

Performance Test to Project an Athletes Event In the Mid-Distance/Distance Events

I. Objective

Identify athletes potential event and weakness as a mid-distance/distance runner.

II. Test

The test can occur on a track or flat grass field which is measured in 400 meters. I like to test the athletes when they first arrive back from the summer (especially athletes you never have coached before).

- A. Endurance
- B. Ability to accelerate (speed)
- C. Ability to change gears
- D. Mental tenacity
- E. Fitness level

The test occurs by alternating either 400's or 200's from fast to slow. The test is over when an athlete does not hit two consecutive times of the faster interval.

Example: Men: 75/85 per 400 – when athlete fails to hit 75 two consecutive times the test is over.

Men or Women: 45/53 alternate 200's – when athlete fails to hit 45 two consecutive times test is over.

Men or Women: 15/25 alternate 100's – when athlete fails to hit 15 two consecutive times the test is over.

The times used in this test depend on the talent level of athletes. Always use conservative times so you can have the athletes run enough laps for a fair evaluation. Also, it is not as important for an athlete to hit the slower time as it is to hit the faster one.

III. How to Interpret Test Results

- A. Endurance – how many laps does the athlete hit the slower pace.
- B. Ability to change gears – how many laps does the athlete hit the faster time. You should be able to notice who has an easier time with this part.
- C. Ability to accelerate – how long does it take an athlete to accelerate to a goal pace.
- D. Mental toughness (focus) – how does an athlete handle the test overall and how many laps can they finish.
- E. Overall fitness level – you should be able to judge the athletes overall fitness level based on what your expectations were of that athlete going into the workout.

IV. Identify an Event

800 – If an athlete accelerates extremely well and can change gears, but usually lacks endurance.

Mile – Has ability to change gears and has the endurance.

2 mile/5K – Lacks the quick ability to change gears, but has good endurance. (Example: take the whole interval to get to the goal pace – first 100 of the 200).

V. Notes about test

This test will give you general information that will aid in understanding what type of athletes you have to work with. You can repeat this test after the cross-country season to see if your training improved the weakness of the individuals.