



CREEK T&F Distance Training

Howard Russ

howard.russ@gocreek.org

Positive Energy

Fist bump or high five?



How many of you love the show Ted Lasso?



My journey...



My Journey...

- ❖ Wayne High School 1997-2005 Head Coach XC
- ❖ Start: 1996 14 Athletes Finish: 2004 108 Athletes
- ❖ 4 district titles (2002-2005)
- ❖ Wayne High School Assistant Track Coach 1998-2000
- ❖ Beavercreek Head XC Coach 2008-Present
- ❖ Start: 2007 54 athletes Biggest group: 2019 194 runners
- ❖ 10 Top 5 Finishes at state meet (2 firsts, 2 seconds, 3 thirds, two fourths, one fifth)
- ❖ Beavercreek Assistant Track Coach 2015-2021
- ❖ Beavercreek Head Track Coach Since December :)

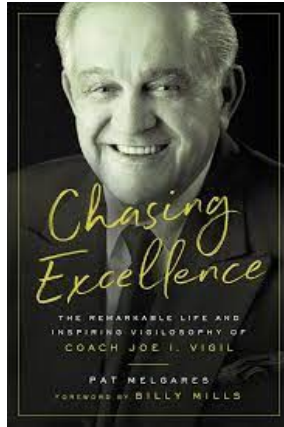
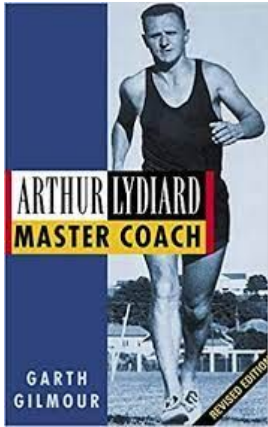


Beavercreek T&F Since 2015

- 800 5 girls under 2:15
- 1600 9 girls under 5:15 (4 girls at 5:00 or lower)
- 3200 7 girls under 11:15 (4 under 11 minutes)
- 4x800 Qualified for state meet every year but 2015 (DQ at Regionals)
 - 2015 9:24 Regionals ran 9:17 but DQ :(
 - 2016 9:14 (4th at state meet)
 - 2017 9:16 (9th at state meet)
 - 2018 9:01 (2nd at state meet)
 - 2019 8:58 (3rd at state meet and 2nd Outdoor nationals)
 - 2020 Thought we could go sub 8:50. But we will never know
 - 2021 9:13 (6th at state meet)
- DMR 11:49 (2nd at Penn Relays)



Training Philosophy Influences



Training Philosophy Track

1. Consistent training year round with gradual increase of mileage and intensity is the key to success.
2. Progression long runs make athletes feel strong.
3. Threshold/tempo runs are the most important workouts.
4. Start race pace in January. Change distance, pace, amount of rest depending on time of season.
5. Touch on speed every day.
6. Add cross training/doubles 2-3 times a week, 30-60 minutes.
7. INDIVIDUALIZE. Work your athletes' strengths and touch their weaknesses.
8. Workout days need ENERGY & SYNERGY!
9. Details matter. (Drills/Core/Strength/Cooldown,etc)
10. **Don't be afraid to work your athletes hard. They will work to the standard you set. Don't let your athletes settle for average.**

Mileage progression

This is just a guide with a perfect progression. There are many variables when creating a mileage plan.

| Gender | 1st year | 2nd year | 3rd year | 4th year |
|--------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Men | 30-40 miles | 45-55 miles | 55-65 miles | 60-75 miles |
| Women | 25-30 miles | 35-42 miles | 35-50 miles | 40-55 miles |

2 Weeks After Cross Country is over

Week 1

- No running
- Recommend cross training 3-5 days
- Foot exercises /hip mobility/core 2-3 days

Week 2

Option 1:

- Mon,Tues, Wed, Thurs
 - 3 days of cross training between 20-45 min
- Fri,Sat, Sun
 - 15 min jog
 - 20 min jog

Option 2:

