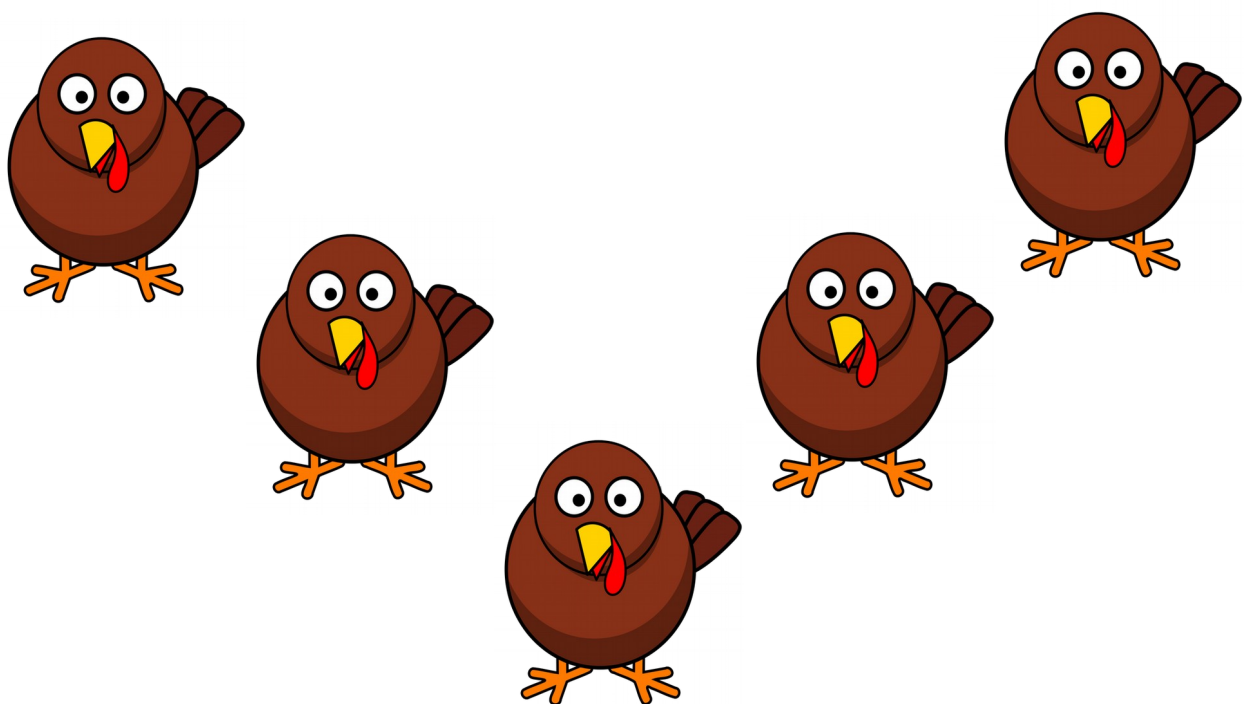


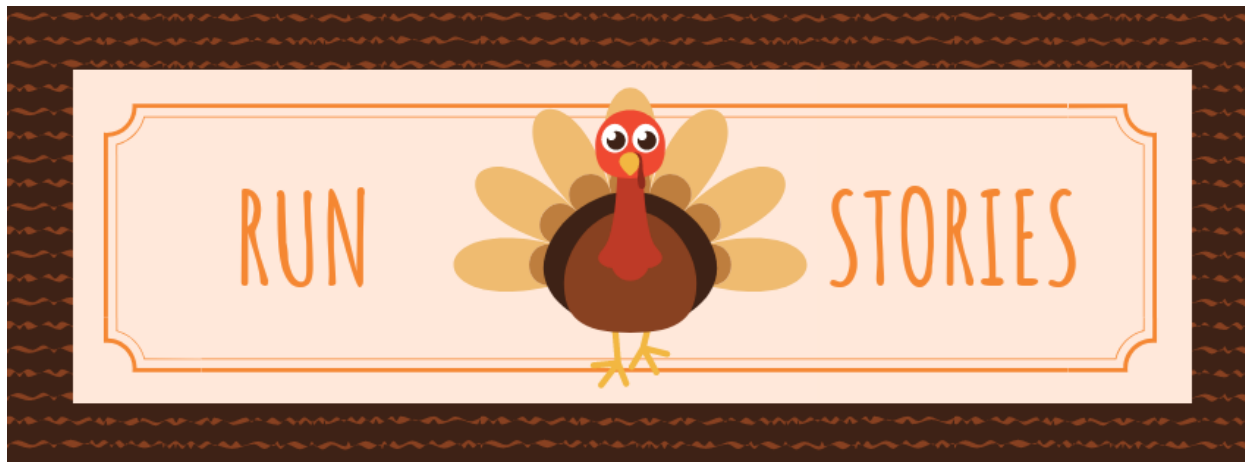


Check out our

[Facebook/Instagram](#) pages

We post lots of updates on runs, and lots of members like to post in the group and chat with one another.





"Inspiration" by Alan Toronjo and Alec Toronjo

Alan Toronjo starts

So I've been contributing regularly now for the monthly newsletter and it's something that I have been enjoying. I hope that you readers have also enjoyed my ramblings and musings because it's a wonderful outlet and I really want to keep the content coming. But for this month, I'm sending in something a little different. While I was sifting through my memories providing a written virtual experience through Waldron Arboretum for our October 2020 edition, our oldest felt the urge to perform some writing of his own. He has really come into his own as a fellow runner and shown great improvements while pursuing his second sophomore year on the high school cross-country team. For this month, I'm just going to take a brief hiatus and pass the writing reins over and let him share his experience with all of you. Inspiration can take many different forms: it can be through family, close friends, a favorite teacher, running club group members, or even following through the news with something that may be happening on the opposite side of the world. Meaningful coaches provide constant inspiration -- shout out to Coaches Rich Olmstead and Anne King for bringing out the best in Kankakee's young women and men as cross country can mean just as much of an internal battle as the one against the rival team. Just something as simple as providing the ubiquitous "runner's wave" could be able to impart an inspirational push to one who may be struggling through a rough time or workout. What follows will be family inspiration. I'm normally quiet and soft-spoken, but I could give many an opinion if the topic of running or exercise made it to the forefront of a conversation. I'm not at all timid when always trying to involve our kids (we are extremely blessed with three) with taking up running or just getting out to experience things that they are unfamiliar with; doing so can assist them in discovering new