

**June 2010**

## INTRODUCTIONS / TIMELINES / SELECTING AN APPROPRIATE TRAINING PLAN

Greetings all! It is a privilege for me to be serving once again as the PEI Marathon Coach. I look forward to the training to come and helping those of you with training questions. To help get the discussion going, I will again be preparing monthly articles on general training principles and offer hints and tips to help you get the most out of your training.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual BMO Nesbitt Burns PEI marathon weekend is October 15 to 17, 2010 and will feature the MRSB Marathon; the Brown's Volkswagen Corporate/Team relay; the Recharge with Milk Half-Marathon Run and Gemini Screen Print & Embroidery Half-Marathon Walk; the Confederation Bridge 10K run, and Heart & Stroke Foundation 10K walk; and Ben's Smart 5K run and 5K walk. If you are a first-timer for any of these distances, it is important to do a bit of planning in advance of starting your training program. For those doing the full marathon, usual training plans are in the range of 18 weeks and would begin now (week of 14 June). Half-marathon training programs typically run from 12 to 16 weeks in duration, and the 5K and 10K can range anywhere from 6 weeks to 12 weeks.

Training for a distance race can be just as challenging as actually competing one. There are many places to find training plans: books, online, in magazines, from your running club, to name but a few. Selecting the right training plan is an important component of success on race day. Here are a few factors to consider when selecting an appropriate training plan:

- As with any exercise activity, consult your physician and get medical clearance before attempting any training plan.
- Many training plans offer a suggested base level of conditioning before attempting the actual schedule. Make sure you can comfortably complete this base load before starting the training plan.
- A good training plan will build weekly distance totals (a.k.a. volume) gradually (5% to 10% a week) and will focus on endurance first while volume is increased. Speed work during volume build-up opens the door to injury.
- Rarely does one size fit all. Therefore, a generic training plan should be considered a template. Adjustments are to be expected. If the schedule must be modified, try not to stack back-to-back hard workouts. Your body needs rest and recovery as part of the training process.
- Missed workouts: Life is unpredictable. If a workout is missed, the best advice is to write it off. It's gone, over. Treat it as an extra rest day. Do not try to compensate by adding extra kms to the rest of your workouts for the week.

Another important aspect of training for novice runners is to make sure you are in the correct shoe. Below is a brief summary of the more important factors about shoes.

- We want you to get into the correct shoe as soon as possible.
- For the most part, novice to experienced runners and walkers can wear the same shoes for both training and on race day.

- Walkers should steer clear of “walking shoes.” Most shoes labeled “walking shoes” are designed for casual walking and can cause nasty blisters if used for longer or faster walking. Fitness walkers usually look to a running shoe to find the performance features they really need.
- All of the major athletic shoe companies (Avia, Adidas, Etonic, New Balance, Nike, Puma, Saucony, etc.) sell shoes suitable for run and walk training and racing. Clerks in a quality running specialty store will be able to help you find the right one for your needs.
- Select a shoe that is a half to one full size larger than their street shoe size.
- We recommend you purchase two pairs of shoes and rotate them throughout the training so that both pairs wear evenly and last for the duration of the training period.
- Don’t pick a shoe just because your friend, or the winner of the local 10k or the Olympic marathon, wears that particular shoe. Every runner or walker has different feet and biomechanics.
- When you try a shoe it should fit right and feel good immediately. With today’s shoes, there’s no need for a breaking-in period. New shoes should fit perfectly right out of the box. Remember that no matter what the shoe reviews say, and no matter what the cost, there is never one “best” shoe out there. The “best shoe” for you is the shoe that is comfortable and suits your needs.

Be prepared to spend \$75 or more. A good pair of shoes will help you avoid injury and should last for 5 to 6 months (or 500-800 KMs) so keep track of your distances. Note the date you purchased your shoes so you know when you need to get new ones. If you are unsure if your shoes are past their prime, bring your old shoes with you to a running shoe store and compare them with the new ones. If your old ones are “dead” they will feel hard with very little cushion or support and may be misshapen.

I wish you all a wonderful training cycle, and I look forward to all the fun running to come.

Happy Trails!  
Coach Jack