

Dear Marathon Runner,

Week 3 is here, and by now, your New Years resolve may well be fading – but I hope that you’re still enjoying your running, and keeping your pace down will hopefully have helped to avoid the smell of burning that a lot of new runners fall victim to. I think I’ve fallen victim to it myself this week, as I have a stinker of a cold – so excuse me if this week’s notes are a bit sketchy.

Right then... a quick review of how you’re all doing. Of the 566 Fetchies listed for the VLM, 398 ran, with a median mileage of 27 – quite an increase on last weeks 21.65, but maybe understandable now the pavements are visible for the first time this year. Take it easy folks, there’s plenty of time to up your mileage. The median long run was 10.25 miles, up about three quarters of a mile on last week. Nice one.

I thought I’d also do a more detailed summary of your mileage and pace in the first two weeks – thanks for adding your time predictions for the race – I’ve put you all in the nearest available group:

|                  | <b>3:00</b> | <b>3:15</b> | <b>3:30</b> | <b>3:45</b> | <b>4:00</b> | <b>4:15</b> | <b>4:30</b> | <b>4:45</b> | <b>5:00</b> |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <i>Race Pace</i> | 6:52        | 7:27        | 8:01        | 8:35        | 9:10        | 9:44        | 10:18       | 10:53       | 11:27       |
| Actual Mileage   | 60          | 81          | 44          | 58          | 39          | 44          | 37          | 41          | 32          |
| Pace (mins/mile) | 7:39        | 8:17        | 8:42        | 8:52        | 9:07        | 9:36        | 9:28        | 10:34       | 10:49       |
| Longest Run      | 14.2        | 14.7        | 10.2        | 12.9        | 11.7        | 9.1         | 8.1         | 10.1        | 8.1         |
| Longest Run Pace | 7:49        | 8:36        | 9:24        | 8:33        | 9:27        | 9:49        | 10:57       | 11:00       | 12:08       |

Note that the number of runners in each group is quite small (just 13 runners in the 4:15 group), which I think goes some way to explaining the occasional blip in the data. It’s nice to see that long runs are being done slower than marathon pace. The 3:45-ers seem to be taking a tough approach to long runs – the only group to run them faster than marathon pace too. Take care guys and gals, don’t get inj\*red.

Right then, after encouraging you to run at an easy pace for the last two weeks, it’s finally time to talk speed work. The principle is a simple one (if you started out run-walking, you’ll be familiar with it) - you push yourself a little bit, and then take some time to recover, and then repeat. There are two basic types of speed session – tempo runs, and intervals. The former is a continuous run, slightly faster than you’re used to, designed to make you push yourself slightly, and get used to running longer distances at a faster pace. The latter is all about shorter bursts of faster pace, with recovery periods. Both should be evenly paced i.e. don’t go off like a loon, and then crash & burn, and both should be preceded by a mile or so at a gentle pace to warm up.

Your training week should be structured around the idea of effort and recovery. Long runs and speed work should be treated as effort sessions, so spread them out nicely to give your body time to recover in the days between. If you’ve not done speed work before, then pick just one of your weekly sessions as your designated speed session. You can alternate weekly between tempo and intervals if you like.

I spoke to Gobi (aka The Dark Lord) to get some suggestions for suitable sessions to build towards. On tempo running, he suggests that you try two types:

- 1) A 3-4 mile tempo run about 15s per mile slower than your 10k pace
- 2) Anything up to 8 miles, somewhere between your Half Marathon and Marathon pace.

For intervals, he suggests that the efforts should be anywhere between half a mile and a mile, with recovery periods of 60-90 seconds, aiming for your 5k pace, or faster, and trying to do between five and ten repetitions.

The key when beginning speed training is to ease in to it, so if you’re just starting out, try a tempo run involving a mile warm up, a mile or two at a definite faster pace, and a mile to recover. For intervals, try five half-mile efforts with 90 second walk breaks between. If you can’t manage five, don’t worry.

If you’re enjoying the newsletter and the whole Fetch marathon experience, you could do some or all of the following:

1. Send this newsletter to friends and club mates, post it on your club forum (might give some of them a laugh if nothing else), and tell \*EVERYONE\* about it.
2. Add a prediction of your VLM time, even if it’s just an estimate, and keep logging your training – I hope to squeeze plenty of motivational stats out for you.
3. Let me know if there’s anything you’d like me to try to cover in future weeks.

4. Join our Fetchpoint groups as a runner (<http://www.fetcheveryone.com/groups-view.php?id=697>) or as a supporter (<http://www.fetcheveryone.com/groups-view.php?id=698>) – more information on Fetchpoint to follow in coming weeks.

Happy Running,

Ian Williams aka 'Fetch'  
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