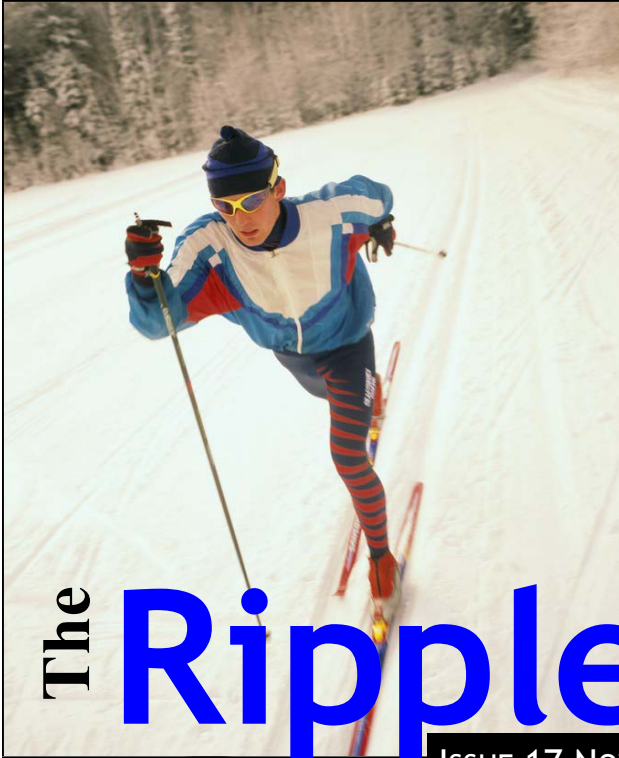


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The Ripple Effect

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Journal of Holistic Health & Fitness

Playing to Get Fit

Alternative Intervals

Karl MacPhee

Intervals: *One of a series of predetermined distances covered at regular time increments with intermittent periods of rest in an athletic workout.*

Enjoyment: *a particular form or source of pleasure*

Suffer: *To undergo or feel pain or distress*

Dictionary.com

Interval training, in its many forms is like a four letter word. As a fitness coach, when I prescribe intervals to any client or athlete, or myself for that matter, the response is never pleasant. Over the years I have experienced intervals as a hockey player, endurance athlete, and currently as a generalist. As popular as the traditional forms of interval training are, there are a number of alternative forms which we have been working with here at Ross Sheppard High School. These approaches receive a much warmer response, and are often used on days when we are not motivated to train.

Endurance athletes incorporate interval training into their weekly regime to build speed and stamina, with the hopes of decreasing their time and improved results. Endurance athletes are not alone however, most athletes incorporate intervals into their training...body builders do so to cut body fat, hockey players and football players hammer out painful interval sessions to increase speed and power, and the average Joe works on

the random or hill program during their cardio sessions at the local gym.

Interval workouts take on many forms, long, medium, or short duration, hills, speed, line drills, and bike sprints are only a small list of approaches toward intervals. The one thing that these formats share in common, is that not too many people actually enjoy the process. Ask anyone who is in the process on smashing out a 30 second interval at 90% of maximum effort if they are enjoying themselves. Chances are you will find the odd duck who enjoys punishing themselves, however when it comes to intervals, my guess is that most people enjoy the result, not the journey.

Alternatively, interrupt a squash game, basketball scrimmage, or a game of shinny hockey and ask the participants if they are enjoying themselves, I guarantee you will receive a much different answer. The workout is the same, however, the participants in this case are having fun, thus not recognizing that they are doing intervals. The application is a simple strategy really, hide the intervals in the competition or game and people enjoy themselves.

The first game we worked with is called **Medicine Ball Squash**. The equipment required is very simple, you need a light medicine ball which bounces, and a wall

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Playing to Get Fit - Alternative Intervals - (continued)...

constructed with cinderblocks, bricks or concrete. Depending on the room which is available, this game is played with 2 or more people. The rules are very simple, throw the ball against the wall in the hopes that your partner will not be able to return it successfully. Generally a rally lasts between 10 to 45 seconds, depending on the players. Some variations of this game are overhead med ball squash, chest pass med ball squash and 3-4 player rotations.

Traveling Med Ball Squash is a game that we stumbled upon last week. We didn't have the space indoors and we had 4 people, so we took the game outside and used the long wall of the school in a game of 2 vs. 2. The concept is the same as Med Ball Squash, however the game becomes more difficult when the traveling aspect is added. The wall we used is about 100m long and the entire wall was in play, thus resulting in lots of sprints, stops and starts, the main ingredients in interval training!

There are many more games, however we will discuss them in another article. To end the article, I will briefly describe my personal favorite...

No Net Badminton. Plain and simple, you need a partner, 2 racquets and some shuttles. The objective of this game is to have one player working, and one resting. The player that is working is retrieving the shuttle by moving forward, backward, left and right. The resting player is guiding the shuttle so that the working player is working quite hard for a brief period of time. The resting player is generally stationary, and the working player is responsible for returning the shuttle, and returning to a pre determined position after each shot. Players alternate after 30-60 seconds of work, and thus enjoy the intervals without the boredom of a stationary bike, or a treadmill.

We would love to try more games, so please e-mail your suggestions to karl.macphee@epsb.ca

Happy Intervals!

Karl MacPhee

Fitness Tip of the Month

5-10 minute Dynamic Warm-ups are a fantastic way to introduce more exercises into your training routine. After a 5 minute general cardio warm-up, complete 10-15 repetitions of 6-10 bodyweight exercises such as squats, rotational push ups, twist hops, single leg dead lifts, and balance drills.

This is a great way to increase blood flow, range of motion and prepare yourself for the upcoming workout. When pressed for time, a Dynamic Warm-up is a great fill in for missing a workout.



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New Feature

Over the next few weeks, you will notice that the fitness center web site will have more information for you to access. In the exercise area, we have been adding more descriptive information for each exercise.

Also, Maria (our new Athletic Therapist) will be working towards adding more exercises for rehab of specific injuries.

Stay tuned for more stretching videos, and videos of more exercises, we are always working to increase the information so that you have plenty to choose from.

The newsletter will be coming out more often, so stay tuned as we plan to have new articles every 2-3 weeks.

Again, if you have any questions, please forward them to us so that we can address your inquiries.

As the winter approaches, we will be looking into hold-

ing a Ross Sheppard Squash Tournament for staff members. More information will be available in the near future.

Did You Know?

If you danced 15 minutes a day, each day of the week, you will accumulate over 91 hours of exercise each year. That's enough to burn over 20,000 calories per year, which is about 6 pounds!

Compare that to only getting to the gym for 60 minutes a week for one workout, you will only burn about 14,000 calories, enough for about 4 pounds.

Keeping active daily is a much better alternative!

Nutrition Tip

Drinking more water every day will assist in maintaining a healthy weight. When we have enough fluid, we don't feel as hungry, thus decreasing the amount of extra food we eat.

Aim for drinking about half your body weight in ounces each day. If you weigh 150 pounds, you will need approximately 75 oz of water daily. That's approximately 2.25 liters of water daily...do you get enough water?



Karl MacPhee is the Fitness Director & Strength & Conditioning Coach, and an instructor with the Canadian Hockey Skills Academy at Ross Sheppard High School. Karl has an extensive background in athletics including competing internationally in the 2006 World Triathlon Championships in Lausanne Switzerland, and over 27 years ice hockey experience. For more information on athletics & health & wellness, please contact Karl at karl.macphee@epsb.ca

<http://shep.net/athletics/newsletter/Exercises.htm>

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