



IAAF

**GLOBAL SEMINAR
ON CROSS COUNTRY RUNNING**

Belgrade, Serbia – 9 December 2013

Welcome



ESSAR GABRIEL
IAAF General Secretary

Introduction



SEBASTIAN COE
IAAF Vice President

Seminar Agenda



- 9:00 Introduction by the Chair, Sebastian Coe
- 9:20 Cross Country Running as a Unique Discipline
- 9:50 Cross Country Running as a Means to Track/Road Success
Round Table Discussion
- 10:40 A Coaches Perspective to Cross Country Running
BREAK
- 11:30 A Physiological and Philosophical Perspective to Cross Country running
- 12:10 Participation at the IAAF World Cross Country Championships
LUNCH
- 14:15 The Future of Cross Country Running
Round Table discussion
- 15:30 Conclusions and Wrap Up
- 16:00 END

Annette Sergent (FRA)



“Running cross country means, for me, more freedom. I like running with nature, discovering different courses; I feel free of the stopwatch and much closer to my feelings. In competitions, I like the ‘team spirit’ and the cheering crowds.”



First steps

At the age of 10, I won a school cross country race and the sports teacher asked me to join the athletics club.

Basic Training

I practiced all disciplines; running, jumping, throwing in summer and cross country in winter.

Second steps (1980 - 1986)

Cross country as winter preparation to get results on the track

Benefits:

- Base training
- Development of natural muscle strength
- Maintain training standards whilst enhancing aerobic activity
- Establish short and mid term goals for self motivation
- Team spirit development

Develop mental strength:

- Learn to adapt to difficult and changing circumstances
- Learn to trust your instincts
- Forget the stopwatch
- Listen to your body
- When to go fast
- When to hold back

Annette Sergent (FRA)

Good results on the track

- National records and titles
- International team selections
- Olympic Games participation at age 22



Annette Sergent (FRA)



Third Steps (1986 to 1990)

Cross country as a means in itself

Annette Sergent (FRA)



Why?

- 1985 1st victory in a national cross country race
- 1986 World cross country bronze medallist
- 1986 disappointing track season (injured and 8th in EC at 3000m)
- I like this event!!!

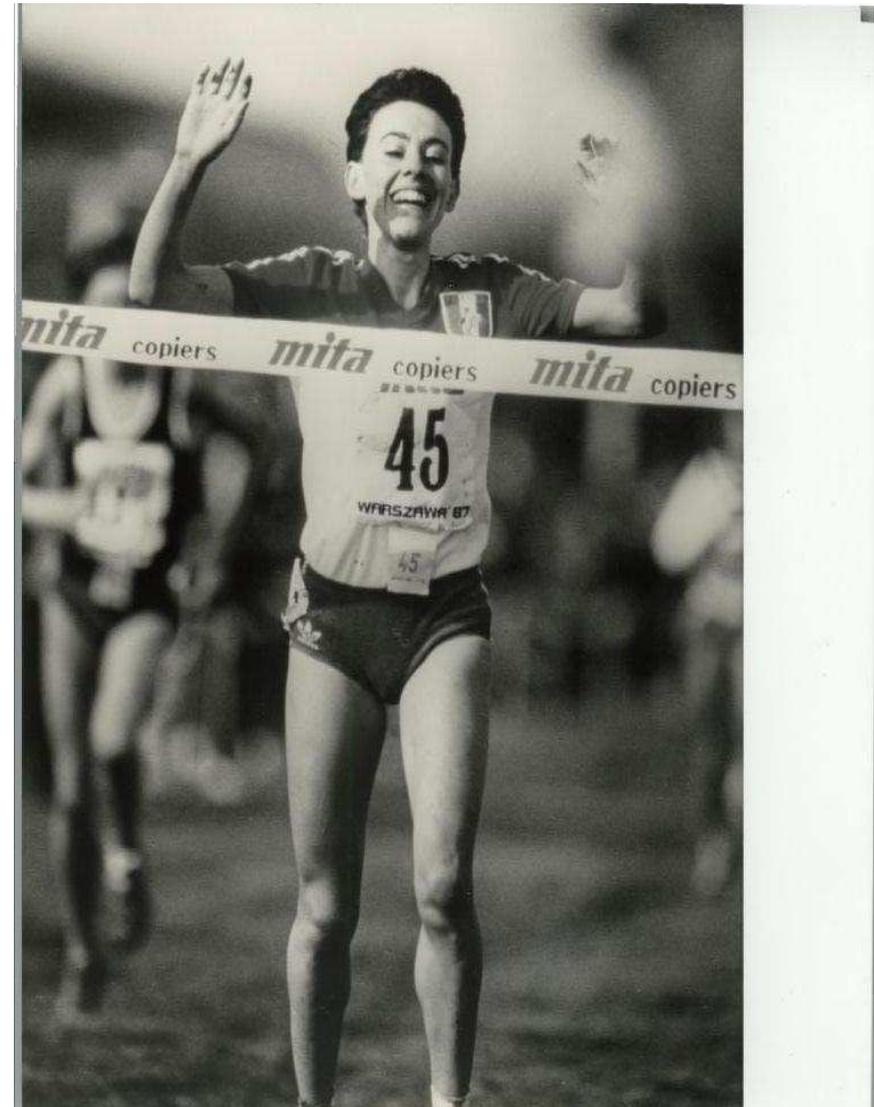
How ?

