



This time of year, in 1987, I was getting ready to begin my freshman year at KU, a year at KU made much more notable by the fact that Danny Manning and the Miracles took Kansas on an improbable run to a national championship that season. I've got all kinds of stats, figures and stories about that season still stored in my brain, but one in particular that I'd like to share with you here because it relates to the school year we are getting ready to begin (actually should have been starting tomorrow).

The Jayhawks were a good team that season but had not had a great regular season (8 losses including 3 at home in Allen Field House to what ended up being to the last 3 teams they'd have to play in the NCAA tournament). Because of this no one picked them to win the national championship. Throughout the NCAA tournament they were led by the eventual tournament MVP and Wooden Award winner Danny Manning, but in every game during their championship run another role player would step up and have an incredible game to keep the dream alive. When it was all said and done and the nets were cut down, there was a reporter who asked Danny Manning about how lucky the team had been throughout the tournament. To paraphrase his answer, Danny responded that he believed luck was when preparation met opportunity.

You can never know exactly when/where in life opportunities will present themselves, but one thing is certain – if you are not prepared to take advantage of them when they do, you will miss them. Danny and the Miracles didn't become national champions because just because they had the opportunity. Their storybook season happened because when the time arose, they were prepared to take advantage of it. This XC season and school year will be a lot like that. It's hard from where we sit right now to predict exactly how all of this will unfold and know exactly when, where and in what form our opportunities for greatness will present themselves. What we do know, however, is that unless we are prepared when they do come, we will miss them.

Hopefully, by the end of next week I'll have more to share about the "what and when" of our opportunities to train and race in XC this fall. Right now there's a lot happening/not happening very quickly and slowly at the same time if that makes sense. We had a building level coaches meeting last Thursday to talk about SMSD guidelines. This coming week I'll be in Sunflower League, Valkyrie Running Club (VRC) Board and KSHSAA (State) meetings. One of the hardest things about this spring/summer has been dealing with uncertainty. I know it's frustrating to not have answers to all of our questions about what's going to happen and when, but we're in the process of trying to figure that out and I'll share that with you as soon as I have a more solid picture of what the path ahead looks like. Of course, another challenge has been that every time we get new information, circumstances quickly change, which invalidates that information.

**BE CERTAIN:** For the time being I don't want to overwhelm you with a bunch of information about what "might" happen. I just want to focus on a few certainties.

- 1) We will face challenges/adversities/obstacles this year unlike any we've ever seen before.
- 2) While those challenges/adversities/obstacles are part of our path, they are not the path themselves. Our reaction and what we do in the face of them is the real determining factor in where we ultimately end up.
- 3) Challenges/adversities/obstacles are opportunities for greatness. We can only take advantage of them if we have prepared

ourselves physically, mentally and emotionally for when they come.

- 4) SMSD will follow Gating Criteria from the JOCO Health Dept. (**NOTE:** Regardless of which learning model you chose for 1<sup>st</sup> semester (Remote or Face-to-Face) you can still participate in XC)
  - Gating Criteria can be found at <https://www.jocogov.org/sites/default/files/documents/CMO/Reopening%20Schools%20Criteria%202020.pdf>
  - JOCO COVID-19 dashboard at [https://public.tableau.com/profile/mapper.of.the.day.mod.#!/vizhome/covid19\\_joco\\_public/Dashboard](https://public.tableau.com/profile/mapper.of.the.day.mod.#!/vizhome/covid19_joco_public/Dashboard)

**BE PREPARED:** Admittedly, we still have several unanswered questions about what lies ahead this season but as the VRC motto says:

*"First do what it necessary.  
Then do what is possible.  
Suddenly you are doing the impossible."  
-St. Francis of Assisi*

Our goal is to be prepared for whatever might come next, which again, we don't/can't 100% know. Often in the face of big challenges and uncertainty we can focus so much on what seems "impossible" about it that we get overwhelmed by it and become paralyzed both mentally and physically. What brings the "impossible" into the range of the possible, however, is a **focus on the necessary**. If you can have the resolve to do that, **focus on what needs to be done** you'll be amazed at what this will prepare you to accomplish. In keeping with that, here are your assignments (resolutions) for the coming week:

- 1) **Mark Your Calendar** – The first official day of practice is scheduled to be Monday 8/17. On M-F of that week practices will be from 7:00-9:15am at SMW (meet in the wrestling room, entering the back door, no lockers will be available). We will also have our first Saturday morning practice that week. More info on that as we get closer to the date as well as hopefully a meet schedule by the end of next week.
- 2) **Get your PPE (different PPE)– Sports Physicals (PPE) + Concussion forms must be completed AND turned in to the office** before any runner will be cleared to participate in practices – no exceptions! Do this by Friday 8/14. The link to the physical is: <https://smwest.smsd.org/athletics/physicalformconcussion-form>  
Options for turning these in include:
  - Fax and email to either [toddmcatee107@smsd.org](mailto:toddmcatee107@smsd.org), or [patriciamcccluskie@smsd.org](mailto:patriciamcccluskie@smsd.org).
  - Mail to school – MUST ARRIVE BY FRIDAY 8/14!
  - Drop them off at school to the table outside the front entrance from 8:00-10:00 am on 8/12-14.
 Many area chiropractors or CVS Minute Clinics can get you in quickly for an appointment.
- 3) **Stay Mentally Flexible** – Control what you can control and let the rest go. The key to traveling long distances quickly is to travel light. Why carry a 60-pound backpack of anxiety around filled with things you aren't actually yours to carry? Don't get too emotionally invested in any one course of action/plan for the season because as soon as you do things are likely to change. As one of my college roommates always said, "Work with it, not against it!"
- 5) **Stay Healthy** – I know it's frustrating not to be able to be together for training right now. Again, I know this feels like an obstacle, but it's also an opportunity. SMSD made this decision to put us all in the best possible position to be able to start practices on 8/17 and be able to begin racing on schedule and have a season. Limit your exposure to large groups and public places, social distance and wear your masks in public when you have to go out! Don't jeopardize our opportunities.
- 6) **Keep Training** – This is Week 11 overall which marks the beginning of our Pre-Competitive Phase of training. In other words, we're done getting ready to get ready to race, now we're getting ready to race! Since we're not able to be together again this week we'll need to be flexible on the types of workouts (going with plan B here) but have the resolve to be at your peak mileage for the year this week. When racing begins, weekly mileage will decrease, but for now, find your volume on the following table (if you have questions about where you should be, ask a coach):

WEEKLY VOLUME	GIRLS PEAK VOLUME			BOYS PEAK VOLUME			100% WORKOUT			
TOTAL (100%)	C	JV	V	C	JV	V	LONG (25% total)	MID-D (15% total)	BASE (10% total)	INTERVAL (7.5%)
20.0	X						5.0	3.0	2.0	6(400m)
25.0	X			X			6.25	3.75	2.5	7(400m)
30.0	X	X		X			7.5	4.5	3.0	9(400m)
35.0		X		X	X		8.75	5.25	3.5	10(400m)
40.0		X	X		X		10.0	6.0	4.0	12(400m)
45.0			X		X	X	11.25	6.75	4.5	14(400m)
50.0			X			X	12.5	7.5	5.0	15(400m)
55.0						X	13.75	8.0	5.5	16(400m)

**Week 11 Workouts:** Print this off if you can and check off all the boxes as you complete! Put yourself in position to have a great workout on 8/17! Any questions about workouts? Ask a coach!

Day	Arms/Abs* sets	Leg Swings + Lunges	Warm Up	Workout	Cool Down	Leg Strength*	Mobility Stretching*
<b>M 8/10</b>	1/1	Yes	1 mile + 8(100m) Strides 0:15-0:20	<b>Descending Fartlek (by feel)</b> 6:00 @ ½ Marathon (long run) pace + 3:00 steady 5:00 @ 10K (6-mile race) pace + 2:30 steady 4:00 @ 5K race pace + 2:00 steady 3:00 @ 3200m (2-mile race) pace + 1:30 steady 2:00 @ 1600m (1-mile) race pace + 1:00 steady 1:00 @ 800m (½ mile) race pace + 0:30 steady *steady is faster than “easy/recovery jog”	1-2 miles	2 sets	Dynamic
<b>T 8/11</b>	0/2	Yes	X	<b>Mid-D Run</b> (see mileage in previous table)	8(100m) Strides 0:15-0:20	1 set	Static
<b>W 8/12</b>	1/1	Yes	1 mile + 8(100m) Strides 0:15-0:20	<b>400m (¼ mile) Intervals @ 5K race pace</b> (see Interval mileage in previous table) 1 mile = 4(400m) (400m Pace = 5K time in seconds/12.5) Ex. 20:00 5K = 20 x 60 = 1200 seconds 1200 seconds/12.5 = 96 = <b>1:36 400m</b> *Recovery time = ½ of 400m time. Don’t cheat this! If you’re slow on 2 consecutive 400s take a longer break and divide workout into sets	1-2 miles	2 sets	Dynamic
<b>R 8/13</b>	0/2	Yes	X	<b>Base Run</b> (see mileage in previous table)	8(100m) Strides 0:15-0:20	1 set	Static
<b>F 8/14</b>	1/1	Yes	X	<b>Long Run</b> (see mileage in previous table)	X	2 sets	Dynamic
<b>S 8/15</b>	0/2	Yes	X	<b>Mid-D Run</b> (see mileage in previous table)	8(100m) Strides 0:15-0:20	1 set	Static
<b>S 8/16</b>	X	X		<b>Make up Miles or Rest</b> (see mileage in previous table)	x	X	You Choose

