

Need More Cardio, Part 3

Description

Ok, back to our regularly scheduled program of talking about this notion of “needing more cardio” to improve your workouts in the box.

If you missed part 1 or 2, check them out [here](#) and [here](#), respectively.

For my last post, I’m going to lay out some thoughts on how to SUPPLEMENT your CrossFit training with additional endurance focused work.

I put *supplement* in all uppercase because you first need to be coming in for your regular CrossFit WODs **consistently** before you even think about adding in any extra endurance work. Why? The kind we’ll discuss is incredibly taxing. As such, you need to be able to manage your recovery really well. Disclaimer: if you recall, when most people talk cardio, they are referring to the long-slow distance type stuff. Running mile after mile at a nice steady pace. This is not the type of endurance training that we will be discussing here.

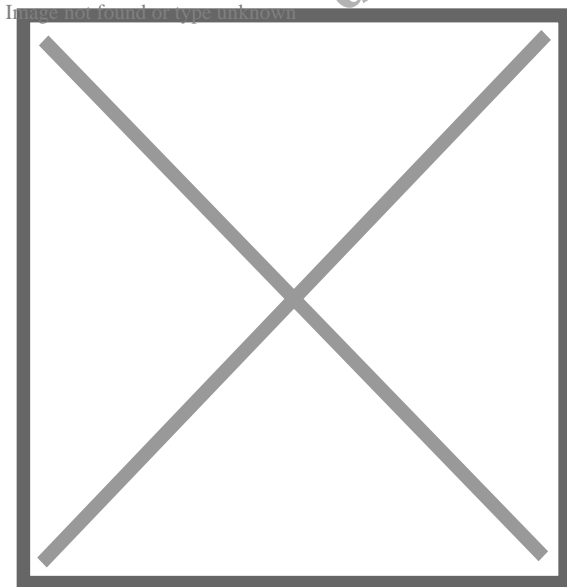
Why? Again, we’re looking for increased work capacity...I mean, increased fitness. LSD training does not offer that.

Want to learn to run slow? Then follow a standard LSD program.

Want to burn fat, quickly and efficiently, with less of a time investment?

Want to get faster, stronger, and more powerful?

Then follow what we do. Yes, it’s that simple.



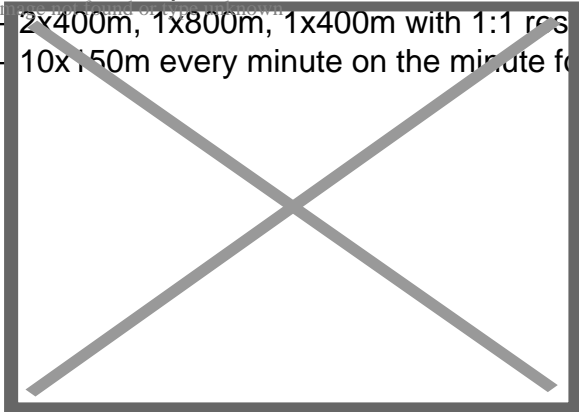
This picture has been floating around for a while now, but is pretty telling. Elite level marathoner vs. elite level sprinter

I take that back; the idea is simple. The implementation and execution, on the other hand, is hard. I

mean really really hard.

Over the past few weeks, I've peppered in a few endurance focused WOD's:

- 4x400m repeats with 1:1 rest
- 2x400m, 1x800m, 1x400m with 1:1 rest
- 10x150m every minute on the minute for 10min



Something to note about intervals like this: in the scientific

community, exercise physiologists use a scale to measure the intensity of your exercise. It goes from 6-20, and correlates to a heart-rate range equal to about 10x of that number. For instance, an RPE of 12 would coincide with a heart rate of 120.

For the intervals above, the RPE should be no lower than 18 – a very very tough effort. If you were going all out, as instructed before the WOD started, then your RPE should be nearing 20, indicating you were giving absolutely everything you had...throughout the entirety of every single interval. If you were present those days, can you faithfully say you ran that hard, all the way through the finish line, each time?

Interval work like this not only trains you to be faster, thereby getting you stronger, but it also trains your body to recover really well. Your ability to lower your heart rate during the rest portion is a correlate of your level of cardiovascular fitness.