- More specific and intense training
- Attendance at Training camps in optimum conditions
Warm climate, synthetic track, healthy living etc...
- International cross country meetings

Annette Sergent (FRA)

1987

1st World Cross Country Title



Cross Country Results

- regular, individual (3, 1, 3, 1) and team (2, 3, 2, 3)
- with great track and road champions

I. Christiansen (14'37/ 30'13), O. Bondarenko, D. Tulu, R. Mota, L. McColgan (14'59 / 30'57), L. Jennings (15'11 / 31'20), L. Williams , S. Sirma (15'03 / 8'39), J. Ngotho, M. Puica.

Annette Sergent (FRA)

Track results

1990 bronze medallist
European Championships



Finally

“Running cross country means, for me, more freedom. I like running with nature, discovering different courses; I feel free of the stopwatch and much closer to my feelings. In competitions, I like the ‘team spirit’ and the cheering crowds.”

It brought me:-

- Recognition as an international athlete
- Confidence
- Financial comfort and support to pursue training
- Fame

11 international championship medals:

2 World Cross Country Titles, 1987 and 1989

2 times World Cross Country Team Silver medalist (1987-1989)

2 World Cross Country bronze medals

3 World Cross Country team bronze medals

1990 10,000m European Championship bronze medallist

32 French team selections including:

3 Olympic Games Team Selection (84 - 88 - 92)

21 National Champion titles (from 1981 to 1995)

Records :

1500m : 4:10.14

3000m : 8:44.19

5000 m : 15:11.44

10,000 m: 31:51.68

Half-marathon: 1:11.21

Marathon: 2:39

Craig Virgin (USA)



“Cross country was always my first love in running. It’s a wonderful, cathartic experience! A pure feeling, being out in the country, especially in the fall when the weather is cool and the leaves change.”



Craig Virgin (USA)