- 2-3 days of 15-20 min jogs
- 2 days of cross training of 20-45 min

Option 3:

- Every other day of 15-20 min jog



Phase I: Mid-November-December

Goal: 100 miles

1. **Minimum distance/time of a run is 20 minutes** CONTINUOUS RUN. Anything less than 20 min. will not count.
2. **Pace of Aerobic Runs:** you want to go at a solid pace that feels like you are getting in a good run. Over the 100 miles, the pace of your runs should gradually be getting faster. Weather conditions, location of run (trails, hills, etc) can all impact your pace. You should always focus on good breathing. 2 in-2 out should tell you if you are going at a good pace.
3. Run different routes and terrain. With your 100 miles, do some running on
 - a. Trails
 - b. Hilly, road routes
 - c. Bike path
 - d. Track or treadmill
4. **Increasing Mileage**
 - a. Most coaches know that runners should not add more than 10% mileage each week. This is true, **but not in the first 4 weeks. You can add 15-20% during the first few weeks.** After four weeks, you are ready to go by the 10% rule until you reach your max mileage goal.



Additions to Phase I

Miles 1-50

1. Do your running drills before you start your mileage runs. <https://youtu.be/5l0QHBzdZuo>
2. 3 days a week, do your activation exercises that Kevin gave you. These are done before drills.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-S2kocnMuQ>
3. **Strides:** After all distance runs, do 6x strides at 60 meters. Pace is around mile pace. Last 2 can be around 800 pace.

Mile 50-75

1. **Hill sprints:** After you reach mile 50, 1 day a week instead of strides, find a hill that takes between 8-10 seconds to run up at 95% effort. Start with 5 and add 1 sprint each week until you reach 8. FULL RECOVERY BEFORE STARTING EACH ONE.
2. **Progression run:** 1 day each week do a progression run. Each mile should get faster. The last mile should be your fastest. Distance will be between 4-6 miles. The last mile should not be faster than Aerobic Threshold.

Mile 75-100

1. **Fartlek run:** warm-up for 10 min. Then do 5x (2 min (5K)/ 2 min recovery) then 5x1 min fast/ 1 min jog. 1 mile or 8 min cool down
2. **Threshold interval workout:** Race day warm up (6 x 800 at threshold pace with 1 min recovery. Then 6 strides

Additions to Phase I

Long Run

1. Long Run: one day a week you will want to do a long run. For some it will be building up to 1 hour, but for others we will want to get to 90 minutes. I like to do your long run based on time more than distance. If the weather is ok and the trails are clear, I love doing long runs on trails like Sugarcreek or Sweet Arrow. The key is that these runs are continuous. We don't want to stop for restroom breaks. One quick drink break is ok, but it needs to be under 1 min.
2. Do strides after long runs.

Cross Training

Cross training is a great way to get in more aerobic work without the pounding of running. In all of the training plans I have put cross training mileage for the week. The minimum you can do in one session for it to count is 20 min. I have a formula for counting miles. I call them MOJO miles.

MOJO Miles

- 10 min of cardio exercise on stationary bike, elliptical, arctrainer, rowing machine = 1 mile of running
- 1600 meters worth of swimming = 5 miles of running
- 12 min on a road bike = 1 mile of running

On all of these, you need to elevate your heartrate to at least 120 beats per minute.

Example: Build to 40 mpw

| Week | mon | tues | wed | thurs | fri | sat | sun | total | Xtrain goals |
|------|-----|------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|----------|--------------|
| 0 | 4 | | 3 | 3 | 3 | | | 13 miles | 60 min |
| 1 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | | | 18 | 60 min |
| 2 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 5 | | | 24 | 75 |
| 3 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 | | 31 | 90 |
| 4 | 9 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 4 | | 35 | 100 |
| 5 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 6 | | 40 | 100 |

Strength Circuit Example (2-3 times a week)

1 min max pushups
1 min- 90 sec plank
5 core exercises each exercise 1 min or 10 core exercises 30 seconds
20 body weight squats
15 lunges on each leg
1 min tricep dips
15 bridges
20 calf raises on an incline
15 clams
15 superman
1 min burpees



