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10k ADVANCED TRAINING GUIDE

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Introduction

Before you begin

This advanced training guide focuses on everything you need to get started, sensible precautions to take, and it also contains a week-by-week structured programme that will convert you into a fitter, healthier, successful 10k runner. However, before you don your trainers and start that first training session, take a little time out to check a few safety considerations

Do you have the right training guide?

It could be dangerous to follow the advanced training guide if you are really a beginner or intermediate runner. If the following applies to you, you have the correct guide. However, if your current level of running training is less than the following, you may need the beginner or intermediate guide.

Current level of running training	Approximate expected finishing time band
You are already a runner	45 minutes or below.
You have been running for a year or more	
Your weekly long run is currently at least 6 miles	
You have competed in 5 mile and 5k events	
You are currently comfortable with running approximately 23 miles per week	
You have already completed several 10k races and are looking to improve your time	

Safety First

To start with, it is vitally important to ensure that it is safe for you to begin this programme. Complete the safety checklist below and if you answer YES to one or more questions, or alternatively, if you are at all concerned about starting training, then make an appointment with your doctor for a check-up before you start.

Health-status safety checklist

1	Are you aged over 30 and/or have not exercised for some time?	Y	N
2	Do you suffer from any medical conditions?	Y	N
3	Are you a smoker or have recently given up smoking?	Y	N
4	Have you undergone any surgery in the past two years?	Y	N
5	Are you suffering from any injuries?	Y	N
6	Are you currently on any prescribed medication?	Y	N
7	Are you unsure about beginning an exercise program?	Y	N

Once you have the all-clear from your doctor then you're ready to start training.

Getting Started

Specialist gear

You're already a runner and have experience of training and racing. You will already own many items of kit but specific kit items can not only aid your training and racing comfort, they can also improve your performance. Your target is to knock time off your current PB and choose the correct kit that can help you run faster and more efficiently. The most important point is that you have suitable clothing (particularly footwear) and that you feel comfortable in everything. The most technical and most important kit you need to buy are your running shoes and to replace them regularly. You may want to consider racing shoes for the event, which are lighter, stripped down versions of conventional trainers.

Shoes

Correct footwear is one area where you should never compromise. Good running shoes are an investment in comfort, protection and injury prevention and it is worth visiting a specialist sports footwear retailer rather than a chain store and discussing your requirements with them. A specialist retailer with gait analysis and pressure plate testing will be able to assess your requirements and recommend suitable shoes for your particular gait and running style. If you decide on racing shoes, they usually have less cushioning and motion control systems than standard trainers, so discuss your plans with your retailer. Racing shoes can be 50% lighter than training shoes and can make a big difference to your race times. Studies estimate that a time gain of up to 10 seconds per mile can be achieved with lightweight shoes, potentially knocking around 1 minute off your PB.

Socks

Advanced, lightweight and foot-specific socks (left and right fitting socks) have a great benefit in that they hug the foot better and there is no excess sock floating around in the shoe which may cause blisters. Some have specially designed wicking areas to help keep your feet dryer, together with more cushioning at the heel and forefoot. In addition to racing flats, specialist socks can further enhance your race day performance.

Shorts and tights

After socks come shorts, or when it is colder, tights. Shorts should be comfortable, lightweight and have the ability to wick away sweat when you train. Elastic-only shorts often move down a little, especially in wet conditions, so choose specific, lightweight shorts with both elastic and a draw-string waist.

When the weather is colder it is advisable to wear tights to keep your legs warmer and thus reduce the chance of injury. Fabric technology continues to advance and this has aided running no end with high tech materials filtering down to basic running kit like tights and t-shirts. Advanced running tights are available which hug the legs more efficiently and stop the wind and rain penetrating the leg itself. This helps in reducing injuries from cold muscles and also means that you can enjoy running when the weather is a little worse than ideal.

Your tights should be snug fitting and comfortable. It is important to try them on before you buy because many manufacturers have different cuts to suit different styles of runner. Generally the more expensive the tights, the more comfortable they will be and the better at keeping you cool in summer and warm in winter.