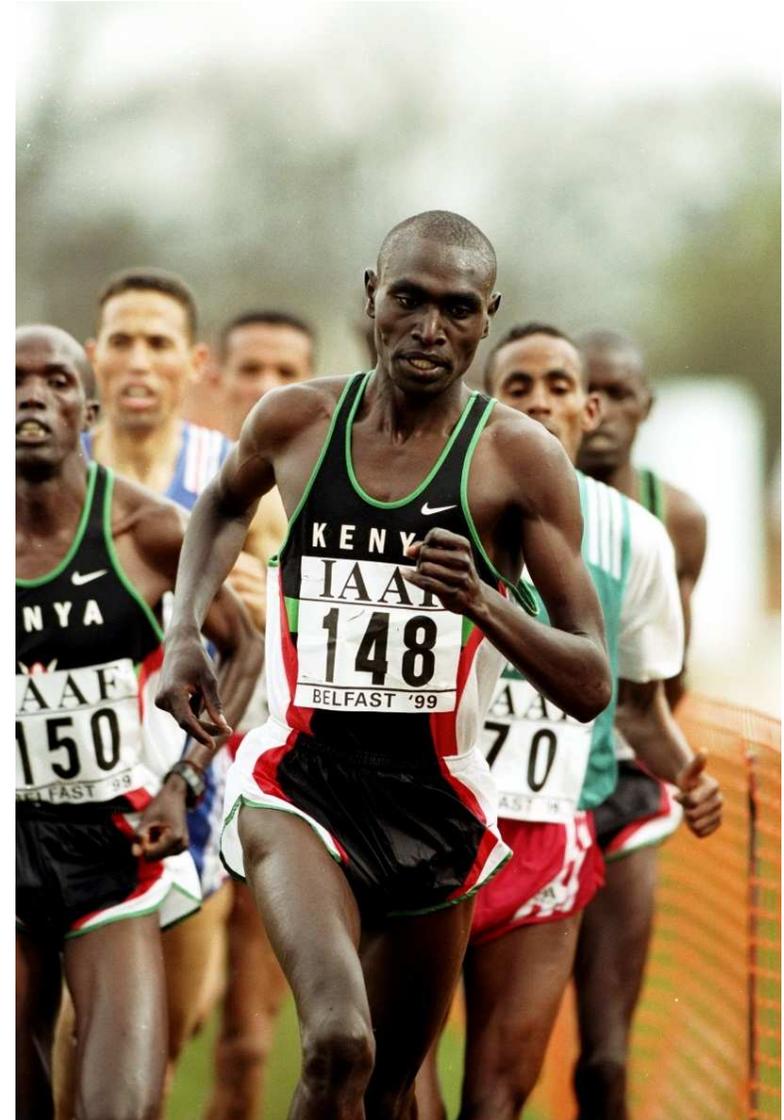


"If I only had one more day to run.... I'd definitely make it a cross country race! Cross country was my first love.... and my best love.... in competitive running!"

Benjamin Limo (KEN)



“In life the daily challenges and obstacles we face, are the key pillars to be strong and successful in the future.”



Benjamin Limo (KEN)



CROSS COUNTRY RUNNING AS SUCCESS TO TRACK AND ROAD RUNNING

Successful male and female athletes in cross country and consequently, track and road running

Cross Country tactics that pay off in track and road running

Successful male athletes in cross country, and consequently, track stars

John Ngugi – Kenya

- 5 time Cross Country champion
- Seoul Olympic 5000m gold medallist

Paul Tergat - Kenya

- 5 time World Cross Country champion
- 2 time World Half Marathon champion
- Former Marathon World record holder

Kenenisa Bekele – Ethiopia

- 6 time World Cross Country champion
- 3 time Olympic gold medalist
- 5 time World Champion
- World record holder – 5000m and 10,000m

Zedenay Tadese – Eritrea

- 1 time World Cross Country champion
- 5 time World Half Marathon champion

Successful female athletes in cross country and consequently track and road running stars

Paula Radcliffe – Great Britain

- 3 time European Cross Country champion
- 3 time World Cross Country champion
- Marathon World champion
- Marathon World record holder

Tirunesh Dibaba – Ethiopia

- 5 time World Cross Country champion
- 5 time World champion
- 3 time Olympic gold medallist

Vivian Cheruiyot – Kenya

- 2 time World Cross Country champion
- 3 time World champion

CROSS COUNTRY TACTICS PAY OFF IN TRACK AND ROAD RUNNING.

Champions do not become champions when they win the event, but in the hours, weeks, months and years they spend preparing for it. The victorious performance itself is merely the demonstration of their championship character.

-- T. Alan Armstrong



Consistent Mileage during Cross Country training helps build endurance which is useful for track and road running.

Cross Country Tempo Speed work and fartlek help the muscles and is vital for the finishing sprint in track and road running.

Hill Workouts training for Cross Country works the legs. Jogging down the hilly surface, too, to gives the quadriceps a good workout. The power built will be helpful in track and road running.

Cross Country Terrain



Cross country terrain makes constant adjustments in balance, using more muscles because the ground beneath their feet is uneven. This will help build balance necessary for consistency running.



Benefits of Cross Country



The benefits of cross country running are both mental and physical. A runner who runs in cross-country is more robust and more versatile, this help build endurances necessary for track and road running

Training and competing in cross country season provides tough physical training, working over a wide range of speeds and Endurances. This provides a good time records and event breaking a world record.

