

## **Bad Run Blues**

### *Preventing, working through and forgetting a bad run*

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You are barely into your first mile of a training run when you just feel blah. You think to yourself, maybe I just need to get warmed up then I will be good to go. By the end of mile two it is just not happening. You recount your pre-run preparation and ensure that you have maintained proper hydration over past few days, you slept well the night prior and have been kind to your body by utilizing recovery days and stretching.

You trudge on trying some tricks to get you into the next mile... fartleks might do the trick. You run at a brisker pace from light post to light post then slow to a recovery pace. This seems to work for the next mile but then your body feels even heavier than the first mile. You seem to have completely lost your mojo and drop into a walk to get yourself home.

What happened? You were on course for a ten mile training run for an upcoming half marathon and now your psyche is blow to pieces. You start to doubt yourself and wonder if you can truly obtain your goal. When you get home you even take your temperature hoping you have a physical reason to blame for this pathetic training session.

Wow...that is quite a case of the bad run blues!

We can take certain steps prior to our run including paying attention to our hydration, fuel, sleep, recovery days and stretching in addition to proper equipment like replacing shoes every 300 miles as well as proper orthotics but unless we can point to a physical illness coming on, a bad run leave us with mental consequences to deal with for days. Know that you are not alone...I often get e-mails from athletes who set out on a training run with exhilaration but return home in the dumps.

If during your run you have tried to mix it up by utilizing short run techniques like pyramids, tempo or fartleks with no success try to look at your run from a completely different angle. Running without a course in mind can help...just head out your front door without expectations and go the opposite direction you normally go to see where you end up. Another technique is to change your time of day. Set out a bit before day break so you can enjoy watching the sunrise. I personally find strength during my bad runs by remembering someone important to me and run for them. After witnessing Brandon Whitehurst pass in the San Jose Rock 'n Roll Half Marathon this past October and befriending his wife, Jennifer, I am more grateful for my running than ever before. I often write his initials on my hand to remind me that he is my running partner. Try one of these tactics to pull you along during a rough run and some days it might work.

On the days that your run does not leave you with a feeling of triumph, remember the commonality we share is that we are not perfect...like any aspect of our lives we will have good and bad days and the quicker we release a bad run from our minds the more

successfully we will move on towards the starting line of our next race. So shake off the bad run blues, load a new mix into your iPOD and get back on the road.