Phase II: January -February (Indoor Track)

Goals for this phase

- Increase aerobic base. Gradually increase mileage. Reach Peak. Late February
- Lots of Threshold paced workouts/runs
- Introduce race pace running (1 day)
- Very short speed with lots of rest
- Hill sprints/repeats
- **CONSISTENT TRAINING.** Can be difficult because of the weather. Might need to use a treadmill or indoor track if available



Phase II Weekly Cycle

Monday: long run. Run it like a progression run. Should be 20-22% of weekly mileage.

- Strides

Tues: Mileage/short Speed/ form day/Double

- Mileage day
- Short speed that works on speed (no longer than 100 meters) full recovery
- Form focus . How do we get better
- Double day of cross training.30-60 min

Wednesday: Mix Workout (threshold intervals/hills/ race pace intervals)

- Intervals at threshold/CV pace (critical velocity pace) Tinman chart
- Hill repeats 15-35 seconds
- Intro to race pace intervals (800-3200)

Thurs: Mileage/maybe hills or hill sprints //Double

- Mileage day
- hill sprints or strides
- Double day of cross training.30-60 min

Friday: Long threshold run/Chase run/Progression

- Long threshold run 2x2 mile, 3-4 mile continuous threshold,chase run, progression run

Saturday: Mileage day/ double

- Just recovery mileage and possible double (cross training)

Sunday: Evaluate training for the week. Send log to coach



Favorite Threshold Workout

2 mile LT run

- Warm-up for 2 miles
- Run 2 mile continuous at Lactate Threshold Pace
- 600-800 meters of short speed
- 1.5 mile cool down
- 2 mile goal pace is calculated by taking what you can run a mile in all out . Add 40 seconds and then multiply by two.
Example: If the athlete can run a 5:30 mile Add 40 seconds (6:10) multiply by 2. **The goal time in 12:20 for that athlete (Vigil)**

3-4 mile continuous aerobic threshold run

- Warm-up for 1-2 miles
- Goal pace is take what the athlete can run an all out mile in and add 1 minute. That is goal pace per mile
- Example: 5:30 all out mile. Add 1 min. The athlete should try and average 6:30 pace for 3-4 miles

7x7x7

- Warm-up for 1-2 miles
- On a loop run 7 min at Aerobic Threshold pace
- 7 min at Lactate threshold pace
- 7 min fast (MaxVo2 pace)
- Rest 7 min then you have an option of part II of workout
- 3x3x3 or 5x5x5 or 1 min on 1 min off for 10-15 min



Favorite Threshold workouts

Chase run

- Warm-up for 1-2 miles
- Stagger start your runners with your slower runners going first
- Distance is 3-5 miles.
- Goal is to come in first
- It pushes your slower runners to run scared and for your faster runners to try and “hunt” people down
- Just another way to do a long, continuous threshold run

Aerobic Threshold Intervals

- **The key is shorter the distance the shorter the rest**
- 400's (15 seconds rest) Lane 8 threshold workout
- 800's (30 seconds rest)
- 1000's (45 seconds)
- 1200's (1 min)
- 1600 (1:15)
- 1.5 miles (1:30)
- 2 mile (2 min)
- **Total threshold workout is 3-5 miles worth of intervals**



Race Pace Intervals in Phase II

800 meter pace

- 100s straights and curves
- 150s (rest is 60-75 seconds)
- 200s (90 seconds)

1600 meter pace

- 200s (60 -75 seconds)
- 300s (75-90 seconds)

3200 meter pace

- 300s (100 meter jog/ 60 seconds)
- 400s (75-90 seconds rest)



Indoor Track Races

- We are not training to peak at Indoor State or Nationals. Indoor races are just fun and a great way to see how the training is going.
- I don't want them to race more than 3 meets during indoor (not counting state meet)
- If athletes don't want to race during the indoor season, that is ok. Most do because they like going to meets at different colleges/universities.
- If the athletes have a meet on Saturday, I just eliminate the workout on Friday.
- I have the athletes race different distances. I don't want them to just focus on 1 event.
- Favorite part of Indoor Season is taking high school athletes to look at different colleges and universities
- If we have athletes or relays that qualify for Nationals, they have the choice if they want to compete or just get ready for outdoor track.