Have you ever noticed that during a WOD, some people are able to get back on the bar/rope/box quicker than others? Many times, it's a sign that they can recover quicker. This is not a hard and fast rule though, as their effort could be less than that of the person who is seemingly slower to get back at it. In my case, I take longer than necessary because I let my mind get in the way of what my body is capable of performing...something that Jay is tirelessly pushing me to get better at.

As you can see, effective cardio work requires an *intense* level of effort. It also takes an immense level of focus, determination, and heart. Work like this, similar to the WODs we do in here, can be incredibly humbling.

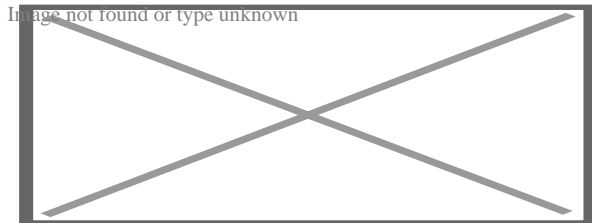
A few interesting notes on the sample WOD's I posted above:

- On the 4x400m day, we used a burpee penalty as an incentive to match your fastest time for all intervals. We literally saw people collapsing past the finish line on the final run to meet that time...This was characterized as "one of the hardest WODs we've ever done," and it was only a MILE of work!
- For the following WOD w/ 400m & 800m runs, there was no burpee penalty incentive. And few people ran it nearly as hard as they did the 4x400's.
- Last night we did the 10x150's...almost everybody remarked how noticeable it was when your body stopped being able to produce their own top-end speed. This is your body switching from one energy pathway to another.

It takes a special type of person, like those who choose to walk into a CF box, to have what it takes to do these types of runs.

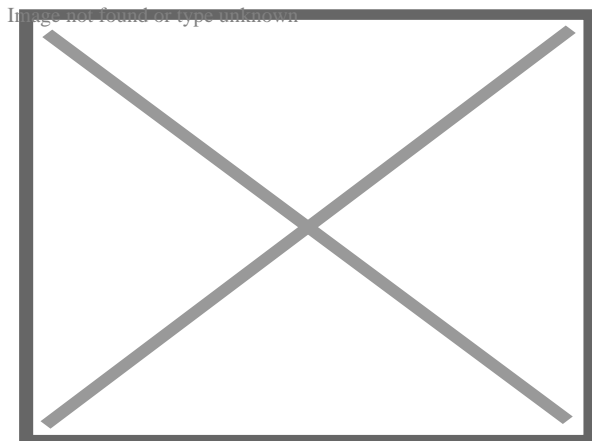
Need proof? Next time you are driving up and down FishHawk Blvd, count aloud how many people you

see doing what appear to be max effort runs. Then, count the people who appear to be doing LSD runs. I'll give you \$1 for every person you find doing ME runs. You owe me \$1 for every person you find doing LSD runs. Someone is buying dinner! And I'm in the mood for steak! If you are stuck on the love of a good old fashioned LSD run, here is something that Jay told me about them: "They should understand that a 30-minute jog 3 times a week is more beneficial as a recovery run, or just a way to sightsee around the neighborhood, than it is a conditioning effort."



I'd say the RPE here is about a 7...but the sights sure are cool!

Let's wrap this thing up with a final thought from Doug Chapman at [Hyperfit USA](#): "Effective workouts – workouts that really will increase your fitness, help you drop fat and increase muscle — are hard. You can't read the newspaper, talk on your cell phone or sit down in front of the TV and achieve an effective workout. An effective workout is intense. It should result in some gasping for breath and **significant** burning in the muscles. An effective workout doesn't allow the time to be stationary long enough, or moving around so little, that you can read the newspaper or Shape magazine. You'll never feel like an effective workout was easy. Anything worth accomplishing **is not easy**. In fact, anything of value is difficult to obtain. There's no easy way out, but it's worth the effort. Being fit is really hard work, but it will deliver the results you're seeking."



Constantly Varied, High-Intensity,
Functional Movements

Date Created
02/15/2013