Running tops

Short and long-sleeve t-shirts have also benefited, like tights, from technological advances. The mid to top range t-shirts all wick away sweat to keep you cooler and allow a greater air circulation through the fabric. They feel very lightweight but have the properties to keep you warm or cool depending on when and how you wear them. Running t-shirts should be reasonably tight but not figure-hugging and likewise they shouldn't flap around when you run in them. It is a fine balance between well-fitted and slightly baggy that you should aim for. With long sleeve t-shirts, you should aim to get ones with cuffed sleeves so they stay down around your wrists. If there are no cuffs then the sleeves often ride up your arms when you run and this can be both annoying and cold.

Similarly, for hot weather training, modern vests are also designed with technological, wicking fabrics that also help air circulate around your body to aid cooling.

When the weather gets really cold or wet it is advisable to run in a gillet or a long-sleeve waterproof top. These offer excellent wind-stopping and rain-resistance capabilities and can keep you warm and dry throughout any run. Gillets are sleeveless jackets and ideal for quicker running in slightly warmer climates while full long-sleeve waterproofs are better for colder and wetter climates. The gillets at the top end are very high tech and guaranteed waterproof and windproof. Cheaper versions will be fine for most running conditions but they will sacrifice certain aspects like being 100% waterproof or windproof. Being prepared for cooler conditions enables you to stay warm, dry and enjoy the run more. In warmer climates the new fabrics and technologies enable you to train harder by staying cooler and wicking away sweat and moisture from the body.

Gloves

These should be lightweight and comfortable. Only in extreme weather will you need to wear thick running gloves and more often than not you will heat up enough to be okay in the normal thin type. Woollen gloves are the norm because they are cheap to buy, but they don't offer the same waterproof and wind-stopper capabilities of synthetic fabrics. Woollen gloves will be fine for most runners but if you are venturing out into colder or wetter climates, it is worth investing in a more advanced pair. Running with cold hands can ruin the experience for you, so choose carefully when you buy, especially if it is near wintertime.

Hats

Hats are similar to gloves in that woollen ones are the norm because they are easy to get hold of and are cheap. Fleece materials offer wind-stopping capabilities and some are waterproof as well. Caps offer greater protection from the rain, snow and sun but often they can get blown off in windy conditions. They don't offer the same warmth capabilities as woollen/synthetic fabrics but they are good when you need better protection from the elements. In addition, they are better for runners who wear glasses because they help the glasses from getting rain or snow on.

Sports bras

It is important to wear a sports bra that fits you snugly and gives adequate support for running. Everyone is different and you may well need to try on a few different products before finding what is just right for you.

So does your sports bra fit?

- Your bra should fit snugly without being uncomfortably tight
- The bra should fit without any bulges around the sides
- The shoulder straps should not dig in (wider straps can be more comfortable)
- When you run there should be significantly less bounce than with a normal bra. There are many excellent bras on the market, which come in a large range of sizes and colours offering every different level of support.

Principles of training

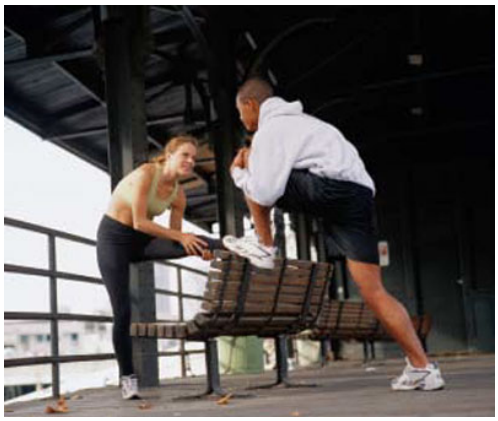
It is common to think that when a training improvement is made, for example running further or running a faster time over a particular distance, that the improvement has been made at that specific time. In fact that is not the case, the improvement has been made some time previously, following an earlier training session. During the training session, it is the measurable results that are registered in the form of quicker times or further distances. This is because of the way the body responds to training. When exercising, the body is challenged. Following a training session, when the body is at rest, it adapts, gets stronger and improvements can be measured during a subsequent session. Hence the most important component of any training programme is rest, so that the body is able to adapt to training. Less is very often more in the long term and inadequate rest can result in excessive fatigue, loss of motivation and at worst, injury.

