

Birkie Basic Training Outline

Overall Training Outline: The general progression of training should be to gradually increase volume and intensity in the months leading up to the race, with a two to three week tapering period just prior to the race.

Pacing:

Easy - Long and slow, used for long run/rollerski/bike ride/swim/paddle

Birkie Pace – Faster than easy pace; heart rate should be elevated, and you should be breathing more heavily. Sometimes referred to as level 3.

5k – Faster than Birkie Pace, but not sprinting (pace you would run/ski a 5k, sometimes referred to as level 4).

Sprint – As fast as possible, but remain in control.

June

Focus: Continue building aerobic base, begin light intensity

Approximate hours per week: 7-10

Areas of Emphasis: Long, easy training sessions (1-2.5 hours at easy pace), shorter, lighter intensity workouts to start working on speed.

Sample Week: 3-4 workouts should be easy pace of 1-1.5 hours; 1-2 workouts should be intensity either running, rollerskiing, or on a bike – 20 minute warm up, 3-5 times 3-4 minutes at Birkie Race Pace with full recovery between each interval (approximately 2-3 minutes, depending on fitness level), 15 minute cool down; weekend workout/s should include a long, easy day (2+ hours at easy pace, bring food and water with you to stay hydrated and fed); should be doing strength 1-2 times per week.

July

Focus: Continue both aerobic volume and intensity, increase total volume slightly

Approximate hours per week: 8-12

Areas of Emphasis: Longer easy training sessions, quality intensity workouts.

Sample Week: 3-4 workouts during the week of slightly longer duration than previous months - 1.25-2 hours; 1-3 workouts should be intensity focused - 20 minute warm up, 4-6x5-6 minutes Birkie Race Pace with full recovery in between intervals – approximately 3-4 minutes, 15 minute cool down; weekend workout/s should include a long and easy

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day (2+ hours easy; bring food and water), strength 1-2 times per week.

August

Focus: Similar to July, aerobic volume and increase intensity slightly

Approximate hours per week: 9-13

Areas of Emphasis: Long training sessions, quality intensity

Sample Week: Very similar to July, with 3-4 quality easy distance workouts during the week, 1-3 workouts should be intensity/speed focused - 20 minute warm up, 2x7 minutes Birkie Race Pace (3 minutes rest between sets), ski easy 5 minutes, 3x2 minutes 5k race pace (1.5 minutes rest between sets), ski easy 5 minutes, 5x15 second sprints (approximately 1 minute rest between sprints), 20 minute cool down; weekend workout/s should include a long, easy session (2+ hours easy; bring food and water), strength 1-2 times per week.

September

Focus: Increase total intensity

Approximate hours per week: 8-12

Areas of Emphasis: Quality intensity workouts, continued aerobic base development/maintenance

Sample Week: 3-4 workouts during the week of durations of 1-2 hours; 1-3 quality intensity/speed workouts during the week, one at Birkie Race Pace (warm up 20 minutes, 4-6x8 minutes, with full recovery between intervals), and one workout being a higher intensity workout (20 minute warm up, 4x4 minutes 5k race pace with full recovery between intervals, 15 minute cool down); continue with at least one long workout (2+ hours) on the weekend; strength 1-2 times per week.

October

Focus: Increase intensity, maintain aerobic volume

Approximate hours per week: 8-12

Areas of Emphasis: Quality intensity workouts, aerobic base maintenance

Sample Week: 3-4 workouts during the week of durations of 1-2 hours; 2-3 quality intensity/speed workouts during the week - warm up 20 minutes, 3-4x8-10 minutes (8 minutes Birkie Race Pace, 2 minutes 5k pace) cool down 15 minutes; continue with at least one long workout (2+ hours) on the weekend; strength 1-2 times per week.

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November

Focus: Aerobic volume, maintain intensity

Approximate hours per week: 10-14

Areas of Emphasis: Maintain intensity, maintain aerobic volume.

Sample Week: 3-4 workouts during the week of durations of 1-2 hours; 1-2 quality intensity/speed workouts during the week - warm up 20 minutes, 3x10 minutes Birkie Race Pace, 3-4x2 minutes 5k pace, full recovery between sets, cool down 15 minutes; continue with 1-2 long workouts (2+ hours) on the weekend; strength 1-2 times per week.

December

Focus: Reduce total volume, increased intensity - race effort

Approximate hours per week: 7-10

Areas of Emphasis: Quality intensity workouts, aerobic base maintenance

Sample Week: 3-4 workouts during the week of durations of 1-1.5 hours; 2 quality intensity/speed workouts during the week - 20 minute warm up, 1x7 minute Birkie Race Pace, 6x2.5 minutes FAST skiing with full recovery, 20 minute cool down; try to find one race of medium distance (10-15k) and practice race effort with a good warm up and cool down; reduce weekend workouts to 1.5-2 hours; strength 1 time per week.

January

Focus: Reduce volume, maintain intensity, race 2-3 times

Approximate hours per week: 7-9

Areas of Emphasis: Shorter, high quality intensity workouts, aerobic base maintenance

Sample Week: 3-4 workouts during the week of durations of 1-1.5 hours; 1-2 quality intensity/speed workouts during the week - 20 minute warm up, 1x7 minute Birkie Race Pace, 5x3 minutes FAST skiing with full recovery, 20 minute cool down; races – try to find 2-3 races to participate in during this month, with 1 being approximately 10k, 1 at 15-20k, and one at 20-30k, or can be first weekend in February, strength 1 time per week.

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February

Focus: Taper for Birkie

Approximate hours per week: 5-7

Areas of Emphasis: Short, quick intensity workouts, taper/recover

Sample Week: 2-3 workouts during the week of durations of ≤ 1.25 hours; 1-2 quality intensity/speed workouts during the week - 20 minute warm up, 1x5 minute Birkie Race Pace, 3-5x1.5 minutes 5k race pace, 20 minute cool down; strength 1 time per week; recovery is a priority, especially the week prior to the race – hours during that week should be minimal, with a few very short workouts just to keep your body moving. Enjoy the race!

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