

# OFF 'N' RUNNING

*JPL Running Club Newsletter (Edited by Jim Ulvestad, 238-700, 4-6734)*

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## CLUB AND LOCAL NEWS

Sorry for the inordinate delay in putting out this issue of the newsletter. The editor has been too busy with work and training.

Many of you ordered JPL running gear this fall, and may be wondering why you haven't received anything except a cancelled check. We have had problems with the supplier. The clothes should be available shortly.

Many thanks to Sam Dolinar, who is stepping down this year after several years as club president, possibly to devote a little time to running, among other things. Sam has devoted a lot of time and effort to putting on races and keeping the club going.

The 1988 club officers will try to provide a mixture of events; watch for future announcements in the newsletter or in separate flyers. Your suggestions will be welcomed, and help in putting on club races will be most appreciated by the new officers. You will soon be asked to renew your membership for the upcoming year. We had only a few more than 100 members in 1987, which is only a little more than the number of people who run the Arroyo Seco Freako race each year. Encourage your friends to join up this year.

## Training Tips for the Beginning Marathoner

Some of you may be interested in training for a marathon, and this article is aimed at giving some tips for beginners and those who have run marathons, but are interested in learning more about preparation for such a race. Local marathons this spring include the Los Angeles Marathon and Corporate Extravaganza in early March and the Long Beach Marathon in early May.

Many people wonder how much training they should be doing for a marathon. Perhaps the single, most widely quoted "rule" for marathon training is the estimate of the amount of mileage a runner should be doing in order to run a marathon. The accepted values are that your average daily mileage should be about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the race length in order to finish the race, and  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the race length in order to "race" it (i.e., to shoot for a particular time). For the 26.2-mile marathon, these fractions translate into about 60 miles per week for racing the marathon and 45 miles per week for just completing the race. This average mileage should be maintained for approximately two months before the race.

Although 45 miles per week is the minimum recommended distance, this averages only 6.5 miles per day. Doing runs of exactly that distance every day of the week is obviously not

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the best way to prepare for a 26-mile race, because the body is trained to stop after about 10 km, and completely unprepared to run the remaining 32 km. Therefore, it is crucial to vary the training on a day-to-day basis in order to include some longer runs in the program. A staple of many marathoners' programs is the weekend long run of 18 or 20 miles. However, one drawback to such long runs is that they take a lot out of a runner who is doing only 50 miles per week and can often lead to injury in individuals whose bodies are not yet adopted to the stresses involved in such long distances. Therefore, for the beginner, it may be better to aim for a single 16 to 20 mile run every 2 weeks leading up to the marathon, perhaps with 3 or 4 such runs in the 8-10 weeks before the marathon. Resting for a day or even two days before the long run may be beneficial to enable the runner to get through the workout with a minimum of discomfort and the maximum benefit. On the alternate weekends, a shorter, but still substantial, run in the 13-15 mile range is recommended.

Why are long runs so crucial to completion of a marathon? They help delay the onset of the "wall" which hits many runners at around the 20-mile mark, but which may come on considerably earlier. Generally speaking, running is fueled by stored glycogen in the liver and large muscles. However, this glycogen is sufficient to run no more than about 20 miles, or possibly less. It is the depletion of glycogen that manifests itself as the "wall." At that point, the body tries to make a sudden transition to burning fat, which is considerably less efficient. The benefit of long training runs is that the body learns that it must burn some fat in order to conserve and "stretch out" the glycogen supply, so it begins producing some energy from fat in much earlier stages of the run. Therefore, there is more glycogen available to the runner in the later parts of a marathon.

Another significant aspect of marathon training is injury prevention. The first important principle to remember here is the need for a gradual buildup of training mileage and intensity. A traditional part of running lore is that a runner's weekly average mileage should be increased by no more than 10% per week. For someone who is doing only 15 miles per week, this is a long and agonizing process, so almost everyone at that level who decides to do a marathon increases the mileage more rapidly. Still, the faster the increase, the greater the likelihood of injury. It's already too late to increase your mileage greatly before the Los Angeles Marathon. If you're currently doing less than 30-35 miles per week, it might be wiser to take the buildup a little more slowly and aim for the Long Beach Marathon in May instead.

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*Next issue: Some tips on training for shorter races*

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