As an advanced runner, looking to improve on your existing race times, it is easy to think that the best training strategy is to continually increase both your mileage and training intensity. However, if you neglect rest from your training programme, you will never be able to perform at your optimum level and those elusive PBs may never be reached.

Structuring your sessions

Following correct exercise protocols is key to getting the most out of your training, so that you start out on the road to fitness with safe and correctly balanced training sessions. To get the most out of your training, you should adhere to the following sequence each time you train:

Warm Up



The warm up raises the heart rate, gets blood flowing to the working muscles and prepares the body for exercise. It should be for a minimum of five minutes and replicate the movements or activities of the main session.

For example: when beginning a run, five minutes very easy jogging will prime the body for the main training session.

Mobility

Some basic actions to put the limbs through the range of movement that the main session requires will ensure that the joints are loosened up, lubricated and will function more efficiently.

Main Session

This will form the bulk of the training session. For example: a brisk 30-minute run.

Cool Down

The cool down should be at a lower intensity than the main session and should bring the body temperature and heart rate closer to pre-exercise levels. Waste by-products of exercise will be flushed from the muscles and tissues, accelerating recovery before the next training session.

For example: the cool-down should be a minimum of five to 10 minutes light CV. Jogging or walking is ideal.

Flexibility

Stretching exercises should be carried out after the main session and cool-down as the body is in a greater state of relaxation than at the beginning of the session. Five to 10 minutes spent stretching the muscles worked will maintain suppleness.

How to Stretch

To get the most out of your post exercise stretching session, simply follow the step-by-step guide below:

Relax

It is very important to be relaxed. Physical and mental tension will inhibit your range of movement and prevent your muscles from stretching as effectively. Hence, you will not achieve maximum flexibility benefits.

Ease into the stretch

Gradually move your body or the limb being stretched into the stretch position. Once you feel slight tension in the muscle, (known as the point of bind), which is the limit of the muscle's flexibility, hold the position. Avoid bouncing or any other movements, which could overstretch the muscle and result in injury.

Relax your breathing

Always keep your breathing easy and relaxed because that will reduce all-round muscular tension, which in turn will allow you to stretch further. Holding your breath will tense up your entire body, making stretching much harder.

Hold for 30 seconds

To get maximum stretching benefits, you need to hold the stretch for a minimum of 30 seconds. Stretching each muscle for just a few seconds brings no flexibility benefits.

Pain means no gain

Stretching should invoke a mild feeling of 'tightness' or tension within the stretched muscle. Pain when stretching indicates injury or a muscle that has been overstretched. Therefore, never stretch beyond a 'comfortable tightness'.

Rest and repeat

A single stretch for each muscle is very beneficial but if time permits, carry out two stretches for each muscle, separated by a short break of 30 seconds. The second stretch will help extend your range of movement further.

Frequency

Ideally stretch the major muscles after every run but if that proves too time-consuming, stretching twice a week is a suitable target.

Additional Training

Obviously running will form the core of all your training because you are training to condition your body to complete the distance. However, it is also beneficial to incorporate other types of training in your programme, so that you get to the start line in the best possible shape.

Flexibility training

There are a multitude of flexibility exercises for stretching every muscle in the body. Primarily, you need to focus on leg stretches to keep your muscles long, supple and injury free. The key is to ensure that the muscles that have been utilised during your workout are stretched at the end of the training session.

For example: at the end of your run and cool down, spend a few minutes stretching the hamstrings, quadriceps, calves and adductors.

Cross-training

Cross-training is the name given to other forms of training that complement your running training. Cross-training can be extremely beneficial because it allows your body to recover from a run whilst still providing training benefits. Running is a very repetitive activity that if not carried out correctly, can lead to overuse injuries. By occasionally adding different activities to your programme, you keep fresh and significantly reduce any injury risk.

For example: the day after a long endurance training run, a light swimming session or bike ride will still provide cardiovascular benefits but without the same loading on muscles that have been fatigued from running.

Resistance training (weight training)

Resistance training is extremely beneficial to complement your running; strengthening all around the body and correcting any muscle imbalances. The range of resistance training exercises for training specific muscles is immense, and can enhance your running performance through improved posture and all-round strength.

