

What To Do On Easy Days: Tempo Workouts For Sprinters

*Presented by Ben Blackmer
King's High School
bblackmer@juno.com*

Overview of Sprint Training

- Sprinting is a skill, practice running fast (90%+) to get faster
- Problem is can't train high intensity every day (MI 48 hr./ HI 72 hr. recovery)
- So what can be done on easy days? Tempo running!
- Tempo for sprinters is not the same as distance runner's tempo
- Not traditional intervals or repeats (aka intensive tempo, 80-85%)
- Extensive Tempo is essentially low intensity running circuits done at 60-75%

Purpose of Tempo

- Recovery from high intensity days
- Develops general fitness, like cardio for sprinters
- Improves work capacity = ability to handle more sprint training, long warm-ups, etc.
- More than filler between speed days, feeds into speed work and supports speed work
- Able to get in work without compromising CNS

Physical Benefits of Tempo

- Increased capillary density
- Supplies muscles with oxygen
- Removal of waste products from muscles
- May help to relax muscle tone
- Teaches rhythmic gait pattern

Tempo's Place in the Sprint Program

- Follows high intensity days including meets
- Performed by everyone in our "sprint group"
(sprinters, hurdlers, jumpers, vaulters, javelin)

Sample weekly programming:

General Week - Thursday Meet

M	T	W	TH	F
Acceleration and Max Velocity	Speed Endurance	Tempo	Meet	Tempo

Back-to-Back Saturday Meets (Invites, Championships)

M	T	W	TH	F
Tempo	Speedwork	Tempo	Meet	Tempo

General Week - Wednesday Meet

M	T	W	TH	F
Speedwork	Tempo	Meet	Tempo	Speedwork

Components of Tempo

- Location
 - **Nice grass** (field, baseball field, around campus, parks)
 - Track, turf, trails, gravel road, gym if need be
 - Smooth surface is required, softer surface eliminates pounding

- Tempo should be done at 60-75% of max speed

	<u>Best Time</u>	<u>60%</u>	<u>75%</u>
100m	11.0	18.3	14.6
	13.5	22.5	18.0
200m	22.8	38.0	30.4
	27.3	45.5	36.4

- Why not above 80%?
 - Too high of intensity to recover in 24 hours
 - Can become lactic
 - It's another medium-hard workout

- Form
 - Tempo running is NOT perfect sprint form (practice sprint form when sprinting)
 - Basic good posture
 - Emphasize rhythm
 - Natural yet be conscious of form
 - Caution over-correction, overthinking = rigid
 - Allow heel-toe

- Volume
 - Generally 2:1 Tempo to Speed ratio (Tempo two-thirds total volume)
 - Daily average 1600-2000m, as low as 600m week of State
 - Longer for 400m and 300m (3,000m+)?

Sample Tempo Workouts

<u>Charlie Francis Big Circuit</u> 100-100-100 100-200-100-100 100-100-200-200 100-200-100-100 100-100-100 (50m walk/rep, 100walk/set) 2200m Total	<u>20 - 100's</u> 10x100m 100m walk or water 10x100m (30s rest between reps) 2000m Total *Var: 3 person shuttle relay	<u>Pyramid</u> 100-100 200-200 300-300 200-200 100-100 (50m walk/rep, 100walk/set) 1800m Total
<u>1-2-1</u> 100-200-100 100-200-100 100-200-100 100-200-100 100-200-100 (50m walk/rep, 100walk/set) 2000m Total	<u>Half 1's Half 2's</u> 5x200m 100m walk 8x100m (50m walk/rep) 1800m Total	<u>Endless Relay</u> 8x200m (3 person teams) 1600m Total

Feel Free To Be Creative

- Variables: Intensity, work period, rest period, total volume, surface
 - Use what you have available, odd distances
 - Partner runs, endless relays
 - But don't change things late in the season (e.g. barefoot)!
 - Barefoot
 - Inspect for sharp/hard objects, incorporate early, watch calf tightness
 - Incorporating general strength exercises
 - Make rest periods more challenging by adding various BW exercises
- Hurdles
 - Combine tempo with intermediate and low hurdle training
 - Random spaced 33" and 30" hurdles in one lane each
 - Shuttle style (hurdles down, nothing back)
 - 36" 5 step rhythm hurdles on straights (approx.. spacing 16m boys & 14m girls)

Athletes Reaction

- Early season may complain not hard enough
- Competitive season (e.g. Thur and Sat meets) they appreciate tempo
- If coming from intensive tempo/intervals will have to hold them back
- Type 1 fiber (slower twitch) athletes find it easier
- What about a long run instead?
- Mix it up, can get boring especially for HS aged athletes
- Athlete's choice days (coach chooses volume, athletes choose distances)
- Make daily adjustments if needed
(e.g. first part of workout is full approach vaults = cut tempo accordingly)
- Allow athletes to be social

Sample Weeks

Week 4

M	T	W	TH	F
<u>Accel and Max V</u>	<u>Speed Endurance</u>	<u>Tempo</u>	<u>Meet</u>	<u>Tempo</u>
4x20m Hills	2x100m Hills 90%	100m-200m-100m		9x200m Turf
6x20m MB Starts	2x120m Trck 90%	100m-200m-100m		as partner relay
4x30m Fly 95%	6+ min. rest ea.	100m-200m-100m		65-70%
3 min rest ea.		100m-200m-100m		
		60-65%		
		50m walk/rep, 100walk/set		
(320m volume)	(440m vol)	(1600m vol)	(500m vol)	(1800m vol)

Week 11

M	T	W	TH	F
<u>Accel and Max V</u>	<u>Tempo</u>	<u>League Prelims</u>	<u>Tempo</u>	<u>League Finals</u>
5x20m Gun Starts	12x100m		10x100m	
4x20m Fly 100% or relay exchanges	60%		60%	
Full rest	Turf or track		Turf or track	
	30 sec rest/rep		30 sec rest/rep	
(250m volume)	(1200m vol)		(1000m vol)	