

Excerpts from the Training Diary

The following excerpts are really to illustrate the daily breakdown of my training at different times of the year, and at different stages of my career.

FEBRUARY 1968

(My 'blue' period in Brighton, when things were going badly.)

Sun Feb 11: 16 miles steady run. Felt very tired.

Mon Feb 12: (am) Repetition hills. Total 6 miles.
(pm) 7 miles steady. Felt v. tired.

Tue Feb 13: (am) 4 miles jog.
(pm) 11 miles run, Stanmer Village to Saltdean. 1hr 20mins.

Wed Feb 14: (am) 4 miles Stanmer Village. Felt tired.
(pm) 4 laps of football pitches in Stanmer Pk. Total 7 miles.

Thu Feb 15: 4 miles easy, preparation for race.

Fri Feb 16: 4 miles easy.

Sat Feb 17: Hyde Park Relay. Started off hard, legs and thigh muscles very sore. Couldn't run properly. Bad run, felt really tired. $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles lap in 16 mins 40 secs.

Week's total: 69 miles in 10 sessions.

Sun Feb 18: Fed up. Decided to have a day off.

FEBRUARY 1969

(Twelve months later I had found out about my iron deficiency anaemia and corrected it.)

Sun Feb 9: Easy run 13 miles. Ankle sore.

Mon Feb 10: 14 x hills very hard. Total 11 miles.

Tue Feb 11: 8 miles steady run.

Wed Feb 12: Hills flat out again. Total 13 miles.

Thu Feb 13: 6 miles.

Fri Feb 14: Steady jog, 4 miles.

Sat Feb 15: Hyde Park Relay. Flat out from start, very good run, felt very tired. $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles lap in 13 mins 33 secs (8th fastest time of the day).

Week's total: 64 miles in 7 sessions.

MAY-JUNE 1972

(I was one of at least half-a-dozen contenders for Britain's Olympic 1500 metres team at Munich.)

- Sun May 28: (am) 10 miles steady/hard run.
 (pm) Speed work. $10 \times 120\text{m}$, 10 secs rest between.
 $2 \times 100\text{m}$ flat out. V. hard session, important to do it regularly.
- Mon May 29: 4 miles easy run.
- Tue May 30: (am) 4 miles easy run.
 (pm) 800m time trial at Meadowbank. 1:52.3 (55.5 + 56.8). Then $6 \times 200\text{m}$, with 200m jog. Average 25/26 secs. Going okay.
- Wed May 31: (am) 4 miles easy run on golf course.
 (pm) Track session at Meadowbank. 12×400 metres with 90-95 secs rest. Average 58.4 secs. Very hard session, legs tired from yesterday, unable to relax at this speed. Total 6 miles.
- Thu Jun 1: (am) 10 miles easy run.
 (pm) Track session. $8 \times 200\text{m}$ with 25 secs rest, quite hard.
 $10 \times 100\text{m}$ turnabouts, going hard.
 $3 \times 100\text{m}$ flat out. Total 7 miles.
- Fri Jun 2: (am) Easy run. Total 4 miles.
 (pm) Easy run. Total 6 miles.
- Sat Jun 3: (am) Easy run with Wilf, 6 miles.
 (pm) At Usworth track (ran over and back). $2 \times 600\text{m}$ with plenty of rest: 89.0 and 88.3 secs. Trying to pick it up was difficult.
 $4 \times 100\text{m}$ flat out. Total 10 miles.
- Week's total: 80 miles.
- Sun Jun 4: 12 miles easy run. Foot sore.
- Mon Jun 5: (am) 4 miles easy run. Felt a bit rough.
 (pm) Fartlek (speedplay). 2×1 mile, $3 \times 500\text{m}$, $6 \times 100\text{m}$. Felt lethargic at first, felt v. tired throughout, especially hamstrings.
- Tue Jun 6: (am) 4 miles easy run.
 (pm) Track, $10 \times 300\text{m}$, 45 secs rest. Average 44.2 secs. Rather windy. $4 \times 100\text{m}$ sprints. Felt rather hard for what it was.
 Total 7 miles.
- Wed Jun 7: (am) 4 miles easy run.
 (pm) Easy run though rather tired, with Wilf. Total 6 miles.
- Thu Jun 8: (am) 4 miles easy.
 (pm) 4 miles easy.
- Fri Jun 9: (am) 2 miles easy jog.
 (pm) 2 miles easy jog.

Sat Jun 10: Emsley Carr Mile at Crystal Palace. Finished 2nd in 3:55.9
(personal best).

Week's total: 62 miles.

DECEMBER 1973

(I was trying to prepare for the Commonwealth Games in New Zealand the following month.)

Sat Dec 15: (am) Track session at Usworth. $8 \times 400\text{m}$, 90 secs rest. Average 60.2 secs. Good session in fourth lane, driving snow, and wind, full tracksuit and tights.

(pm) Easy run, 5 miles.