hobbies and interests and truly to find something about which they are passionate. And to give a further update of Alec's season, as I know he as well as the rest of the Toronjo clan are extremely proud of this year: he ran a best ever PR at the cross-county regional meet in Morris, IL, doing three miles under 22 minutes for the first time, placing at about half of over 100 high school boys. I am excited to see him and the rest of the team and their future accomplishments as they continue on through high school and beyond. The inspiration has come full circle as I get inspired while watching and cheering them on...

Alec Toronjo takes the keyboard...

This month I will try to tell you my story of how I got into running and into becoming a cross country member at school. From about 4th grade on, my dad would always try to get me outside to do some exercise. He had newly found running as his hobby. So back in 4th grade, my dad would always try to get me to run. Looking back and seeing my dad run every day had a big impact on me. It inspired me to pick up his main exercise of choice and one day beat him at his own hobby. Enough with the background, and now it is time for me to get into the real story.

I remember my first time ever running a 5K (the KRRC's Herscher Hare & Tortoise — 9/4/2016). I was in the 6th grade and I sure didn't know what I was getting myself into. I thought, "Oh yeah it's only 3 miles ... shouldn't be too bad." My dad that day was feeling a little sick and because of that, thought he wasn't going to be able to run so I kept saying, "Let me do it!!!" I thought to myself that I might just be able to do this. Well after begging and begging, I finally convinced both my mom and dad to let me run in the race; and my dad was able to run it also. I still remember my bib number; it was 444. I was able to finish the race but had to walk most of it. Even though I felt I had a sucky time of like 40 minutes, I felt so proud of myself. Everyone was clapping for me and I felt great. It felt amazing and never in my life did I feel this proud of myself. It was so inspiring for everyone to cheer everyone else on. Afterwards, although being so tired, I felt like I could do anything.