Phase III: March (Preseason Outdoor Track)

- If athletes raced indoor track, I give them 3-4 days off and the rest of the week is just running and no workouts
- March is when we more individualize based on if the distance runner is more strength runner (3200/1600) or a speed runner (800/1600)
- We do have a few distance runners that played a winter sport (swimming, wrestling, basketball). We have them take 1 week off before they begin training. They will do a couple of weeks of mileage and strides before they will be allowed to jump into any workouts
- The race pace intervals are getting longer or the rest is getting shorter.
- We are usually doing a MaxVo2 workout (3K-5K paced intervals) one day a week.
- Lots of threshold running for the strength runners and a slight reduction for the speed runners



Phase III Weekly Cycle

Monday: long run. Should be 20-22% of weekly mileage.

- Strength runners Last 2-3 mile at Aerobic Threshold pace
- Speed runners. Just steady mileage

Tues: Mileage/short Speed

- Mileage day
- Short speed that works on speed (50 meters- 200 meters) full recovery

Wednesday: MaxVo2 intervals with some 800 meter pace intervals

- Intervals at MaxVo2 (5K-3200 meter pace)
- 800 meter pace intervals
- Strength runners do more VO2 and less 800
- Speed runners do more 800 meter pace and less VO2

Thurs: Mileage/ Hill Sprints

- Mileage day
- Hill sprints

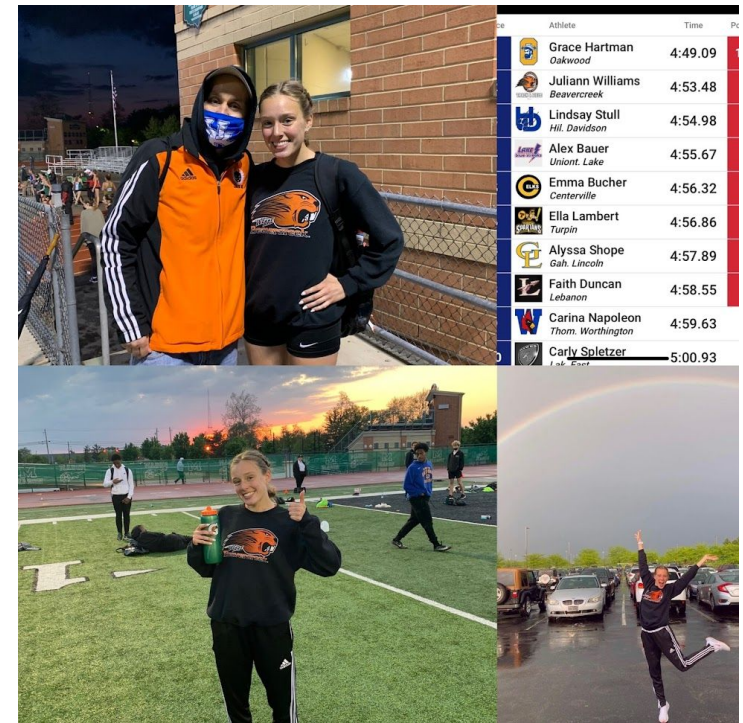
Friday: Threshold and 1600 meter pace intervals

- Threshold workout and then some 1600 meter pace intervals
- Strength do more threshold and less 1600 meter intervals
- Speed runners do more 1600 meter intervals and less threshold

Saturday: Mileage day/ double

- Just recovery mileage and possible double (cross training)

