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STANDARD CHARTERED KL MARATHON RUNNING CLINICS SUMMARY

CLINIC 1 – THE 6-GEAR METHOD OF TRAINING

Introduction

The 6-gear training program is all based on paces. Think of the paces like gears on the bike. You change the gears on your bike according to different circumstances (e.g. hills). This is exactly what you do with paces when running. The 6 paces of the method all have codes as follows:

- 1 – REC (Recovery)
- 2 – E (Easy)
- 3 – M (Marathon)
- 4 – T (Threshold)
- 5 – I (Interval)
- 6 – R (Repetition)

Pace 1 – ‘REC’ or RECOVERY – This is your RECOVERY pace; the pace that you would run at after a tough, demanding session such as a race or a long run. This is very easy running – it almost feels too slow! These runs are about 60-70% of Heart Rate MAX.

Example of sessions – RECOVERY RUNS

Pace 2 – ‘E’ or EASY – This is your default race; the pace that you usually run at most of the time. In these runs, you can talk whilst running. These runs are done at 60-85% of Heart Rate MAX.

Example of sessions – LONG RUNS (but these should be no more than 25-30% of your weekly mileage)

Pace 3 – ‘M’ or MARATHON – This is slightly faster than your ‘easy’ pace and is the pace that you would run at a Marathon. ‘M’ is an easy to medium pace running. Talking is fine but you need to take your time between sentences. These runs are done at 83-87% of Heart Rate MAX.

Example of sessions – Last 5K or 10K of a LONG RUN

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Pace 4 – ‘T’ or THRESHOLD is the pace that you run at when you are at your lactate threshold; the point at which lactate begins to accumulate in the blood at a faster rate than it can be removed. These runs are meant to build up endurance and work both physiologically and psychologically. All ‘T’ times are medium to hard running. You can reply to questions in short responses but you would rather not talk. These runs are done at 87-92% of Heart Rate MAX.

Example of sessions – CRUISE INTERVALS, TEMPO RUNS

Pace 5 – ‘I’ or INTERVAL runs are meant to improve your VO2 Max or the maximum amount of oxygen that your blood can carry to your muscles when working hard. Increasing VO2 Max is critical to running faster. The repetitions you do in ‘I’ sessions will have longer intervals than ‘T’ sessions. All ‘I’ times are hard running paces. Talking is almost impossible other than a quick yes/no response. These runs should be done at 90-100% of Heart Rate MAX.

Example of a session – 1K INTERVALS

Pace 6 – ‘R’ or REPETITION runs are meant for improving running efficiency by improving biomechanics (how you run) and your anaerobic metabolism (how you run in the absence of adequate oxygen). ‘R’ reps will have longer intervals in between each rep than ‘I’ reps. ‘R’ paced running is very hard running. No talking of any kind is possible! DO NOT WORK ON HEART RATES FOR ‘R’ PACE.

Example of a session – 400m INTERVALS with a 4-minute recovery in between.

Some sessions work across the paces

FARTLEK - Fartlek is a Swedish word meaning ‘speed play’. It is a session that involves varying your pace throughout your run so that it involves segments of fast running and segments of slow running. This can be done in a structured manner such as 1 minute of running at ‘E’ pace followed by 1 minute of running at ‘T’ pace. This can be done any number of times, say 10 times. Another method is the ‘pyramid fartlek’ where you increase the fast segments in time, say starting with 30 seconds, peaking at 3 minutes and then returning to 30 seconds, increasing the time of the faster segments incrementally by 30 seconds each time. You would have a 1 minute slower segment in between each fast segment.

ACCELERATION SESSIONS - A great session to help you work on pace. In this session, you must run each and every 1KM faster than the one before. You decide on the starting pace. This is a continuous 10K run!

MIXING ‘T’, ‘I’ and ‘R’ PACE SESSIONS – When training, you can mix the three fastest paces as well. For example, you could do a 3x 1K at ‘T’ pace, followed by 4x 400m at ‘I’ pace, followed by 4x 200m at ‘R’ pace, all with sufficient recovery in between.

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Where do hills fit in?

Hill training is a great way to strengthen up your legs and hills should and can be brought into the 6-gear training program. Some ideas are as below;

- In your long runs which are done at ‘E’ pace, each incline you push to ‘M’ pace.
- Interval Hills – Same as Intervals but done on an incline of about 200-400 metres in length (At ‘I’ pace).
- Repetition Hills – Same as Repetitions but done of an incline of about 50-100 metres in length (At ‘R’ pace)
- Long Hill Repeats – Find a hill of between 7-10 degrees and 600m-1K in length and work at ‘T’ pace all the way up the hill. ‘E’ pace on the way down.

An example of a week of training

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Cruise Intervals 8x 1K at ‘T-1K’ pace	40 mins (REC)	Long Hill Repeats	Rest	10K (ACC)	Gym Work	20K ‘E’ but last 5K at ‘M’

How to TEST for your own VO2 Max

Balke Test

This is a 15-minute time trial to determine your maximum oxygen uptake. You have to do it on a treadmill in Malaysia and put the incline to 0.5 as otherwise, the heat and humidity will take its toll and you will not get a true result.

Run as far as you can in 15 minutes. Your estimated VO2 Max will equal 5.0 ml/kg/min for every 400m that you can run in 15 minutes (and then add 6.5 onto this). So, for example, if you’re able to run 4K in 15 minutes, your VO2 Max would be 56.5 ml/kg/min.

Please keep in mind that this is an approximation of your VO2 Max level only.