So fast forward to the next day, and my legs were completely sore. I still didn't know what I had gotten myself into the previous day. But from that day on, I felt like running just might be my "thing." So I started training and would try my best to get 30 or under 30 minutes for my next race; my first goal ever was born! So I continued with it and after about a week of training, I felt how hard it really was. I could barely run for 5 minutes at one time. After seeing how much work it would take, I started to slack off and over time let running slip my mind.

Now we pass a year to 7th grade and my dad inspired me to run again by saying if I started once more, he would get me some new shoes. So that spring and fall I eventually picked it back up but again but I couldn't keep up with it very well. What really helped me get into running and keep it up was 8th grade when I decided to go out and sign up for cross country. For the very first practice I didn't know what to expect; to start, we met up at Kankakee High School and ran over to Small Park. I thought to myself that that was it for practice, but boy was I wrong. We stretched out and then after that, we ran for over 3 miles around the park. Me, with little practice, did not do well. I continued to go to practice after practice and got better and better. By the middle of the summer I could do 3 miles in under 30 minutes. I remember that same feeling of being so proud of myself, and this motivated me to keep working and to get better at the sport. By the first-ever meet of the cross-country season, I felt stronger, better, yet also more nervous than ever before. Every time I run at a cross-country meet, I get this feeling of being excited, happy, and nervous. This combination of emotions helps me push through every race I have been in. I feel it through my whole body; I still feel it to this day. Every time I



Alec Toronjo

hear, “On your marks!,” I can feel that exact same feeling just as strong as the first time.

After running my first year, I got really good at running and my PR for 2 miles was around 15:24. Whenever I would PR, I would feel even better with myself and it made me realize I wanted to run more to get better so that I could improve my time. So I tried to keep running throughout the year and I ran a few 5Ks throughout the winter.

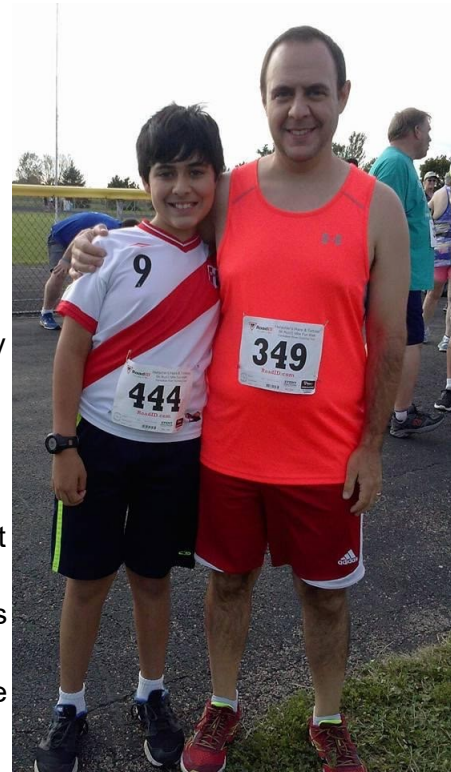
Fast forward again to the beginning of high school where I started as a freshman for another start to cross country. This time the meets were 3 miles instead of 2 at the junior high level. The main thing that changed was that the high school team was larger and the sport became more satisfying to me. It helped me run better and I had time to socialize with my teammates. The only bad thing, if I can call it bad, was that I felt like I was not performing well. I didn't PR as much and I would keep trying my best week after week and it seemed nothing would change; I was stuck in the 24-minute zone. Eventually I pulled through in the last meet of the year to PR and finally broke 24 minutes. After that first high school cross country season ended, I took about 2 weeks off. I thought to myself I can't have that 2 weeks turn into a longer amount of time, so for the first time I really stuck with running throughout the winter. I didn't practice as much as I should have, but it was more than I had ever done before.