Sunday: Evaluate training for the week. Send log to coach



Wednesday Workouts: MaxVO2 & 800 pace

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Strength (1600/3200) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8-10 x400 @3200 pace 4x200 @800 pace• 6-8 x500 at 3200 pace 5x150 at 800 pace• 5-7 x800 5k pace 3 x300 at 800 pace |
| Speed (800/1600) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4-5 x400 at 3200 pace 2x(4x200 at 800 pace)• 4-5 x500 at 3200 pace 2x(4x150 800 pace)• 3-4 x800 at 5K pace 2x(3x300 at 800 pace) |



Friday Workouts: Threshold & 1600 pace

| | |
|----------|--|
| Strength | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Athletes will do one of the threshold workouts we discussed earlier• 1600-2400 meters of pace work at 1600 meter pace |
| Speed | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Athlete will do 800 -2000 meters worth of threshold work (basically a warm-up)• 3000-4000 meters of 1600 pace work |

1600 meter repeats are usually done as 300's, 400's, or 500's in this cycle



Phase III Notes

- We usually do a 1200-meter, 600-meter, and 300-meter time trial to see how the athlete is doing and what their strength/weakness is at this point
- The weather in March can be terrible. If the weather is bad on a workout day, I will usually make modifications.
 - Nothing faster than 1600 meter pace
 - Won't time the workout and make athlete do it based on feel
 - **Alpha Fartlek day.** I give them the total length of the workout and give them options. Example: 24 minutes
 - Straights and curves
 - 200 on 200 off
 - 300 on 100 off
 - 400 on 200 off
 - 10 min hard 2 min jog 10 min hard
 - How many laps can you do in 20 min?
 - They can combine different parts of this workout
 - **Athletes love this on a bad weather day. They have control.**



Phase IV: April (Early-Mid Racing Season)

- Varsity athletes will usually run 1 meet a week (Exception talented freshman)
- 2 races is usually the maximum. Possibly 3 if they do the 4x400
- Vary the distance that they race
- Love for athletes to do 4x400 at end of meet (great speed work when tired)
- Most JV races are on Tues or Wed. Most varsity meets are on Friday night.
- We race good competition as much as possible.



Weekly Cycle Phase IV

Sat or Sunday: long run. .

- Distance will depend on Athlete.
- Other day is rest

Mon: Mileage/Short Speed

- Mileage day
- Short speed or Hill sprints

Tuesday: Workout Day. Most days are a Mix of different paces. Very individualized.

Wednesday: Strength day or mileage day with some short speed or hills

- Strength runners will do some threshold running and strides
- Speed runners usually just do mileage and strides or 150's or 200's

Thursday: Premeet

- Mileage
- Short speed 600-800 meters (athletes can do 60's, 100s, 150s, 200s)
- A few relay exchanges

Fri: Meet. Athletes will run in 1-2 races at a meet



Workout Examples Phase IV

Speed Runners

- 3-4x600 at 1600 pace then 5x300 at 800 pace
- 6x400 at 1600 pace then 2x(4x200 at 800 pace)

Strength Runners

- 3-4x800 3200 pace then 4-6x400 mile pace
- 800 at 3200 pace 2 mile at threshold pace . 800 fast
- 8 laps alternate 400 at 3200 pace and threshold pace. 4-6x300s at 800 pace



Phase IV Racing

- Athletes will race different distances throughout this phase
- Love relay meets in the early part of season
- No elaborate race plans. I want them to race and then tell me what they need to work on (Self-evaluation)
- Take risks and race people. Don't worry about time
- Athletes need to learn how to recover between races
 - 8-10 min cool down
 - Hydrate, possibly light snack
 - Prop legs up for 10 min to flush legs
 - Reset for next race. Can evaluate previous race after the meet



Phase V: Championship Season (May-June)

- Coach needs to look at what event could each athlete have the best chance of qualifying for Regional & State meet
- What distance runners will be on postseason 4x800 and possible 4x400
- League meet is all about points. Find ways to maximize points.
- Most of your athletes will be racing either Wed/Fri or Thurs/Sat
- Need to individualize workouts to fit the needs of each athlete. What makes them feel strong
- Make sure they don't give a championship performance in practice. Save it for race day. Have to hold them back.
- We do a lot of race simulations and short time trials.