Sun Dec 16: 20 miles steady run. Right heel very sore. Could hardly walk afterwards.

Mon Dec 17: (am) Steady run to school, 5 miles. Heel too sore to run properly.
(pm) Treatment from physio Norman Anderson. Heel badly bruised.

Tue Dec 18: Treatment.

Wed Dec 19: Treatment.

Thu Dec 20: Treatment. Norman said heel nearly okay.

Fri Dec 21: 4 miles steady run on school field.

Sat Dec 22: Steady run, 10 miles.

Sun Dec 23: Steady run with Lindsay, 16 miles.

Mon Dec 24: (am) 7 miles steady.

Delayed journey to Malaga. 12 hours travelling. Very tired.

Tue Dec 25: (am) Steady run, 10 miles, in hills at Malaga. Met Juha Vaatainen by chance.

(pm) Steady run in woods. $3 \times 700\text{m}$, $3 \times 200\text{m}$. Total 7 miles.

Wed Dec 26: (am) 10 miles on road. Tired. Quite hot.

(pm) Steady run in hills, v. tired, 7 miles.

Thu Dec 27: (am) Set off for steady run, but after about one mile had to stop because of bad stomach. In bed all morning. Thought I might not run in afternoon.

(pm) Track session at Malaga with Vaatainen. $10 \times 300\text{m}$, 45 secs rest. Average 42.8 secs. One of best ever? Felt OK, legs stiff with hard track. Total 8 miles.

Fri Dec 28: (am) Steady run in wind and rain, 10 miles.

(pm) Steady run with Vaatainen to Los Pacos. Felt tired for last 4 miles. Total 13 miles.

- Sat Dec 29: (am) Steady run 7 miles. Felt tired to begin with.
 (pm) In woods – 2 sets of $8 \times 200\text{m}$ (18–20 secs rest). Seemed to be going okay. Faster on second set. Seem to go best when I've warmed up a bit. Total 7 miles.
- Sun Dec 30: Steady run by myself along seafront. Quite warm, felt okay, until last few miles. Total 20 miles.
- Mon Dec 31: (am) Steady run along the beach for 7 miles. Felt okay, as though I was running again.
 (pm) Track session at Malaga. Warm day, slight breeze in back straight. $6 \times 800\text{m}$ 4 mins rest. Average 2:01.5. Best session ever!

JULY–AUGUST 1974

(Preparing for European championships in Rome.)

- Sun Jul 21: 20 miles steady run.
- Mon Jul 22: (am) 10 miles steady to work.
 (pm) 8 miles steady run.
- Tue Jul 23: (am) Steady 5 miles.
 (pm) Steady 5 miles.
 (pm) Track 7pm. $3 \times 800\text{m}$ ($4-4\frac{1}{2}$ mins rest). Cold windy night. Average 2:01.3. Very hard session, needed it. Ran $4 \times 100\text{m}$ on grass afterwards.
- Wed Jul 24: (am) Steady run to work, 9 miles.
 (pm) 2 sets of $8 \times 200\text{m}$ quite hard (20 secs rest). $4 \times 100\text{m}$. Quite a tough session. Total 6 miles.
- Thu Jul 25: (am) Steady run, 6 miles.
 (pm) Steady run, 5 miles.
 (pm) Steady run, 5 miles.
- Fri Jul 26: (am) Steady run to work, 6 miles.
 (pm) GB v Czechoslovakia 1500m race in Edinburgh. 1st 3:41.2.
 (2nd F. Clement 3:41.7.)
- Sat Jul 27: 15 miles with Mike Baxter, quite fast. Week's total: 110 miles.
- Sun Jul 28: (am) Track at Gateshead. $3 \times 1600\text{m}$. Nice day. Average 4:10.18 secs; equals best ever. Very hard.
 (pm) Steady 10 miles run. Very tired, but felt better than I thought I would.

- Mon Jul 29: (am) 10 miles steady.
(pm) 10 miles steady.
- Tue Jul 30: (am) 6 miles steady run.
(pm) Track at Gateshead, lunchtime. 10 × 400m (90 secs rest).
Average 58.49 secs. Quite hard throughout.
(pm) 8 miles steady run.
- Wed Jul 31: (am) Steady run, 7 miles.
(pm) 2 sets of 8 × 200m (20 secs rest). Recovering well.
- Thu Aug 1: (am) Steady run to work, 6 miles.
(pm) Steady run, legs sore, 8 miles.
- Fri Aug 2: (am) Steady run, 5 miles.
(pm) Steady run, 5 miles.
- Sat Aug 3: Gateshead Games. 3000m in 7:35.2. World record.
Quite pleased with last lap.
(pm) 4 miles steady run.

APRIL 1976

(The bulk work for Montreal had gone on throughout the winter, and was reaching its highest level.)

