



THE CREATIVE WORKOUT LIBRARY

Rule #1 – There are no rules!!

A workout can touch more than one zone. Gone are the days when a workout can only be 4 x Mile or 8 x 800 or 16 x 400 or a 4-mile tempo run. Don't be afraid to mix zones and distances over the course of one session.

EX: 2-mile/4x800/1-mile/4x400

2-mile tempo run at steady state Pace. 3 minutes rest. 4 x 800 at lactate threshold pace with 1-minute rest in between repeats. 3 minutes rest after #4. 1 mile at critical velocity pace. 3 minutes rest. 4 x 400 with 1-minute rest getting progressively faster (5k pace, 3k pace, Mile pace, FAST). Grand total of 6 miles of hard work, 5-6 different training zones, and 4 different repeat distances.

The same workout can look slightly different from year to year. Tweaking a staple session can provide excitement amongst your team.

EX: If you've "always" done 8 x 800 before your conference championship but you have a team of real aerobic beasts in a particular year, change it up a bit. Slow the pace down a hair and try 10 x 1k instead. It's 2 more miles of total volume and a little longer repeat. They'll enjoy the challenge. Or if you have a team of speedsters, try 10 x 600. It's only a quarter mile less of total volume but you can run them at a slightly faster pace (both of which they'll probably appreciate!).

Just because one coach or team does a workout one way doesn't mean you and your team can't do it a different way. It's not always the exact details that matter—it's the general principles.

EX: The Michigan. Sure, legendary coach Ron Warhurst, during his days at The U of M, came up with a workout where he had his athletes run 1600/1200/800/400 on the track with a 2k steady road run in between each repeat. It became known as The Michigan. But remember, he made it up! And so can you. Create "The [insert your mascot name here]" and tweak the workout to fit your needs.

You can sneak a little speed into the end of just about any workout. Athletes always have a little more in the tank than they think at the end of a race, and it's good to remind them of that at practice.

EX: You can add up to a mile's worth of work at 1-mile race pace (nice and smooth) on to the end of just about any workout imaginable (tempo runs, lactate threshold repeats, critical velocity repeats—doesn't matter). And you can add it on in a bunch of different ways. Early in the season it's nice to just start out with 100s with 45 sec rest. You can start with 6 x 100, and move toward 10, or even 12 x 100. Then you can move to 200s, eventually getting to 8 x 200 with 50 sec rest. The end of the season can be a great place to try 4 x 300 at mile pace with 1-minute rest after a hard workout. The goal with all of this is to master running fast when tired, without going completely to the well (hence 1-mile race pace and not "all-out"). If an athlete learns this, masters this, and then believes he or she always has this in their back pocket at the end of a race, then you are much more likely to see them make the decision to "kick" at the end of a race.