The importance of strength, conditioning and additional training

There’s a vast amount of research that backs up the benefits of including strength and conditioning sessions into your training schedule. Therefore specific strength and conditioning sessions are recommended throughout this race guide. Whilst we are all different and require individualised training programmes, there are certainly areas that you'll want/need to focus on in these sessions.

The glutes – The glutes are a massively underused muscle group and, if you can get them firing well, your running will become a lot more efficient and you'll notice your power increase.

The major leg muscles – Your major leg muscles will also need strengthening; hamstrings, quadriceps and calf muscles. Not only will stronger muscles improve your performance and endurance, but they will also help protect your joints from the significant impact forces they are subjected to whilst you are running.

The core – Another key area to focus on is your core. Core strength stabilises your hips and makes your running more efficient.

If you make sure your strength and conditioning sessions incorporate exercises that train all the muscles and muscle groups mentioned above, you’ll be a stronger, faster and more efficient runner. To create your own strength and conditioning session the first step is to speak with a gym instructor or personal trainer at your local gym or health club to help put a programme together and to ensure correct technique.

Advanced 10k Training Guide

Program notes

For each session in the programme, follow the protocols for warm-up, mobility, main session, cool-down and flexibility outlined earlier. Start at week one but if your training is slightly ahead, you can jump in at a later week. Simply check the week-by-week chart to see which week matches your current activity levels and then start at that point.

There is flexibility within the programme for switching training sessions around during the week to fit in with your other commitments such as work, home, family etc.

The key point is to ensure that your training is balanced each week, including flexibility, CV and rest.

Insight

Don’t be a slave to the guide! The training programme is designed with rest days, recovery sessions and lower volume weeks. This will ensure your body has time to adapt to the training. However, everyone is different and if you feel that an extra day’s rest will be beneficial to your training, simply take out one of the shorter sessions in that week.

Who is this guide for?

This is a performance focused training guide for someone looking to take their 10k training to the next level and improve their PB. This guide has been devised for the keen 10k race runner who has already participated in at least five 10k events.

Predicted finish time:

Whilst every runner is different, by following this guide your predicted finishing time will be 45 minutes or below.

The training guide will work on a four times four week phase. In each four week phase, three weeks will be a building mileage and intensity. The fourth week in each phase will be active recovery to absorb all the training completed, before the possibility of a race at the end of the week.

Each run session should start with a 10 minute warm-up and finish with a 10 minute warm down.

Advanced Training Guide

Week No.1	**Laying the Foundations**		
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional	1 easy run totalling no more than 5 miles		0-5
Mon	5 mile steady run		5
Tues	3 x 1600m (2 mins jog/walk recovery between sets)	A jog/walk is more beneficial to recovery than remaining static	4
Wed	Strength and Conditioning	A 30 minute session to include arms, legs and core	
Thurs	Rest		
Fri	6 x 400m (2 mins jog/walk recovery between sets)	Keeping to 2 minutes recovery to keep quality of session	3
Sat	4 miles easy	Recovery run after yesterday	4
Sun	6 miles easy	Nice and easy as you build on this distance for your long Sunday run	6
		Total weekly mileage	**22-27**

Week No.2	**Building endurance and speed**		
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional	1 easy run totalling no more than 5 miles		0-5
Mon	Rest		
Tues	4 x 1000m (2 mins jog/walk recovery between sets)		4
Wed	Strength and Conditioning – as per week 1		
Thurs	5 miles steady		5
Fri	5 mile hilly speed session	Alternate ½ mile easy ½ mile hard	5
Sat	Rest		
Sun	7 miles easy	Distance progression from week 1	7
		Total weekly mileage	**21-26**

Week No.3	**Building endurance and running speed**		
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional	1 easy run totalling no more than 5 miles		0-5
Mon	4 miles easy		4
Tues	2 x 1000m, 2 x 800m, 2x 400m, 2 x 200m (2 mins jog/walk recovery between all sets)		4
Wed	Strength and Conditioning - Run 1 mile before and 1 mile after session		2
Thurs	4 miles easy		4
Fri	4 mile speed session	½ mile easy ½ mile hard	4
Sat	Rest		
Sun	7 miles easy		7
		Total weekly mileage	**25-30**

