

Intervals for **SPEED!**

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Comrades!

Are you trying desperately to increase your speed? Well, to be honest, I am no running guru but I know what works. Back when I went through selection we followed the following running schedule:

Monday: Evaluation Run (race day)

Tuesday: Long Slow Distance (LSD)

Wednesday: OFF

Thursday: Intervals

Friday: LSD

Saturday: Fartlek or Indian Run

Sunday: OFF

This was a very effective schedule. As for run distances and times, The Eval standard was a 7-minute mile, no slower or you failed! The distances increased every week of course. As memory serves me, we started at 1.5 miles for the Eval and at the end of selection we were tested at 6 miles (42 min or less to pass). I was not a fast runner by any means, and the interval training we did was great, but I found out later that by reversing the way we did it would more than double the effectiveness!

For those who want the full skinny, here it is. Monday's Eval was simply an all out effort. Do or Die. Tuesday was an LSD, which varied. In the beginning it was only 3-4 miles, toward the end we were running 10+ miles. We would often use time instead of distance, running for 30, 40, 50, 60 minutes and so on. LSD's were also subject to the instructor that day. If he liked to run fast, well, you had to keep up. Other days were better. I will never forget an instructor, John Gardner showing up one day with a Ruck on and thinking it was going to be an easy LSD day. That lasted until someone pissed him off and then he picked it up to a sub-6:30 pace!!! The point here is sometimes its good to push a little harder from time to time. Thursday intervals started with long intervals and ended with short ones. Friday's LSD was always longer than Tuesday's. Saturday was a Fartlek of sorts. While running at an 8-9 minute pace we would sprint to the front of the formation or do orbits at a sprint. Sunday was off.

When I graduated from selection and was whisked into the pipeline I was still in for a few lessons. The first one was from the US Army Combat Diver School in Key West. I was able to keep up a 6:30 pace for miles with no problem. But in Key West you started every run with a slow walk that turned into a jog that went into an all out sprint once we passed the gate! I remember thinking that was going to end eventually. It didn't. Sure it slowed up a bit because the instructor had to stay in sight of the student, but that wasn't much in the way of reducing the pace. I held my own. Some days I was in front, some days I was in the middle. I was never in the rear though! Dive school taught me to run HARD!

When we got back to Lackland AFB, Adam Pope had been hard at work to devise a running program from hell. The interval day was amazingly effective. The first day we tried it, none of us could finish it! Eventually we did finish it once or twice. On every evaluation after we started that program we dropped our times by alarming numbers for well-seasoned runners. Some as much as 30 seconds in a week! My personal best was a three mile run with the following times: mile 1-5:03; mile 2-5:30; mile 3-5:35.

Below is a synopsis of this brutal program. I warn you though, DO NOT attempt this program if you are not a well-seasoned runner! This program will make or break you.

Interval Training (Thursday)

**220=1/8 mile, 440=1/4 mile, 880=1/2 mile. On a standard 1/4 mile track,
220=1/2 lap, 440=1 lap, 880=2 laps, 1 mile=4 laps.**

Start: Light stretch and 1/2 mile jog.

**220's: 220 x 8 :35-40 sec pace
Jog to start line & restart**

**440's: 440 x 6 :70-75 sec pace
Jog 220, walk 220, restart**

**880's: 880 x 4 2:45-3:00 min pace
Walk 440, restart**

**1 Mile: 1 Mile x 2 6:30-6:40 min pace
Walk 440, restart**

Rest/Walk For 5 Minutes

**2 Mile: 2 Mile x 1 8:00-8:15 min pace (per mile)
This is a cool down but the pace is still important.**

**Walk and control breathing until your heart rate goes below 100 BPM.
Stretch. Rehydration is essential. Try to eat a high carbohydrate snack as
soon as your stomach can tolerate it. Eat a high protein/ high carbohydrate
meal as soon as feasible.**

**Comrades, if you are an experienced runner, try this out and watch your times dissolve!
Enjoy!**