

Workout de Jour

Telephone Poles

1 on/1 off

2 on/1 Off

3 on/1 off

4 on/1 off

5 on/1 off

1 no off

A great workout on a bitterly cold afternoon in which the sky is clear, the air is subfreezing in feel, the pavement is dry, and there is no fun to be found in being out in the elements. The second half of February is less than ideal, but the choices are to morosely brood about getting onto the treadmill or bundle up, cowboy.

Same local park, only no loops in the workout, other than the warmup and cool down. Utilizing the half-mile long straight along the tree line with the telephone poles spaced out from one end of the straight to other.

The first set is quick in hand motion, because you're slapping your running watch at every pole – starting out with a quick pace, slowing down from running quickly, accelerating into the next on. The distance between each pole is 0.05 of a mile. You do the arithmetic on the repeat numbers. No walking breaks.

The second set is the same, requiring a relaxed effort for double the length, knowing that the next three segments require the same relaxed speed and focus. It's quick and it's meant to be. The distance takes the effort out of the workout because you're too mentally focused on the next pole. Even though your off is at a slog pace, you see the overall average per mile pace drop with each segment. It's just a part of the instant gratification process.

Besides, in just two days' time, the ground will be frozen, covered over with ice, snow, and wet in that order. The air will hurt to breathe. No amount of bundling will create that comfortable running-in-the-winter feeling. The legs will enjoy the running of the poles. The workout will be a good running memory sustaining you for three days on the treadmill you know is in front of you. Beats being bitter.