

# THE SPRINTER'S OFFSEASON TRAINING MANUAL

The following is the recommended training program for sprinters/jumpers who are not doing a winter sports and are looking to prepare for track. Athletes who are participating in this program must COMMIT to it. When the drag of late January and early February rolls around, it's going to be very, very easy to drop this. An easy way of avoiding falling off: have teammates do it with you. Focus on Day #1 of track. It's simple: *If you do these things, and you do them right, you will be better than you were before.* You will see an improvement not only in your speed on Day #1 but also in your degree of in-season improvement, as well as your ability to withstand the rigors of the track season without injury.

## THE OFFSEASON PROGRAM

**NOVEMBER:** As this program is laid out, winter training begins on **December 1<sup>st</sup>**. This does not mean that athletes shouldn't be doing training prior to this date, however. November can be most effectively spent doing general fitness training, like runs of 2-3 miles or light weight room work. No high-intensity workouts should be done during this time, however. Fall sport athletes should make sure to give themselves enough time to recover from their last season.

### DECEMBER—FEBRUARY

Each week should feature the following:

#### RUNNING

- 12-25 miles of general mileage—100/200 runners should do 12-20, 400 runners 15-25. This mileage will *not* make you slower, but will strengthen the ligaments and tendons so that you are prepared for the intensity of hard workouts when the season comes. This mileage total INCLUDES a run on the weekend (and it will be easier to reach that mileage if you do a run on the weekend). Using the Winter Running Club program to achieve this aspect of training is *strongly* recommended, as it will give you progressive mileage totals.
- 1 day of 5-6 30-yard 100% effort sprints through some sort of "give" surface (pea rock, soft mud, sand, etc). In the winter, 6-inches of soft snow will suffice. Focus on FORM—back straight, head up, "gunslinger" arms, knees high, ankles passing through at the knee. There are two purposes for this workout: to give your muscles a brief but intense workout, and to work on technical form. This workout is only beneficial if BOTH purposes are being focused on. Translation: if you do this workout flailing around while trying to go faster, you're doing more harm than good. Pair this day with a hard day of sprint-circuit lifting, and do these after your usual run.
- Stair Sprints—starting at the bottom, sprint from bottom to top. Hands can't touch the railings, and you can't take steps more than two at a time. Walk back down, full rest, do it again. As with the soft sprints, the focus here is acceleration and *form*. Again, focus on straight back, high knees, pumping the arms (gunslinger motion, no side to side or flapping). If your form slips in an attempt to go faster or harder, the workout isn't worth it. This is NOT a conditioning workout, it is a technique workout.

#### STRENGTH

- Weight-lifting—The offseason is a great time to build *power*—the greater the force a sprinter can produce, the greater that sprinter will be. At least three days a week is recommended. Work on the sprinter off-season weight routine (see Mr. Klein). Experienced lifters can "graduate" to more complex lifts IF they have approval of the weight room supervisor.
- Plyometrics—do at least once a week. See the "Offseason Plyo Workout Sheet" for details. In each stage, do the plyos *once* each of the first two weeks, then *twice* in the third (each stage is three weeks long). These can be done on a day when you're not running or after a light run.
- General Strength—Pillar, Pedestal, Bataan, Waterloo. Simple routines that take no more than 10 minutes following a run, but will have tremendous impact on your ability to maintain form at max speed, stay rigid coming out of blocks, and avoid injury.

The last week before track should be spent *resting and maintaining*. This doesn't mean do NOTHING. Go for easy runs together, throw in some 50m bursts if you want, maybe even some light lifting, but nothing more strenuous than that. Your winter work is done at this point. Now start to rest for the season.