



Anaerobic Training for Distance Runners

The basic philosophy underlying these sessions is that you're not trying to 'max out' your anaerobic system, as would runners like Usain Bolt or Tyson Gay. Instead, you're simply trying to get better at creating some energy anaerobically during race efforts which are primarily aerobic.

Use the distance runner's best friend - the 1200m interval - in the following way:

Calculate the maximum number of 1200m intervals you can do per workout by multiplying your weekly mileage by 10 per cent.

For example, if you run 40 miles per week, $10\% \times 40 = 4$ miles, or about 6400 metres.

You can complete five 1200m intervals per workout ($5 \times 1200 = 6000$).

Warm up by jogging for 10-15 minutes on the track, and then run three 1200m intervals at your current 5K race pace, with recoveries that are equal in time duration, or slightly shorter, than the work intervals.

For the last two intervals of the workout, run the first 800m of each interval at 5K pace, but sizzle through the last 400m of the interval at 2 seconds per 400 faster than 5K pace.

Overall, this will give you 800m per workout of more-anaerobic running, preparing you for 800m charges at the ends of your 5K competitions.

It's okay to use a slightly longer recovery between the last two 1200m intervals. If your mileage dictates that you can only do four 1200m intervals, use a 2-2 system



(the first two intervals are strictly at SK pace; the last two have the faster-than-5K flare at the end).

On a road or in a park, mark off a three-quarter mile distance.

Arrange it so that the last 100-400 yards (metres) of this distance are moderately uphill.

Then, conduct intervals over this three-quarter mile stretch, trying to maintain close to SK pace throughout, even on the last uphill section.

Use recoveries that are equal to, or slightly longer than, each work interval, and use the 10 per cent formula to calculate the maximum number of intervals per workout.

The variable-recovery session.

Complete 400m work intervals at a pace three seconds per 400 faster than SK tempo.

After the first work interval, recover for only as long as the duration of the work interval.

After the second work interval, recover for six to eight minutes.

Continue in this way, alternating equal-duration recoveries with six- to eight-minute recoveries, until you are tired or you reach the 10 per cent limit.

Tapering.

Warm up by jogging two miles or so on the track, and then complete 3 X 300 metres with a 100m jog after each 300.

Try to do each 300 at fairly close to all-out intensity but still with a sense of control.



You shouldn't be scratching, scraping, leaning or losing your basic running form.

Don't try to time the 300s, but they should definitely feel faster than SK tempo.

For your fourth interval, after you've completed the three 300-100 combos, run a full 400 at a pace about 5 seconds per 400 faster than current SK speed.

This ends the first set, which adds up to about one mile of running.

Walk 400m to recover, and then carry out a second, similar set.

Depending on your current mileage levels and the 10 per cent rule, you can try a third or even a fourth set.

After the basic workout is over, warm down by jogging easily for one mile. The faster-than-SK nature of this session ensures good anaerobic development. Also, the fuller recovery between sets allows a runner to maintain speed over the duration of the workout.