

Workout de jour – 400 repeats anywhere

12(400/:30 - 1:15 jog)

Cold-ass windy Spring Day

Wind-sheltered segment of bike path

I'm a training plan kinda guy. I'll sit down with pencil to apply workout plans to a pad of paper. Easy runs, long runs, short workouts, long workouts, races, etc., knowing that I'll change every run by how I feel. This workout is not only a keeper for me, but breaks up the self-induced intensity of repeats 400-meter repeats. But first, you need a twist on the running path and a leap of faith.

Repeats can become a drudge and a drain on morale. Necessary to a distance runner for so many reasons, they can also be less than ideal. But never fear, with a wee bit of imagination, an alternative reality is created. Just locate the right elements, say, a hill along the chosen running path, upon which you can push uphill before gracefully flying back down.

At the 1.5-mile mark on the path I use, there is a four-percent uphill grade path jutting away from the main path, a quarter-mile pole just off the path being the logical end and beginning of uphill and downhill repeats. With a 30-second rest after the uphill segment and a 45-second rest after the downhill portion, repeat four times up and the same down. Leg lifts on the incline and the same on the decline will keep your effort consistent, and almost effortless in effect. Your running legs will appreciate you.

That appreciation will carry you to the final portion of the workout, with four true 400's on the flattest part of the main path, run quick followed by a 1:15 recovery sluggo slog.

Should you do this workout correctly, for the last four 400's you'll feel your lungs expand, attempting to gather air sufficient to keep with the increased leg turnover. Simultaneously, the willingness to push the pace will manifest itself with each final repeated segment. Don't be concerned with going fast. You're only running four of these, out and back, twice. Go with it. Don't overthink it.

The spring weather is warmer next week. I may come back to same workout then.