- Sun Apr 4: 20 miles easy run, quite comfortable.
- Mon Apr 5: (am) 10 miles steady.
(pm) 10 miles hard with Wilf.
- Tue Apr 6: (am) 10 miles steady. Quite tired from last night. Worried about knee injury.
(pm) 10 miles steady, with three hard stretches. Only ran steady because of knee, felt a little discomfort after 7 or 8 miles.
Very tired tonight.
- Wed Apr 7: (am) Seemed very tired when I got up, had to persuade myself to go running. My knee was worrying me and the fact that I'm not sure if I'd be able to complete 10 miles doesn't help. Had to work hard to keep going all the way, suffering for it. 10 miles.
(pm) Steady run with Wilf, 10 miles. Very tired, in fact could hardly keep going over the last few miles. Knee not too bad.
- Thu Apr 8: (am) Steady 10 miles, going okay.
(pm) Steady 10 miles, seemed to be going well, even though very tired indeed, very fatigued over last few miles.

Am having to apply myself to maintain this level of training.
Am feeling extremely tired and low because of it occasionally,
however have the motivation to keep going, especially as it
seems I'm running well.

Fri Apr 9: (am) Steady run 5 miles.

(pm) Steady run 5 miles.

(pm) Steady run 5 miles.

Sat Apr 10: (am) Track. Nice day. $10 \times 400\text{m}$ (90 secs rest). Average 61.26 sec.
Pulse 172 15 secs after last one. Total $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

(pm) 10 miles steady by myself. Felt stiff, possibly because of track
session, but going okay when able to concentrate properly.

Week's total: $131\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

Sun Apr 11: 20 miles steady run.

Mon Apr 12: (am) 15 miles steady.

(pm) Steady run up hills and in woods – 7 miles.

Tue Apr 13: (am) Steady run, 11 miles.

(pm) Club run, 12 miles.

Feeling as though I'm doing as much running as I possibly
can, getting sick of all the running without variety, and hope
racing and track training will release the boredom. Would be
worse if I wasn't running well.

Wed Apr 14: Feel like taking an easy day.

(am) Steady run, 10 miles. Made little effort.

(pm) Steady run with Wilf, 10 miles, going quite strong.

Thu Apr 15: (am) 10 miles steady.

(pm) 10 miles steady. Felt tired nearly all the way. First time this
week that the tiredness has really caught up with me.

Fri Apr 16: (am) Steady run. Tired. 5 miles.

(pm) Easy run on football field, 5 miles.

(pm) Steady run with Lindsay, 5 miles.

Sat Apr 17: (am) Track. $5 \times 600\text{m}$ (2 mins rest). Average 91.9 secs. Quite hard.
Felt stiff. Total 6 miles.

(pm) 10 miles steady run with Pete. Felt stiff to begin with and
rather stiff and tired when I finished.

Week's total: 136 miles.

Sun Apr 18: (Last three weeks average $131\frac{1}{2}$ miles p.w.)

(am) 20 miles steady run. Quite stiff to begin with, but very tired
from halfway.

- Mon Apr 19: (am) 11 miles steady.
 (pm) 10 miles steady. Warm day, nice for running, felt very tired, especially later on. Legs feeling the pressure.
- Tue Apr 20: (am) 15 miles steady run by myself.
 (pm) Steady 7 miles with Mike Tagg. Got going after halfway, running quite strongly.
- Wed Apr 21: Only 7 hours sleep.
 (am) Steady 6 miles with Mike Tagg.
 (pm) Easy slow run with Lindsay, 10 miles.
- Thu Apr 22: (am) Steady 10 miles.
 (pm) Steady 7 miles.
- Fri Apr 23: (am) 5 miles steady.
 (pm) 5 miles steady.
 (pm) 5 miles steady.
- Sat Apr 24: (am) Steady run with Wilf. Felt tired and short of breath. 3 miles.
 (pm) National Road Relay, Sutton Coldfield.
 Felt lethargic warming up, but determined to beat record. Didn't feel as though I was running fast but quite hard, and not getting particularly tired until I finished. Time: 13:37 for 3 miles 100 yards. Course record by 15 seconds.
- Week's total: 126 miles

And For The Future . . . ?

Sometimes when I feel miserable about the amount of training I have to do to remain an international runner, I reflect how much more comfortable it might have been twenty or thirty years ago, when everyone trained less – and times were consequently slower. But then again, those of us running internationally in the 'seventies may be fortunate that we do not find ourselves training even harder, to the exclusion of virtually everything else, as I feel may be the case in the not-too-distant future.

So, purely as a daydreaming exercise, I have compiled what I think might be a typical week's training for an athlete of the future – in the year 2000, for instance. In the Olympic Games of that year (to be held in Gateshead perhaps?) I estimate that the winning times in the 5000 metres and 10,000 metres will be around 12:50.0 and 26:40.0 respectively.

Training for those Games will, I suspect, be much more scientifically monitored, if not programmed. It could possibly include extra activities like gymnastics, yoga or weight training, plus an enormous amount of running. Quite probably there