Quote

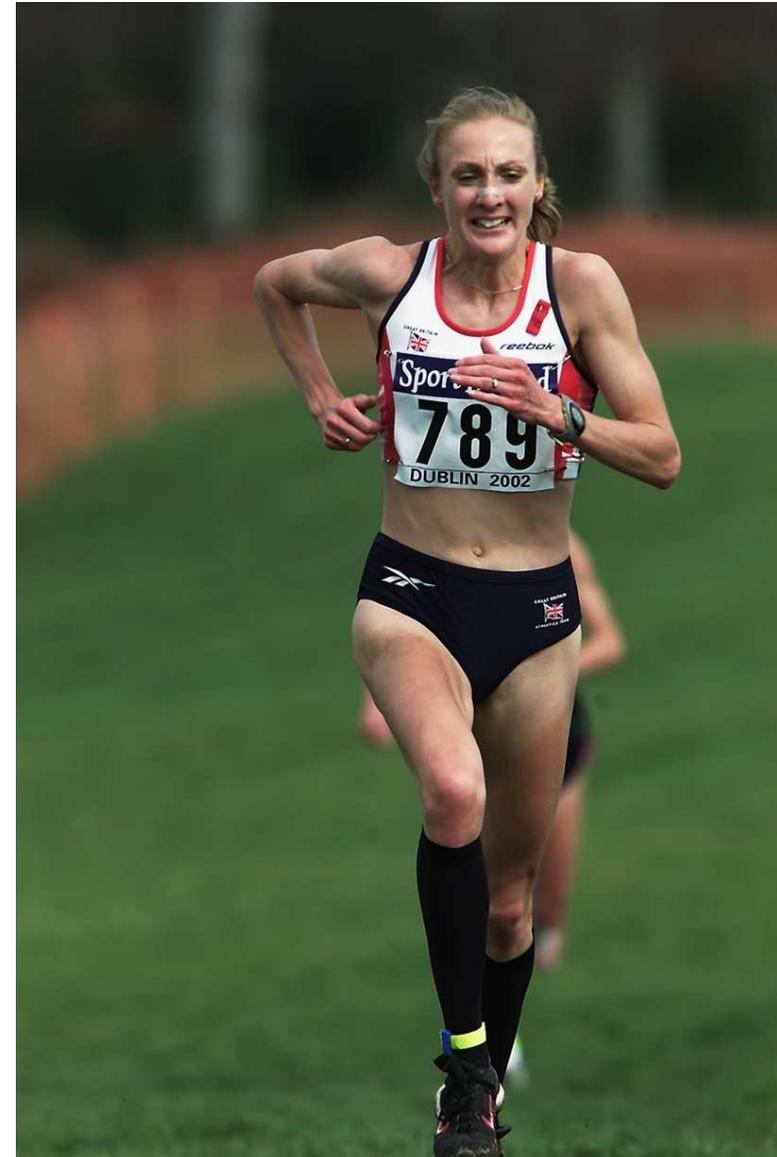
In life daily challenges and obstacles we face, are the key pillars to be strong and successful in future.

Benjamin Limo

Paula Radcliffe (GBR)



“Cross country is the purest, simplest and most natural way of racing. There are no split times or pace makers, you run by feel and instinct, racing to your physical and mental limits and stretching the boundaries. A true cross country race tests all of these.”



Sonia O'Sullivan (IRL)



“Cross country is the backbone of athletics, it is what makes us strong and relentless on the track, knowing the challenges we have overcome, and strength and fitness built up throughout the winter months.”



Sonia O'Sullivan (IRL)



1987 Irish Cross Country Championships



Sonia O'Sullivan (IRL)



1987 Cork City Sports, Irish Junior Record 3000m

Sonia O'Sullivan (IRL)



1998 IAAF World Cross Country
Championships, Short and Long Course
Gold Medalist



Sonia O'Sullivan (IRL)



