

## **SPEED WORK, continued**

Now, let's talk about the actual training needed to improve in the 5K. Although everyone has different styles and approaches, certain basics are standard in 5K preparation. Many people consider training for the 5K to consist solely of mile repeats and some track work consisting of 400's and 800's and maybe some 200's thrown in to sharpen speed. In fact, many 5K training plans call for just these types of workouts. Although these types of workouts surely have their spot in your training plan, you will not be preparing yourself adequately if you stick solely to them. In fact, even when completing those workouts, most people don't perform them correctly, as they either don't take enough rest in between sets, or most often they take too much. The same goes with the speed that you perform the interval work at (which is why the pace calculator is essential in interval work). Remember, the old adage that you don't race in training and train in races couldn't be more accurate.

Knowing that those 3.1 little miles can prove quite painful early on in the race when your body is going into oxygen debt and the lactic acid in your legs is steadily building, it is essential to train at varying intervals that will actually improve your VO2 Max (oxygen consumption) and reduce lactic acid buildup. Rather than 800 meter and mile repeats, I suggest doing 1K (1000 meters) and 2K (2000 meters) interval work, as it pushes your body just a little bit farther and really improves your stamina in the 5K distance. In other words, when you are on the track and you've completed laps for your 1600 meter workout interval, it's that extra 400 meters that really tests your fitness and prepares you for the challenging part of the 5K, the middle mile and the end. Additionally, active rest is a must, meaning that you jog very slowly after each interval. The shorter the distance of your intervals, the less recovery time between sets that is needed. If you are doing 400 meters in training (which I only suggest incorporating into your 5K training as part of a ladder—for instance, a workout that consists of the following intervals in ascending and then descending order: 400, 800, 1200, 1600, 1200, 800, 400—the recovery time needed between sets in very minimal (a 200 meter jog at most). The opposite holds true for the longer intervals, such as 2000 meters, in which you will need a longer active recovery, usually consisting of 2-3 minutes.

Another accepted principle is that any speed session should contain approximately 3-4 miles of speed, with a solid warm-up of at least a mile (I'd suggest 2 miles) and a good cool-down of the same distance as the warm-up. This will make planning your workouts easier. For instance, a typical 5K workout that I will do in my training is the 5K distance spread out as one 2K interval, followed by 2-3 1K intervals. This might sound easy, but you may want to hold off on that erroneous conclusion until after the workout. I also like to end all of my speed sessions with some 200 meter strides at a pretty fast pace (but still holding back slightly) just to activate the fast twitch muscles and to improve your lactic acid threshold. The ladder workout described above is also a good workout that is tough but rewarding. If speed work is done correctly, it should be as rewarding as a good long run and leave you feeling exhausted but satisfied at your effort. I also strongly suggest that you find a partner of similar or greater ability or group if possible to do your speed work with, especially the longer intervals, as speed work usually improves with increased numbers of runners completing the workout. Lastly, your speed sessions should be limited to 2-3 sessions per week (3 only for the more experienced runners), with the rest of the week consisting of easy and moderate efforts, and at least one longer run per week of 10-15 miles for endurance purposes (remember that the 5K is an endurance race as much as it is a speed race and you need the easier miles during the week to have the proper level of endurance come race day).

**Good luck and I'll see you at the races!**

*Please feel free to send your feedback on this article or suggest future topics or alert me to athletes of interest in the local community by contacting me at [spencerrunner@gmail.com](mailto:spencerrunner@gmail.com) or messaging me on Facebook.*



**1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL MEMORIAL**  
*Father O'Reilly*

**5K RUN & FITNESS WALK**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2015. 7:00AM**

**Vista View Park, Davie**  
*To Benefit St David Catholic School Choir*  
**For more information, register at any Runner's Depot  
Or Register Online at Active.com**

~~~ **Join Us** ~~~  
**GOLD COAST RUNNERS**  
*weekly training runs!*



**Sunday Morning – Hollywood Beach Broadwalk with the Hollywood Run Club, A-1-A & Garfield Street at Charnow Park. 7:00AM start. All paces, Runners & Walkers.**

**Tuesday Evening – Hollywood Beach Broadwalk with the Hollywood Run Club, A-1-A & Garfield Street at Charnow Park. 7:00PM start. All paces, Runners & Walkers.**

**Wednesday Evenings – Robbins Park, Davie Just North of Orange Drive on Hiatus Road**  
6:00 PM – Meet by the bathrooms  
All paces, 4, 5, or 6 miles. Stay after for the stretch

**Thursday Evenings - 17th Street Causeway Runner's Depot Run Club – Ft Lauderdale**  
6:30 PM - Starts at Runner's Depot - Ft. Lauderdale  
1489 SE 17 St. Causeway, Southport Center  
All paces, 4-6 miles. Refreshments & raffles!

**Thursday Evenings – Coral Springs-Parkland Runner's Depot Run Club – Coral Springs**  
Starts at Runner's Depot-Coral Springs  
5679 Coral Ridge Drive (954) 575-2090  
All paces, 3-5 miles. Refreshments & raffles!

**Thursday Evenings - Weston Runner's Depot Run Club – Weston**  
6:30 PM - Starts at Runner's Depot – Weston  
1378 Weston Road, Country Isles Plaza  
All paces, 4 miles. Refreshments & raffles!

**Saturday Mornings – Weston Town Center**  
6:00 AM. 5-10 Miles, All Paces, 2 Water Stops

***Runners and walkers, all paces Welcome!***