One day my dad told me about the 7-mile race at Davis Creek and I thought why not, I will go ahead and try to run it. That has gone down as one of the longest runs I have ever participated in. Another thing that happened in that same off-season was beating my own dad at a 5K. The race was a winter one, the yearly Jingle Bell 5K, and one of the coldest races I have run. But I had finally beat my own dad at his own hobby. I knew then if I kept trying to run every day, I could really get my time down.

During the spring I signed on to another sport: tennis. Tennis has also become a sport I really like, and I try to practice as much as possible. I tried even then to keep up running while enjoying tennis at the same time. I would wake up early, run, take a shower, go to school and play tennis at morning practice. This started to become a lot to do every day so I started to run every other day and sometimes on the weekends. Our tennis season was going good until COVID happened. The whole season got canceled for good; we started doing school at home. I thought to myself, “What now?” I was bored doing all of my school work at home so I started to work out as well; I tried doing 50 sit-ups and 50 push-ups every day with some running mixed in. Over time, I got better and did 100 sit-ups and 100 push-ups every day. My running had improved also. At least once a week, I would go run 6 miles at just under a 9-minute mile pace. I tried to keep this up as quarantine continued, and once cross-country practice got the okay to start back up, I felt stronger and faster than ever. My speed work times were faster and I had that same proud feeling come over me, and I was inspired to do the best I could. So throughout the summer, I kept doing cross country with some tennis thrown in. Fast forward a little more time to just several weeks ago with my first ever cross country meet as a 10th grader. This meet, however, would go down as one of my worst. I had a bad seasonal allergic reaction that made it hard to run and got a time for an only 2-mile race at around 18 minutes — not my best. Then the next week we went back to a normal 3 miles and I felt much better and had a much easier time running. I had a time of around 23:46. I still was not yet satisfied with my time. So even more recently on a Thursday night at the All-City meet, I really tried to push myself for this 2.5-mile race and my mile average was the best yet of any meet. I felt as if I could keep up this time for a full 3 miles. Again, seeing this progress made me feel proud and inspired as I

always do after a good race. I ran 18:34 for the All-City; this was over 3 minutes faster than the All-City meet I ran the previous year.

Just a few weekends ago, my dad inspired me again to run 6 miles on a Sunday. It felt like forever since I ran that distance. I feel like during the actual season I'm faster, but during the off-season, I have more stamina to run longer. So, yeah, my 6-mile time was pretty slow, but it felt good overall. It made me sleepy afterward but it really helped shake out my legs and gave me time to think. I think that in over 3 total years of running, there are 3 different things that never change for me. 1st is that no matter what race I'm running, I always get that feeling of excitement and nervousness that helps me push through the run. 2nd is that no matter how fast I get, whenever I feel I am about to get close or have a PR, I feel inspired to run more and push more. 3rd, and I saved this for last because I think it's the most important, is that no matter what happens, my dad always has a way to inspire me to run. Even though I'm faster than he is, I owe every running medal and every PR to him. He got me into the sport and he always saw that I could do more. He inspired me to run, to always try to do better, to push myself at the All-City meet, and even a few weekends ago to run 6 miles. Even though sometimes it doesn't seem like I'm listening, he has his way of convincing me to run and do better. I hope this is just the start of my many years of running.



Alec Toronjo, Alan Toronjo

AFT with AJT

Feedback from Rodger Willing on Ken Klipp Articles

Ken, Your newsletters are excellent. Definitely like the scientific approach. I am learning quite a bit in reading your stuff.

Thought I'd throw in my 2 cents. The biggest 2 lessons I have learned in my 50 odd years of running are: Stretch stretch stretch.

