



Coach-Athlete Q&A

A look at some coach-replies to common questions by topic.

Q: I pushed the bike harder
>than I was suppose to last Saturday and that could be why. Why
>have we kept the bike intensity way low up to this point?
J.M.

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A: VOLUME IS KEY @ THIS POINT.

VOLUME CAN DO THINGS THAT INTENSITY CANNOT DO ON THE SAME AMOUNT OF RECOVERY.

A STORY: IN THE ROME AND TOKYO OLYMPICS (IN '52 AND '56).....A COACH NAMED ARTHUR LYDIARD (WHO IS NOW FAMOUS FOR HIS PRINCIPLES) COACHED PETER SNELL.

HE HAD SNELL RUN 100+ MILE WEEKS FOR 42 WEEKS OUT OF THE YEAR W/ ONLY TRACK-SESSION-A & THRESHOLD RUNS (LIKE YOU DID HERE). NO TRUE INTERVALS.....AND ONLY CUT DOWN THE VOLUME W/ 6 WEEKS TO GO BEFORE THE GAMES.....AND **THEN** ADDED MAJOR INTENSITY & TAPERED.

SNELL WON THE GOLD IN BOTH OLYMPICS

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THE SURPRIZE?.....SNELL RAN 800M.

LYDIARD ASK THE QUESTION THAT NOONE ELSE ASKED AT THAT TIME.....'WHY CAN NO MAN RUN 2 400'S (BACK TO BACK) IN 52 SECONDS EACH.....WHILE 12 IN THE WORLD @ THAT TIME COULD RUN ONE 400 IN 46SECONDS?'

TODAY.....EVERY MAJOR NCAA D-1 DISTANCE RUNING/XC PROGRAM PREPARES THEIR HOUNDS W/ 90+ MILE WEEKS FOR MONTHS OVER THE SUMMER.....SEVERAL ON END FOR A RACE THAT TAKES THESE GUYS ABOUT 30MINUTES.....& ALL IN A MERE 12 WEEK SEASON.

WE'RE PREPARING FOR RACES THAT TAKE OVER 1 TO 2HOURS FOR A MUCH MORE EXTENSIVE SEASON.....HOW MUCH MORE RUN & BIKE AEROBIC DEVELOPEMENT DO WE NEED THAN THEM?

SO WE'RE FACED W/ A BALANCE BETWEEN 'VOLUME' AND 'INTENSITY'. "INTENSITY" WILL TAKE YOU A LONG WAY IN A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME.....AND MAXIMIZE THE AEROBIC CAPACITY YOU CURRENTLY HAVE.....BUT IT COMES @ SUCH A HIGH 'COST' OF RECOVERY, THAT'S IT'S USE IS ONLY VALUABLE FOR BRIEF PERIODS BEFORE IT BEGINS TO WORK BACKWARDS ON YOU.

I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW MANY PEOPLE THAT I COACH WHO SIMPLY STARTED DOING INTERVALS AROUND MARCH.....& KEPT ON DOING THEM THROUGH APRIL, MAY, JUNE, JULY, AUGUST.....WEARING DOWN ALONG THE WAY AND HITTING A SINGLE PLATEAU AND THEN EVEN GRADUALLY SPIRALING DOWN AS THE SEASON WORE ON.



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WE.....INSTEAD.....FOLLOW A REPEATING SEQUENCE OF VOLUME, THRESHOLD, BRIEF INTENSITY, TAPER.....& THEN REST AND DO IT AGAIN. EACH TIME.....AN ATHLETE HAS THE CAPACITY TO IMPROVE OVER THE PREVIOUS 'STEP'.

AND THE BIGGER THE "VOLUME" ON THE FRONT END.....THE LESS THE INTENSITY DRAINS THE NEEDED RECOVERY IN THE FINAL WEEKS PRIOR TO TAPER.....THE LESS THE "DRAIN".....THE MORE COMPLETE THE TAPER.....THE BETTER THE RACE. HANG IN THERE.

Sonni