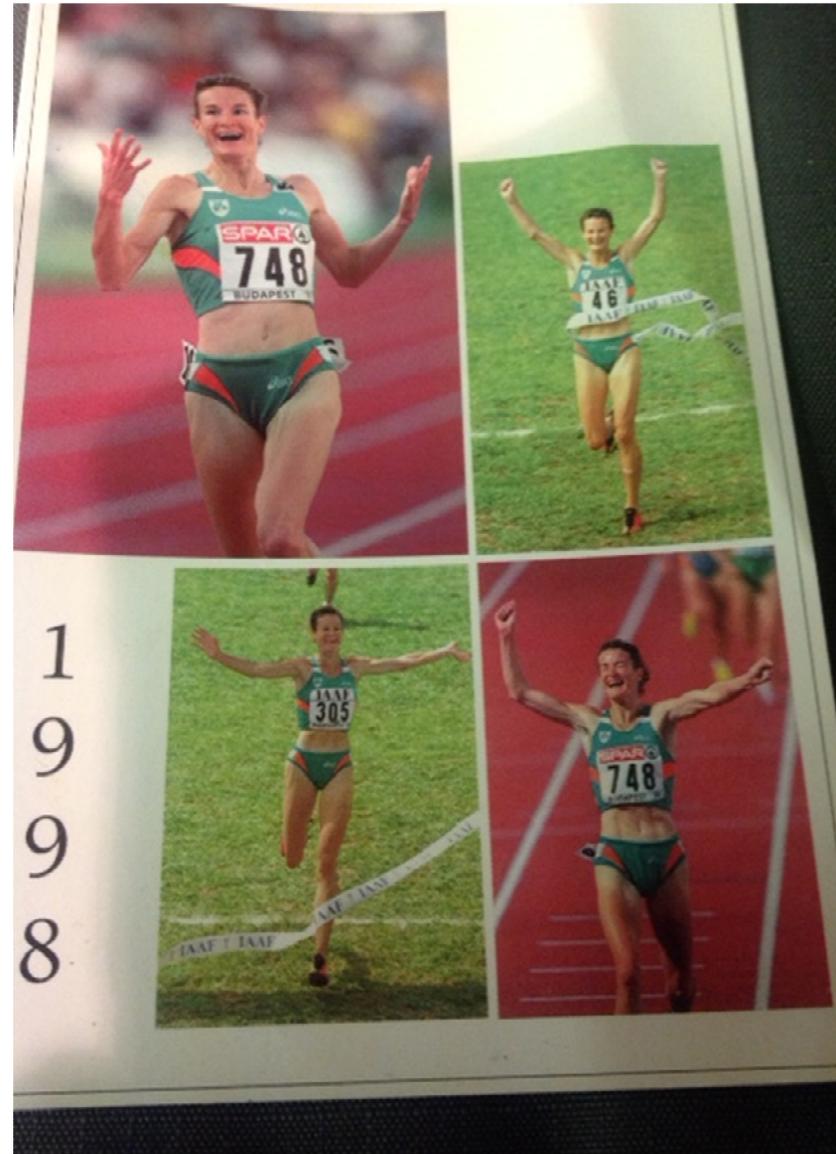
1998 European Championships, 5000m and 10,000m Gold Medalist

Sonia O'Sullivan (IRL)

