

BLAZIN : 1

by Jordan Collins 05_01_06

One of the often asked questions I receive would undoubtedly be “how do I get faster”? Well, the answer is quite simple; to run...and run fast I might add. As a D-1 sprinter, obviously I have a few tips on how to improve your speed. The funny thing is that it’s not really as confusing as some make it out to be. In order to understand the full spectrum that I’m talking about, I have decided to start an article series sampling my personal sprint training through-out a base training phase (early off season) culminating in the process of tapering for in-season racing.

After a crushing season where your body is continually broken down time and time again, it’s crucial to take some time off (for me that consists of one week, two max) and then start building up your endurance and speed strength with good, strong form running. As for a sample week’s workout, it consists of something like this:

M: 8x200 (75%) (90 second rest interval)

Tu: Big Circuit (90 second rest interval)

W: 200 run-200 walk for 30-45 minutes (nice slow 200m as recovery)

Th: Small Circuit (90 second rest interval)

F: Broken 300’s x1-3 sets (3 minute recovery between sprints)

Now that you have seen the workout, it’s time to explain what everything means. Firstly, every workout in the base phase would be considered “tempo” or sub maximal sprinting work. The reasoning behind this is to build up your legs while not putting too much of a pounding on them, compared to maximal sprint work. The goal of this “tempo” training is to develop firing patterns of the lower regions, while also emphasizing the cadence of running (form work such as high knee drive and acceleration) and recovery from tough workout sessions. Above all else, the constant interval training will provide great threshold development that will prepare the body for the more specific, powerful demands of speed training that will be covered later in training.

Moving on to the specifics of the workout, you will come to learn the workouts become very demanding towards the end of the week, as the consistency of volume keeps building and building, along with the added mobility work, strength training and static stretch down. The key to this level of training is not to try and sprint full out during the workouts, because they are meant to build a base with good form and foot strike...this will prepare you for more demanding sprints later in training.

While quite demanding from a volume perspective, this level has a quick “adaptation curve” and event though you might be blowing up at the start, by the end of the level you’ll be amazed at how quickly you can recover from this type of training. On top of that, the training truly develops the essentials necessary that will enable you to sprint at max speed. It is important to not jump into pure speed work until a good, strong base is developed that will enable the hamstrings, among other muscles to hold maximal effort during the sprint.

As for other elements of training, it is essential to continually graft mobility drills (tumbling and hurdle drills) and proper strength training to make sure your body is

developed in a powerful manner where you can accelerate and maintain your top speed (for more information, check out the DVD "SPEED" at gamespeed.biz). Just as general guidelines lifting wise, make sure you're doing plenty of Olympic lifts and their variations (power clean/snatch, push jerk/press) along with hip and hamstring dominated exercises...HINT HINT....SQUAT!!!! To further point, I would incorporate the power-speed drills I mentioned about in my previous article as a daily warm up and to assist in functional form improvement.

To conclude my opening of the Blazin series, I'd like to remind everyone this is a base level of training, not to be confused with max effort sprinting. As the series evolves, I will continue to build upon the tempo training talked about above while delving into certain techniques, drills and lifts to enhance your on the field speed. As for me, time to go burn up the track...

Jordan Collins, collijo@auburn.edu

The style of the south, is a sprinter for Auburn University's track & field program. He has trained under Coach John Davies for years now and has starred in many DVD for Renegade Training. He brings a young flare and passion to the strength and conditioning community.