

Birkie Trail 5k 2015 – General Training Plan and Progression

Overall Training Outline: The general progression of training should be to gradually increase both volume and intensity in the weeks and months leading up to the race, with a one week tapering period just prior to the race. Ideally, you would do some other 5k races on roads and/or trails prior to the event to build speed, and learn how to properly pace the distance. This plan runs through the 6 weeks prior to the event.

Pacing:

Marathon+ - Long and slow, used for long runs, or recovery runs

Half Marathon – Faster than marathon+, but still not what most would consider fast running

10k – Getting pretty fast (the pace you would run a 10k...)

5k – Fast running, but not sprinting (pace you would run a 5k...)

Sprint – Exactly what it sounds like.

Week 1 (8/15/15 – 8/22/15)

Focus: Begin Training

Miles: 7-10

Description: The first week of training should be fairly light, and should be focused on basic aerobic development, and avoiding injury and/or too much soreness (you're probably going to be a little sore if it's been a while, but that's ok). Mileage should be kept low, and there should be at least two rest days in order to properly recover from the training and prevent injury.

Good Sample Workout: 2-3 mile run at Marathon+ pace

Week 2 (8/23/15 – 8/29/15)

Focus: Increase Mileage

Miles: 12-17

Description: The second week of training, you should add a few more miles. At this point, you are still developing your aerobic system, and training should be focused on easier, aerobic workouts. Still probably a good idea to have at least two off days this week. Next week, we'll add some intensity and some speed training.

Good Sample Workout: 3-5 mile run at Marathon+ pace

Week 3 (8/30/15 – 9/5/15)

Focus: Speed/Intensity

Miles: 8-10

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Description: This week, we'll begin to increase the intensity levels, and add some speed training as well. When running a 5k, endurance and aerobic capabilities are certainly important, but you also have to have some anaerobic capacity and some pure foot speed in order to race well. Following your easier runs this week, add 10 x 20 second accelerations (begin at an easier pace, and by the time you reach 20 seconds, be running close to a full sprint) with a good 45 seconds to a minute of recovery between each one. Add in two intensity workouts this week (preferably not on consecutive days).

Good Sample Workout: 15 minute warm up, fartlek interval session (random intensity durations, done at random times throughout the run. For example, you may run at 5k pace for 4 minutes, take a 2 minute break, then run for 3 minutes at 5k pace, then take a 1.5 minute break, then run for 4.5 minutes at 5k pace, then a short break, etc.) for 30 minutes, 15 minute easy cool down.

Week 4 (9/6/15 – 9/12/15)

Focus: Intensity/Mileage

Miles: 15-20

Description: This week will be the hardest week of training leading up to the race. We'll combine an increase in intensity with an increase in mileage, making for a big week of training. Be sure you're recovering well, including drinking plenty of water, and eating well. Two intensity workouts this week, and the other 3 workouts should be longer distance runs (4-5 miles)

Good Sample Workout: 15 minute warm up, 45 minute fartlek session (see description above) OR 6x4minutes at 5k pace, 15 minute easy cool down.

Week 5 (9/13/15 – 9/19/15)

Focus: Speed, Tapering

Miles: 10-15

Description: This week, we'll cut back on mileage a little bit, but continue to work on some foot speed. You'll want to continue adding accelerations at the end of easier runs, but the duration of the acceleration should be increased to 30 seconds now.

Good Sample Workout: 3 mile Half-Marathon Pace run with 10 x 30 second accelerations afterward. A good 10 minute stretching routine after the accelerations would be beneficial also.

Week 6 (9/20/15 – 9/26/15)

Focus: Taper

Miles: 5-10

Description: This week is totally focused on tapering, and getting ready for the race on Saturday. Short runs, and 3-4 recovery days this week will be beneficial. Good Luck!

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