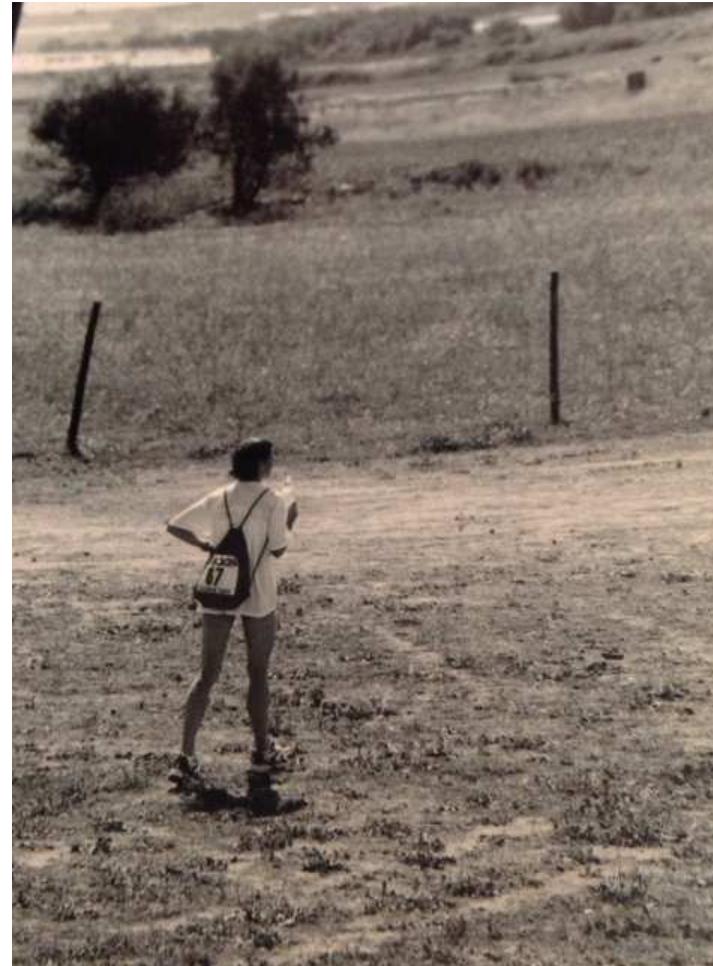


DOUBLE

DOUBLE



Sonia O'Sullivan (IRL)



2000 World Cross Country Championships, Vilamoura, 7th Place Finish

Sonia O'Sullivan (IRL)



2000 Olympic Games, Sydney, 5000m Silver Medallist



A Coaches Perspective to Cross Country Running

Ibrahim Kipkemboi Hussein (KEN)



“Cross country is the cornerstone of Kenyan athletics”









Background



Sports in Kenya is very much intertwined with culture

Athletics was formally organized in Kenya around 1922. It was introduced by the British

Cross Country in Kenya



Kenya has dominated the IAAF World Cross Country Championships in the past quarter century.

The Kenyan men's team won 24 world championships, including 18 in a row until Ethiopia won in 2004-05.

The junior men's team won 23 titles since 1988, and the women's team has won four straight since 2009.

Junior women have won 15 world championships.

Five men have won individual world cross country titles in the men's division

Kenyan Coaches and Athletes have taken advantage of:

- Environment (Terrain)
- Surface
- Altitude
- Season
- Distances
- Nature of Running (Team Event)
- Training for Cross Country

The IAAF started subsidizing the participation of developing countries in the World Cross Country Championships, Kenya began to take the event seriously.

The Federation started to make a big deal out of the National Cross Country Championship and set up a three-week training camp for the team before the Worlds – They way they had established a pre-Olympic camps but more thorough.

Kenyan Success



Men: John Ngugi, William Sigei, Paul Tergat, John Kiboen

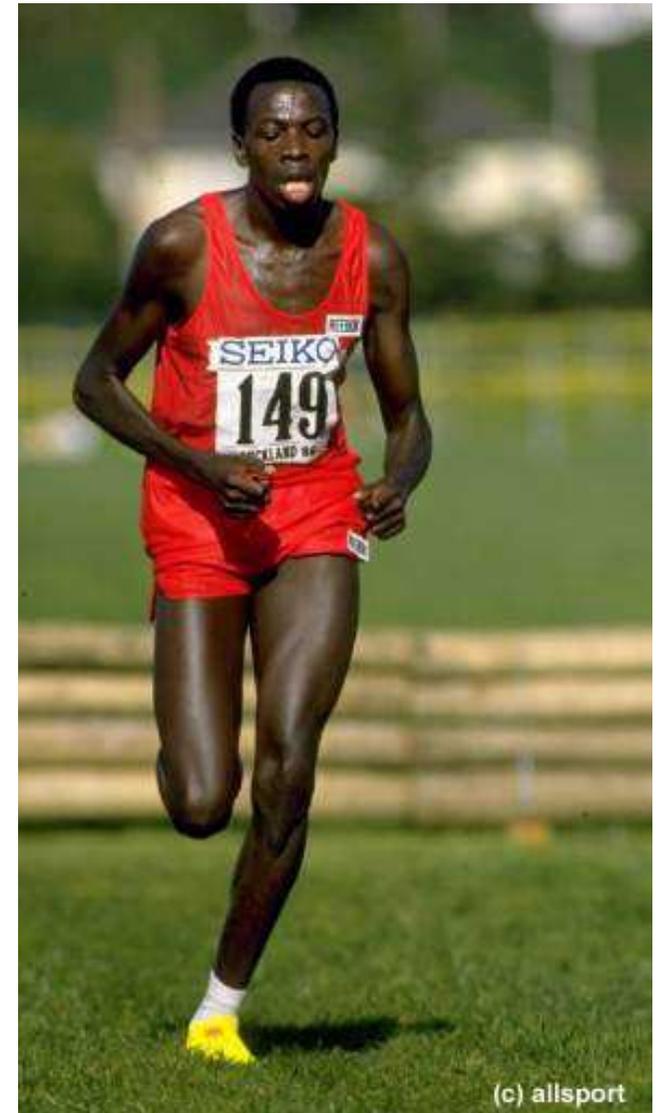
Female: Hellen Kimaiyo, Edith Masai, F. Kiplagat, Emily Chebet