Phase V Training Cycle

Sat or Sunday: Mileage run

- Distance will depend on Athlete.
- Other day is rest

Mon: Workout day

- We do a lot of race simulations
- Short time trials
- Talk to the athlete and let them help you in creating a workout to fit their needs
- **Most days were 2-3 simulations.**

Tues: Mileage day or Premeet

- This all depends on if they are racing on Wed

Wed: Light workout (If not racing)

- 3200 meter runners will do some threshold pace intervals
- Most 1600/800 runners are probably racing. If not a light set of race pace intervals or one race simulation

Wednesday: 4x800/4x400/ prelims

Thursday: Premeet

- Mileage
- Short speed 600-800 meters (athletes can do 60's, 100s, 150s, 200s)
- A few relay exchanges

Fri: Meet. Race with confidence/MOJO



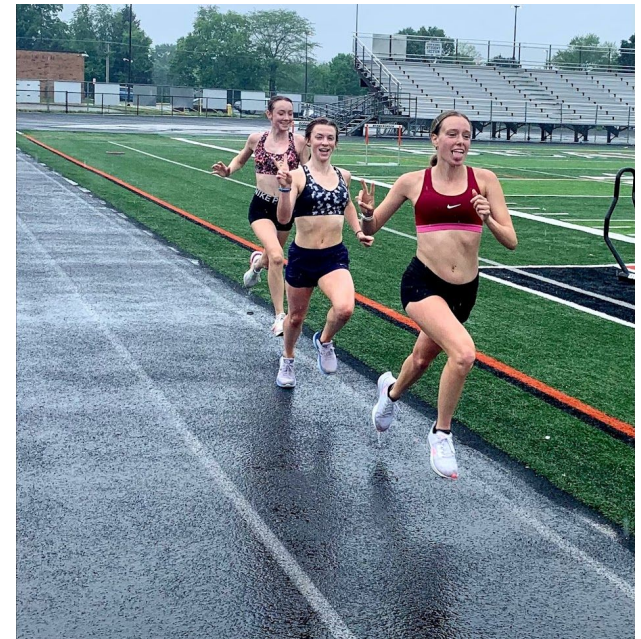
Race Simulations

800

- 300 race pace/200 float/300 race pace
- 400 race pace/200 float/200 fast finish
- 4x150 race pace with 50 meter float between each
- 600 meter time trial
- 4x200 with 30 seconds rest
- 2x500 at 800 pace with 6-7 min rest between each

1600

- 3x800 at goal pace with 5-6 min between each
- 4-5 x600 with 4 min between each
- 5-6 400's with 90 seconds rest between
- 4x400's with 60 seconds rest
- 600 race pace-float 200- 400 race pace-200 float- 200 fast finish
- 500 race pace-float 300- 300 race pace-200 float- 300 fast finish
- 1200 meter time trial
-



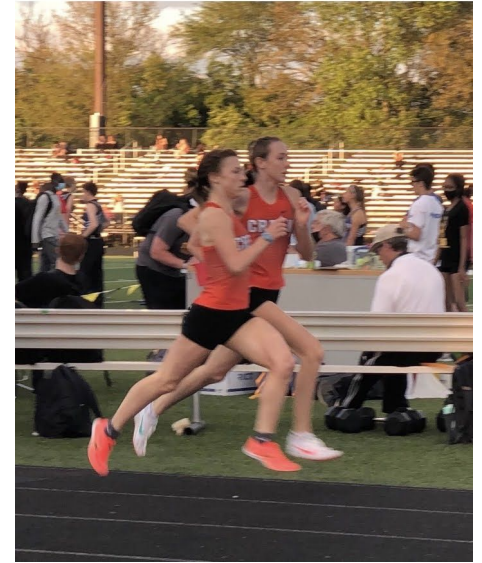
Race Simulations

3200

- 400 race pace/400 float for 8 laps. Do 2 sets
- 200 on faster than race pace/200 float for 8 laps (Oregon drill)
- 400 race pace 200 float for 8 laps
- 6 laps at threshold then 2 laps hard
- 800 race pace/1 mile threshold/800 race pace
- 4x800 goal pace with 90 seconds between each
- 400s at goal 3200 pace with 60 seconds rest