Week No.4	**Recovery week followed by a 3 mile (5k) Time Trial**		
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional			
Mon	Rest		
Tues	5 x 400m (1 min jog/walk recovery between sets)		3
Wed	Strength and Conditioning		
Thurs	5 miles steady off road if possible		5
Fri	After warm-up, 6 x 1 min stride outs (1 min Jog recovery between each effort)	Stride outs at your perceived 5k pace	2
Sat	2 mile easy jog		2
Sun	3 mile time-trial	Pace judgement for full effort from start to finish - Remember good 10 min warm-up and 10 min warm down	3
		Total weekly mileage	**16**

Week No.5	**Build phase again**		
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional	1 easy run totalling no more than 5 miles		0-5
Mon	30 min mobility/stretch workout to aid recovery from time trial		

Tues	4 miles easy		4
Wed	Strength and Conditioning - Run 1 mile before and 1 mile after session		2
Thurs	5 miles steady		5
Fri	6 mile hilly speed session	Compare speed to week 2's hilly speed session	6
Sat	4 miles easy		4
Sun	6 miles steady	Progression on speed of Sunday's long run	6
		Total weekly mileage	**27-32**

Week No.6			
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional	1 easy run totalling no more than 5 miles		0-5
Mon	5 miles easy		5
Tues	4 x 1600m (2 mins jog/walk recovery between sets)	See if you can improve time on each 1600m split from week 1 with extra 1600m effort	5
Wed	Strength and Conditioning - Run 1 mile before and 1 mile after session		2
Thurs	5 miles steady		5
Fri	8 x 400m (2 mins jog/walk recovery between sets)	See if you can improve time on each 400m split from week 1 with two extra efforts	4
Sat	Rest		
Sun	6 miles steady		6
		Total weekly mileage	**27-32**

Week No.7			
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional	1 easy run totalling no more than 5 miles		0-5
Mon	5 miles easy		5
Tues	2 x 1000m, 2 x 800m, 2x 400m, 2 x 200m (2 mins jog/walk recovery between all sets)	Compare session to week 3 for speed progression	4
Wed	Strength and Conditioning – Run 1 mile before and 1 mile after session		2
Thurs	5 miles building pace to steady		5

Fri	5 mile hilly speed session	1 min easy, 2 min hard	5
Sat	Rest		
Sun	7 miles steady		7
		Total weekly mileage	**28-33**

Week No.8	**Recovery week followed by a time trial at the end**		
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional			
Mon	Rest		
Tues	5 x 400m (1 min jog/walk recovery between sets)		3
Wed	Strength and Conditioning		
Thurs	5 miles steady	Off road if possible	5
Fri	After warm-up, 6 x 1 min stride outs (1 min jog recovery between each effort)	Stride outs at your perceived 10k race pace	2
Sat	2 miles easy jog		2
Sun	3 mile (5k) time-trial with 10 min warm-up and 10min warm down	Compare time to week 4	4
		Total weekly mileage	16

Week No.9	**Build phase again – long run now race distance**		
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional	2 easy runs totalling no more than 6 miles		0-6
Mon	Rest		
Tues	5 miles including 8 x 2 mins hill climb repetitions	Building strength and speed	5
Wed	Strength and Conditioning – Run 1 mile before and 1 mile after sessions		2
Thurs	5 miles steady		5
Fri	6 mile tempo run	Build the speed slowly until at 5 miles you hit 10k race pace	6
Sat	4 miles easy		4
Sun	7 miles steady		7
		Total weekly mileage	29-35

Week No.10	**Long Run on Sunday enhances endurance capability**		
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional	2 easy runs totalling no more than 6 miles		0-6
Mon	Rest		

Tues	5 x 1600m (2 mins jog/walk recovery between sets)	Progression on number of 1600m efforts	6
Wed	Strength and Conditioning - Run 1 mile before and 1 mile after session		2
Thurs	5 miles easy		5
Fri	10 x 400m (2 mins jog/walk recovery between sets)	Progression on number of 400m efforts	4
Sat	5 miles easy		5
Sun	8 miles steady		8
		Total weekly mileage	30-36