I had a high school cross country coach who was an olympic marathoner. He taught us about the value of stretching. A thorough stretching regimen strengthens and stretches your muscles/tendons and warms them up for the pounding to come. If you consistently stretch the main muscle groups, you can truly minimize (NEVER ELIMINATE) flare ups and issues. I am sure we have all learned the hard way that shortcutting the warmup stretching inevitably comes back to haunt.

Another benefit (at least he convince us of this and we bought it HL&S) is that by merely stretching, you can extend your stride with zero added effort. For instance, if your stride increases by a mere 1 inch due to stretching, the quick math says that without any added effort, you can run ~200 yards farther which is equivalent to cutting off ~1 minute from a 10k run. I don't know if it was true, but he convinced us!

Shoes shoes shoes.

Find the shoes that work for you and don't change! No more injuries. No more injuries. Just some thoughts from the peanut gallery from those of us who think we know everything. The speed thing doesn't matter as much to me anymore at the age of 62, however the non-injury thing is still a biggie in my book.

Take care,
Rodger Willing

Koach's Korner by Ken Klipp

Welcome back, everyone! Have we been studying our notes from the previous newsletters? Yeah, me neither. However, if you have access to them, it might be helpful to refer to them once in awhile so that all of this fits together in a continuous overview of distance running training. Anyway, let's get back to it.

What is the biggest thing that we are trying to do in our training? Answer: Increase our ability to supply oxygen. What types of workouts help make those changes in our bodies? Last newsletter I wrote about Long Distance Runs, how to structure them, and what specific changes they can bring about in the body to increase oxygen capacity. What else is there?

THE HARDEST THING - INTERVAL TRAINING! In my experience, interval training is THE most misunderstood aspect of a person's training program. First of all, a simple definition - repeated runs at a specific pace with a specific recovery period between runs. Many runners don't understand that INTERVAL training gets its name, not from the distance run, but from the rest period in between runs. So, let's look at the different aspects of an interval workout, and what it can do for you, IF DONE CORRECTLY.

INTENSITY - what pace should each run within the workout be done? The ideal pace is what is called VO2Max pace. How fast is that? It's the pace that you can run for 10-15 minutes, but most people use their current 5K pace (which, in most cases, is too slow; may need to actually do a 10-15 minute all out run on a track to determine it; or subtract 20-40 seconds from your current 5K pace per mile). The pace of the workout is critical. Many people run these workouts TOO FAST, because they can. Not a good idea - you are trying to challenge a specific chemistry within the muscles and the body. Going too fast (or too slow) challenges a completely different chemistry, negating the results you are working for. So, spend some time accurately figuring out what your pace should be. It is important. If the run seems too easy, shorten the rest interval, or lengthen the run - **DO NOT CHANGE THE PACE.**

DURATION - how long should each run be? This can vary considerably, depending on how the workout is structured. Understand that the purpose of this workout is to run AT VO2Max pace. If we assume that you have chosen the correct pace, it will usually take 90-120 seconds at that pace to REACH VO2Max in your body. Then, ideally, you would maintain that effort for a period of time in order to challenge that chemistry and thereby "improve" it during your recovery day (remember?). So, it stands to reason that your run needs to be around 2 minutes or more to get the biggest bang for your buck. So, 2-4 minutes is an average length of the run (15 minute 5K folks can run up to a mile, but that's not most of us). So, you can set up the length of your run by time (2-4 minutes), or a distance that would fall into that range (400-1000 meters).

