**SECRETS OF ENDURANCE TRAINING: Michael Hobbs-Aldridge. British Masters Champion.**

I am writing this as a competitive Masters Athlete (now 46 years of age) who, over the years, has enjoyed training and competing at distances from 3k (indoors) up to marathon.

I liked running at school but then lost interest until my late 20’s when I joined a club. My training at this point didn’t have structure and I had no real race plans other than to turn up, stick on my vest and run as fast as I could on the day. Results were ‘hit and miss’ and I would blindly accept that some days I would run well and others I wouldn’t. There was no mental connection between my training and what happened during a race. I had no ‘Race plan’ and I couldn’t tell you what time I thought I was going to run. There was no ‘formula’ behind what I was doing.

I was totally unaware of how different training methodologies could dramatically impact performance. VO2 max, tempo running, aerobic endurance, speed work etc were all just terms that I had heard of without actually understanding how they could be structured into a training programme to maximise whatever natural ability I had.

However,  a chance meeting 11 years ago with my now coach, Ian Wilson, transformed my knowledge of training and I began to understand how to train effectively, smartly and most importantly how to peak for races to give myself the best possible chance of winning. I learned how to personalise and pace every session to maximise the effect of that session.

The results were more than I could have hoped for. England Masters team selection at cross country followed by 10 British Masters gold medals winning the British age group titles at 5000m, 10000m, 10k, 10 mile, half marathon and cross country.

In 2019 I was ranked in the 10 in age group for every distance from 5k to marathon and I currently hold the 7th fastest time in history for Parkrun in the 45-50 year old category.

Over the next few weeks I want to share some of the secrets to my training that have helped me reach these goals.

These will include the physiology behind what makes a good endurance runner as well as tips on how to improve or maximise

1)     Lactic threshold

2)     VO2 max

3)     Speed endurance

4)     Aerobic capacity

5)     Flexibility

6)     Running economy

7)     Recovery

8)     Diet

Hopefully I will include some useful personal tips along the way starting with the most important one of all ….. Enjoy what you do !

Best wishes and happy running

Michael