\*For Arms/Abs + Leg Strength + Mobility Stretching see **Extra Degree** tab on <https://valkyrierunning.com/training-tables/>

- 7) **Log Your Miles** – It’s important for us as coaches to know both what you are doing and how you are doing. Logging your miles is an act of accountability to putting in the work necessary to find out what your true potential is. Really there are three levels of accountability to this:

- Accountability to yourself
- Accountability to your coaches
- Accountability to your teammates

Good teams are accountable to their coaches. Great teams are accountable to their teammates. What kind of team do you aspire to be? What will that take from an accountability standpoint? Who is willing to hold other accountable? Beyond this accountability, remember that summer conditioning mileage logged also counts towards both:

- 400/500 Mile Club membership/t-shirts <https://valkyrierunning.com/training-champions/>
- Points toward lettering (see more at:) <https://valkyrierunning.com/guidelines-participation-lettering/>

Finish updating mileage for Weeks 1-10 (see tabs at bottom of spreadsheet) and log new mileage for week 11 at:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1mZliRBZPbiYFSCQnZR5\\_o0mfb6iTr2TEDW789CTW\\_bE/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1mZliRBZPbiYFSCQnZR5_o0mfb6iTr2TEDW789CTW_bE/edit?usp=sharing)

**BE AWESOME:** Great acts are a result of Good preparation. Small consistent daily acts (being good enough) put you in a place or prepare you to take advantage of opportunities for greatness when they arise down the line. You don’t have to be “great” every day. You just have to be “good enough” consistently over time. The key is to focus on the path/process and not become too fixated on the ultimate destination. If you were driving to Pike’s Peak in Colorado you won’t get there if all you look for is the sight of the mountain on the horizon even though that’s where you want to end up. You have to focus on the road directly ahead of you. It’s important to put in the miles (weekly volume + frequency), but it’s equally important what you put into the miles (intensity). We often encourage you to stretch after a workout/run but the reality is that when you’re doing a long/mid-d run, a tempo workout, repeats or hills – in all of those type of workouts we want you to stretch yourselves, to push a little harder than what feels comfortable so that you can stretch your comfort zone and in turn stretch your potential and your view of what’s possible.

Each week, from the start of summer conditioning to the end of the season, we try (it’s been hard to be consistent with that this summer!) to recognize people who have done just that. In other words, we’re always looking to recognize people who “stick” it in workouts in one way or another and do this by presenting them a Stafur (Viking/Icelandic for stick). This week I’d like to present this honor to two people in particular “stuck” out to me this last week for stretching themselves in runs, both of whom are newcomers to the team – **Josh Swanson** (Sr.) – great 12.5-mile Capillary Run! and **Kennedy Cash** (Fr.) – Solid 5-mile Mid-D run!

We run because we are not merely casual travelers on this journey, waiting passively to see what life brings our way.

We believe in the value and the need to identify, face and push through barriers in our way,  
both real and imagined, in order to move forward.

And so, we strive and train with a purposeful intent to explore, expand and transcend  
the boundaries and limits of the comfort zones that lie in our bodies, minds and spirits,  
keeping us safe within the limits of the known, but at the same time confining us and holding us back like a prison.

We run this path in the race of our lives to resolutely chase down our potential  
believing that any adversities we face are not meant to dissuade us  
but to take us to places we could not have otherwise gone or even imagined were possible.

We believe in this worthy pursuit, and we believe in the power of belief itself,  
because when we do believe, really believe, that anything is possible,  
nothing can hold us back.

So, what do you believe?