Workouts during Championship season

- Most athletes will do 2 or 3 simulations/sets for a workout. Very individualized
- If an athlete looks tired, don't be afraid to modify the workout or shut him/her down for the day. Don't want them to leave the workout feeling defeated
- Purpose of workouts is to build confidence
- Athletes need to be confident they can race many different ways. Don't want an elaborate race plan because races are very unpredictable



Favorite Workouts

Taylor Ewert

- 45-50 miles per week (senior)
- 3200 10:17
- 1 mile 4:48
- 2000 steeple 6:33
- 2 mile threshold (11 flat) 4x400 mile pace
- 4x800 3200 goal pace 4x400 mile pace or faster
- Long run at hard pace
- 4 mile threshold at sub 6 pace
- Hated time trials

Juliann Williams

- 30-40 miles per week(senior)
- 800 2:11
- 1 mile 4:53
- 400 (split) 57.1
- 1200 (split) 3:34
- Loves any type of race simulation. She would help me build them. Usually one 1600 and then one or two 800 simulations
- 6x400 mile pace with 90 seconds or 4x400 MP with 60 seconds
- 200s or 300s at 800 pace
- Hated 2 mile threshold runs



Favorite Workouts

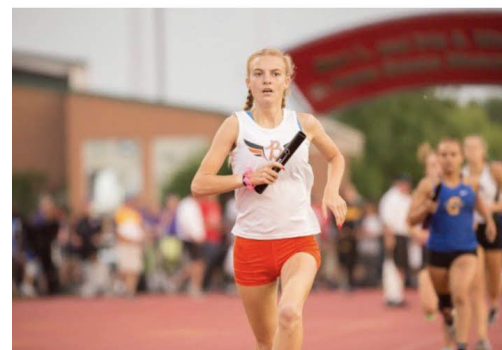
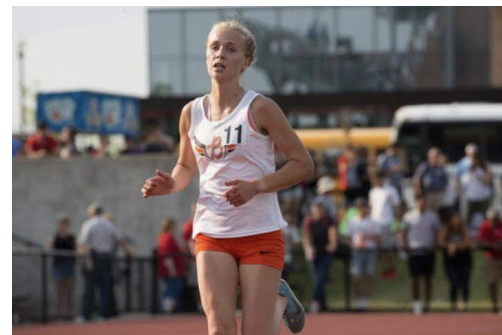
Savannah Roark

- 45-50 miles per week (senior)
- 1 mile 5:00
- 3000 9:39
- 3200 10:23
- 2 mile threshold (11:10) then 4x200 fast
- 400s at 3200 goal pace with 1 min rest
- 3-4 mile threshold runs around 6 min pace
- Hated speed workouts. Made her feel flat

Jodie Pierce

- 35-42 miles per week(senior)
- 400 58 (56 split)
- 800 2:10
- 1 mile 5:10
- 3200 10:44

- Jodie could do any type of workout, but she wanted to do it with a teammate. I usually told her what the other 3 were doing and she would choose which one sounded best that day.
- Most versatile racer I ever coached but could not run a fast mile



Evaluate the Season

1. What went well?
2. What did you learn?
3. What do you need to do more research on in the offseason?
4. Who will be your leaders next year?
5. How can I improve the CREEK T&F Culture?

Right now

- Consistent strength training
- Increasing mileage on mileage days but slowing down pace
- More threshold during track season for the strength runners



Final Thoughts

The more I study top distance programs, the more I realize that there are a million different ways to create a championship level program. The things I see that are consistent:

1. Recruit great kids.
2. Use consistent year-round training system (48 weeks)
3. Have a culture of hard work & high standards.
4. Little details matter.
5. Athletes must have MOJO/Confidence.

