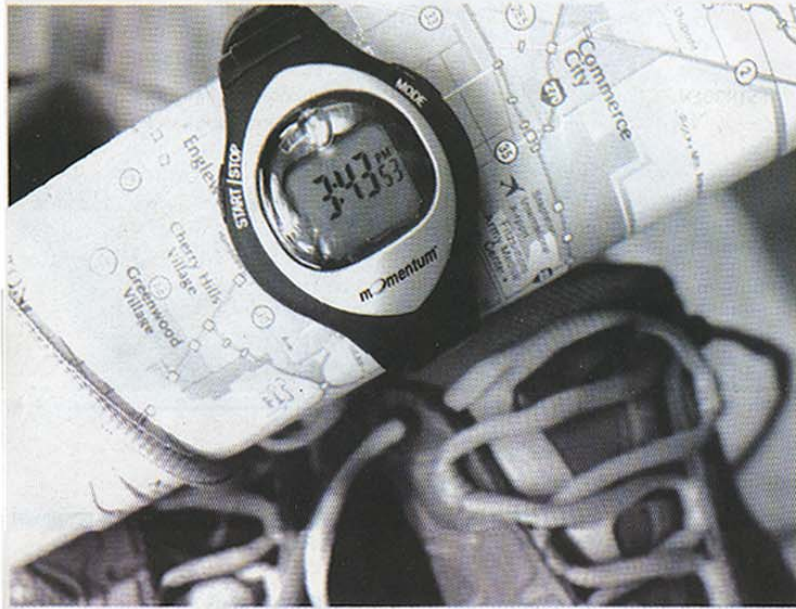
plish a higher intensity of work overall, trains your body to process the build up of lactic acid, which can help you avoid fatigue during your race. Intervals also strengthen your heart and lungs, which translate to greater cardio capacity overall. In short, intervals give more bang for your workout buck.

5K Race Training

MON.	30-MIN. INTERVAL* WORKOUT
WED.	30-MIN. INTERVAL* WORKOUT
FRIDAY	30-MIN. INTERVAL* WORKOUT
SUNDAY	LONG RUN - SEE BELOW

- 8 WKS. BEFORE RACE = 1 MILE
- 7 WKS. BEFORE RACE = 1.5 MILES
- 6 WKS. BEFORE RACE = 2 MILES
- 5 WKS. BEFORE RACE = 2.5 MILES
- 4 WKS. BEFORE RACE = 3 MILES
- 3 WKS. BEFORE RACE = 3.5 MILES
- 2 WKS. BEFORE RACE = 3 MILES
- 1 WK. BEFORE RACE = 2.5 MILES

* FOR A SAMPLE INTERVAL WORKOUT, GO TO WWW.BREAKTHROUGHHF.COM/TRAINING AND CLICK ON "SAMPLE WORKOUT." —JR



new skills, and keeps you on track. Considering running a race this year? You probably already know which one. Now make it happen.

First-time racers and seasoned pros both maximize their time and effort with a systematic training approach—a roadmap. Just as you wouldn't get in your car and drive to San Francisco without researching the best route, you shouldn't train for a race using random acts of fitness.

TRAINING TOOLS

Two simple tools can maximize your precious training time: a heart rate monitor and an interval training schedule. Used together, these heart rate-based interval training tools offer the most effective way to ensure you don't over-train, under-train, burn out, or get injured on the way to your training goals. Moreover, they help you monitor progress and set your pace on race day.

How? First, research shows the most effective cardio-conditioning and endurance

you are at risk, see sidebar on the benefits of a heart rate monitor.)

MONITORS

Heart rate monitors range from \$40 to several hundred dollars and have a variety of features (see sidebar). Most beginners and intermediates will get what they need in a \$100-range monitor. I recommend monitors that show target heart rate zones and count calories burned.

INTERVAL TRAINING SCHEDULE

Also key is an interval training schedule. Interval training, long used by elite athletes, has recently become popular for all levels of athletes because of its proven benefits. Interval training simply means that you vary the intensity of your workout. So, instead of running for 30 minutes at the same speed, you run hard for several minutes and then ease up for a minute, run hard, and ease up. The interval recovery period, which allows you to accom-

HEART RATE MONITORS AND HEART ATTACKS, HYPERTENSION, WEIGHT LOSS

Individuals with a heart condition who have been advised by their physicians to participate in a regular exercise program would benefit from using a heart monitor so that they can be aware of their heart rate and adjust the level of intensity of their exercise to maintain a safe heart rate. Individuals who have been advised to exercise for weight loss, or for treatment of hypertension, will also benefit from this device because it is an effective means of measuring progress in achieving exercise goals. —DM

Now, look at your chosen race and its date to see if it allows enough time to get into proper shape. For the average beginning runner to prepare for a 5K, allow two months to train, with three weekdays and one weekend day dedicated to your running schedule per week. (For a specific 5K interval training schedule, see sidebar). Beginners should start with the shortest distance, a 5K, then work up incrementally. To avoid over-training, don't add more than 10 percent to your total mileage each week.

HEART RATE MONITORS

MOMENTUM (\$100): www.MomentumFS.com
This premium wireless heart rate monitor comes as part of the Momentum Fitness and Weight Loss System, a complete personalized fitness program that is based on interval training. It includes online customized fitness software, DVDs, CDs, a nutrition program, and workout log, and has calories burned and target heart rate zone functions.

POLAR F6 (\$100): www.Polar-USA.US

The F6, features coded transmission to prevent crosstalk with other monitors assuring a quality group workout. It includes all basic heart rate monitor features plus OwnZone, which automatically establishes your personal target heart rate zones and OwnCal, which tracks calories and fat burned.

IRONMAN DIGITAL FITNESS SYSTEM (\$100): www.Timex.com

For the more serious athlete, this watch includes 100-lap memory; a 100-hour chronograph with lap or split; and digital FM transmission for clear signals around exercise equipment and power lines. —JR

CARDIAC RISK

To calculate your risk of having a heart attack in the next ten years, take the quiz at ZOCOR.COM.

BEFORE YOU START ANY EXERCISE PROGRAM, CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR.

RUNNING LOG

As you train, track your workouts in a running log. Jot down your distance, time, and how you felt (e.g., "I felt like I could run forever," or "my legs felt really heavy." Also, a nutrition log can help you dial in your eating habits to support your training efforts. ■



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