Week No.11			
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional	2 easy runs totalling no more than 6 miles		0-6
Mon	5 miles easy		5
Tues	2 x 1000m, 2 x 800m, 2x 400m, 2 x 200m (90 seconds jog/walk recovery between all sets)	Compare to week 7 with less rest this time	4
Wed	Strength and Conditioning – Run 1 mile before and 1 mile after session		2
Thurs	5 miles steady		5
Fri	6 mile speed session to include 10 min warm-up and down	1 min easy, 2 mins hard	6
Sat	Rest		
Sun	9 miles steady	Longest run before 6 mile (10k) race	9
		Total weekly mileage	31-37

Week No.12	**Recovery week followed by time trial at the end**		
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional			
Mon	Rest		
Tues	5 x 400m (1min jog/walk recovery between sets)		3
Wed	Strength and Conditioning		
Thurs	6 miles steady off road	Off road if possible	6
Fri	After warm-up, 6 x 1min stride outs (1 min jog recovery between each effort)	Stride outs at your perceived 5k race pace in preparation for Sunday	2

Sat	2 mile jog		2
Sun	Race 3 miles (5k) or 3 mile time trial	Looking for speed	3
		Total weekly mileage	16

Week No.13			
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional	2 easy runs totalling no more than 6 miles		0-6
Mon	Rest		
Tues	5 miles easy		5
Wed	Strength and Conditioning - Run 1 mile before and 1 mile after session		2
Thurs	5 miles steady		5
Fri	5 mile hilly speed session	1 min easy, 2 mins hard	5
Sat	Rest		
Sun	6 miles steady	Covering 6 miles (10k) at least 20 seconds slower per mile than you would expect to do on race day	6
		Total weekly mileage	23-29

Week No.14	**Start tapering for 6 mile (10k) road race**		
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional	1 easy early morning run totalling no more than 5 miles		0-5
Mon	Rest		
Tues	3 x 1600m (2 mins jog/walk recovery between sets)	Compare speed to week 1	4
Wed	Strength and Conditioning - Run 1 mile before and 1 mile after session		2
Thurs			
Fri	6 x 400m (2 mins jog/walk recovery between sets)	Compare to week 1	4
Sat	6 miles easy off road		6
Sun	6 miles steady	Covering 6 miles at least 20 seconds slower per mile than you would expect to do on race day	6
		Total weekly mileage	22-27

Week No.15			
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional	1 easy run totalling 5 miles		0-5
Mon	3 miles easy		3
Tues	4x 400m, 4 x 200m (2 mins jog/walk recovery between all sets)		3
Wed	Strength and Conditioning – Run 1 mile before and 1 mile after session		2
Thurs	4 miles easy		4
Fri	4 miles hilly speed session	2 mins easy 1 min hard	4
Sat	Rest		
Sun	5 miles steady		5
		Total weekly mileage	21-26

Week No.16	**Race week!**		
Day	**Training**	**Training notes**	**Mileage**
Optional			
Mon	Rest		
Tues	1 mile warm-up, 1 mile at 6 mile (10k) race pace, 1 mile warm down		3
Wed	4 miles easy		4
Thurs	4 miles steady		4
Fri	Rest		
Sat	2 mile jog		2
Sun	Race Day!	Start at a comfortable pace, you will be tired at 4 miles, but able to hold pace for final 2 miles	6
		Total weekly mileage	21

Conclusion

Well done!

You have come to the end of the 16-week schedule, and your speed, strength, endurance and speed endurance has advanced. You should be feeling considerably fitter and feel yourself moving up. Along the way, you have made significant health and fitness gains, and equally importantly, you have progressed safely. As well as your race goals, by maintaining your training, you will be making a major contribution to your long-term health and fitness and this advanced schedule can also serve as a foundation and springboard to increase your fitness levels further.

Statistics show that most runners can continue to improve and progress for at least seven years after they first take up the sport. Now you've advanced and have improved, after a race recovery period, evaluate your training and racing strengths and weaknesses before you launch into your next racing challenge. That way you can map out a structured guide that could see you advance further in your next competition.

Disclaimer
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