RECOVERY - how long should you take between runs? The general rule of thumb is

the same amount of time as the run. So, for you math challenged folks, if you run 800 meters in 4 minutes, you could take up to a 4 minute recovery. This can vary. For example, if a runner opts to run 400 meter runs in about 2 minutes, they have only been at VO2Max for 30 seconds. They might shorten the recovery interval to 1 minute. That way they are not completely recovered, and will reach VO2Max quicker (maybe in 60 seconds, instead of 90), and therefore, spend 60 seconds at VO2Max pace instead of 30. Over the course of the workout, the more time spent at VO2Max pace, the better. So, the shorter the run, the shorter the recovery interval (ranging from a minimum of about 1 minute to a maximum of 3-4). Another important point about the recovery is to make it an "active" recovery - shag jog or walking. This helps clear any built up lactic acid, keeps muscles and tendons loose, and oxygen consumption a little higher so that you get to VO2Max sooner in the next run. I have found in my own experience, that if I jog about half of the distance of the run, it gives me a 1:1 rest (run a 400, jog a 200; run an 800, jog a 400).

TOTAL DISTANCE - how many repeats should you do? Don't want to get too technical here, but the right total distance, when you add up your paced runs, should be about 8% of your weekly mileage (again, for the math challenged, if you are running 20 miles a week, the repeats should add up to about 1.6 miles; if 40 miles a week, 3.2 miles). As a general rule of thumb, about 2-3 miles should do it. So, if using distance (not time), you're talking 8-12 x 400 meters, or 4-6 x 800 meters, or any variation of 2-4 minute runs where you can maintain the correct pace with the correct rest. Some folks like doing it by time: 8 x 2minutes pace/2minutes rest, or 6 x 4 minutes pace/4 minutes rest. Some mix it up: 4 x 400, 2 x 800, 4 x 400. The possibilities are endless - set up the workout so the pace is correct, total distance is correct, and rest intervals are correct. That should work.

HOW OFTEN - how often should you do an interval workout? That will depend on where you are in your training program (which we will cover in a future newsletter). It will vary from never to twice a week during the heaviest phase of your program. Keep in mind that a RACE counts as an interval day, so if you have two interval workouts set up in a week to 10 day period, and you plan on racing once, then you should only do one interval workout within that time frame.

BENEFITS - how do interval workouts help? The easy answer is they help EVERYTHING.

- increases your VOMax capacity (so as this increases, your race times will get faster, and therefore the pace of your interval workouts)
- increases your heart stroke volume - more blood pumped per beat = more oxygen to muscles
- increases your max heart rate = more oxygen to the muscles
- improves the dynamics of your circulatory system - arteries, veins, capillaries
- improves your ability to get rid of lactic acid produced in the muscles
- helps teach you race pace (5K)
- toughens you both physically and mentally to tolerate hard work at a fast pace

One caveat -- some people think "Well, if interval workouts improve EVERYTHING, I'll just start with those right away." Not good - a runner needs to build up his "base" (red blood cells, capillaries, tendons, etc) before starting intervals for a couple of reasons: 1) to prevent

injury - intervals are very tough on the body, and if the toughening that comes with the base work is not done first, an injury is more likely and 2) once a runner begins the "interval phase" of his program, it tends to lock in his "capacity" at that level. The more base work you can do first, the higher your capacity will be driven (more RBC's, capillaries, etc), and so the intervals can take you to a higher peak. The different training "phases" need to be completed in order. Hope some of this makes sense. As always, any questions, contact me at kcklipp@comcast.net. Next time, we'll take a look at lactate threshold paced runs - what they do, how to do them, when to do them, etc. Still need to talk about reps, running form and efficiency, race pacing, strength training, and of course, how to put it all together into a single program that produces results. Stay patient.

Winterfest update by President Steve Anderson:

I know it may seem months away, but as we've tried making plans for Winterfest, we are already running into a few snags that we are not able to overcome. The biggest issue is that we cannot get the venue. The board has discussed different options, but we feel that for a race in early February we need a place for folks to gather indoors in case of frigid weather as well as access to restrooms. We've decided that unfortunately, it's just not feasible to have the race on its usual date.



So, the current plan is to wait and see if we can possibly get the building in March/April. Winterfest may have to turn into Springfest this year. If we still cannot get the venue, we will have to cross that bridge when we get there and discuss other options.

So please hang tight, and when we have more info we will let you know. ~~tot~~ get the venue. The board has

