

Before I begin this month's article, I wanted to ask to all those who made New Year's Resolution to exercise more in 2012... how is it going?

Our group training classes that we conduct are seasonal based which is in preparation for hiking, rock climbing, running, cycling, mountain biking and for some underwater basket weaving. Our goal is to augment strength into power and energy system development (ESD) or intervals.

Recent weather has already enabled outdoor sport activities (OSA) such as hiking. Call me extremely optimistic, a sucker for following the almanac, or just nuts but we are going to have five months of summer! I have observed early hikers that run up, hike up, struggle up, or stop longer than they hiking recently High School Butte lately. Most of the hikers have lost their ESD efficiency.

ESD allows individuals to recover quicker. I was recently asked during a group training session how to regain what was lost of ESD efficiency future hikes such as Snow King is not so difficult for the lungs.

To explain ESD, I provided an insert from the *Core Performance* book by Mark Verstegen. "Unlike traditional cardio work, ESD focuses on quality, not quantity, and trains the lactate (high intensity work for up to 3 minutes), alactate (high level work for periods of up to 12 seconds), and aerobic systems (the ability to work beyond 3 minutes). For instance, if you are sprinting up hills and walking down, you are using the lactate system on the way up and the aerobic system on the way down. In this case, the aerobic system enhances your recovery from these intense bursts of energy. ESD improves the function of the entire cardiovascular system while building endurance and helping the body tap into new energy levels."

Currently many individual's ESD levels tend to be adequate regardless of the recently inconsistency of ESD training. But the goal we teach here is that you always want to enter OSA as if you never left. A good little "get back into lung endurance" program is not as difficult as one may think. Anyone can use the following to measure how he/she is doing or enter at any stage based on current level of training. Using Snow King as an example:

Stage zero, consult with your physician prior to embarking upon any the following exercise regimens for this type of training may not be appropriate for everyone.

Stage one, hike up Snow King or Jose's Ridge from start to finish to establish a base line. Use what you feel as a moderate hiking pace and stop if you have to catch your breath. Use the same equipment you will continue to use every time you hike up Snow King such as camelback, water bottle, hiking poles...etc. Also, you want to gauge progression in some manner of total time, pedometer, heart rate average, number of stops...your choice. To be done once.

Stage two, hike faster than normal. Do not be concerned if you have to stop to catch your breath but do note total stop time or recovery time of pre hike heartbeat. Perform twice a week.

Stage three, hike with a five to 20-lb backpack. The pace can follow normal hiking as in stage one or stage two. Either way is fine and the mix up does great for your lungs. Once a week will suffice.

Stage four, pick a longer hiking trail like the Old Pass Road, Rendezvous Mountain or Goodwin Lake following stage one rules. Once a week is adequate.

Stage five, hike up Snow King just a bit faster than normal hiking speed and perform a set of 10 squats at each switch back. Feet are wide and pointing out to side. Concentrate on using the glutes and hamstrings. Continue hiking after the completion of the squats. Perform twice a week with 3-4 days in between.

Stage six, hike up Snow King and compare to stage one. Improvement and overall feeling of lung endurance should be enhanced. Now before my named is cursed if dramatic results are not seen take in the following considerations:

This type of program is standard and may not work for everyone. Avoid talking while hiking unless you consistently hike with a buddy. Inconsistent hiking, travel to sea level for long stays, allergies (not allergies to exercise, ha), stress, injury, recovery, over reaching (like over training), and nutritional needs all affect success or accelerated success.

Improvements can take up to two weeks or all summer depending upon current level of training and frequency. Also, concentrate using the glutes and hamstrings during any hikes and use poles to descend to avoid knee pain on the decent. Don't forget about DAMP (dynamic activation movement prep).

Enjoy the weather, get outside and do not forget your bear spray!