

Maximizing the Minute

For runners, minutes come and minutes go. Some feel like hours and others like seconds—reflecting our state of body and mind at that moment in time. Little real benefit is typically attached to any ONE minute of running. When it comes to nurturing racing fitness for the 10K through the half marathon distance, you need to make your minutes count.

Fast one minute runs with a brief, 60-second recovery will turn your strength and endurance into personal bests. The key to these weekly workouts is waiting to invite them into your training regime until a proper foundation of base work and stamina training has been completed. From this point in training, these 60 second romps will be savored for the speed currency you are earning with each bout. The runs must be no faster than your current 800m to 1600m race pace. Therefore, the most common mistake in this workout is beginning the session by running the first repetition too quickly. Adhering to the painfully brief 60 seconds of standing rest between each repetition is the cornerstone to developing the speed-endurance that you will gain from this workout. The repetitions can be continued until a subsequent repetition misses the finish line of the previous interval. Beginners will be pleased with the fitness gains that four of these reps can produce, while experienced racers over distances from 5K to the half marathon will likely be able to build up to 8-10 reps in a period of 4 weeks.

The body responds favorably in many ways to this workout. The heart develops a greater efficiency at delivering large volumes of oxygen-rich blood to hypoxic muscles. The 60-second bouts also provide you with improved running economy by requiring less energy to move the body in the running motion over the slower speeds. You'll also develop an ability to find a use for the misunderstood energetic commodity of lactate with these peppy moments of running.

With the fall racing season looming for many with 10K's, 15K's and half marathons, anxiety can creep in over how to translate the strength of summer training into racing fitness at these distances. As the saying goes, "Reputations are created every day and every minute" so develop the reputation of a runner who challenges himself to continually improve by making the most of your 60 seconds.

Long may you run, □ □ Sean Coster

Sean Coster applies education in exercise physiology with experience coaching runners to create custom training programs for runners and multi-sport athletes of various abilities. To order a custom training program for your next event from Complete Running Programs visit www.crpusa.com/tp.php.

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