Junior Men: Philip Mosima, Josphat Machuka, David Chelule, Dan Komen, Japhet korir

Junior Women: Lydia Cheromei, Sally Barsosio, Jebiwott Keitany, Rose Kosgei, Vivian, Viola Kibiwott, M Cherono, Faith Chepng'etich

Kenya's Cross Country Legend!

5 times World Cross Country Champion and is considered one of the best cross country runners ever.



Ngugi was born in Kigumo Muranga district and later his family moved to Nyandaria district where Ngugi's career started to take shape.

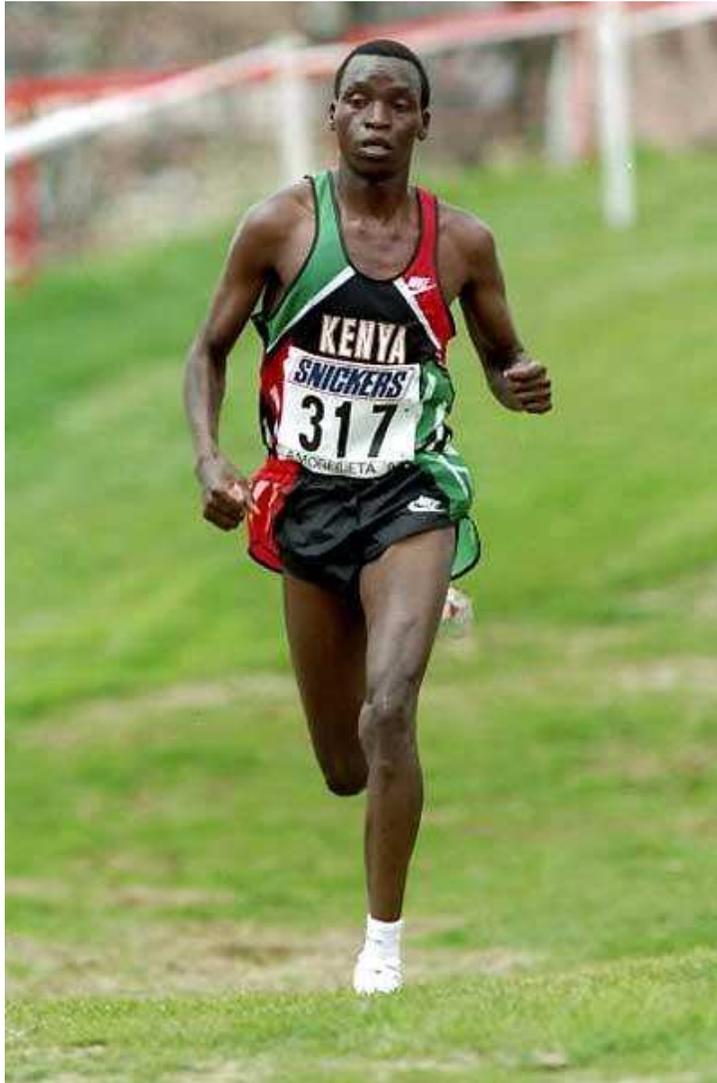
Ngugi would run 10km a day to deliver milk from his parents farm. He was inspired to join the army by watching soldiers in Nyahururu train every day. In 1985 he joined the army where he joined team-mate Paul Kipkoech, a person with whom Ngugi's career was intertwined as they often placed 1-2 in races all over the world.

Ngugi won the first of his world cross country championships 1986. He went on to win 4 consecutive titles until 1989.

Ngugi had a reputation as fearsome front runner. He confirmed this reputation when he won the 1989 world cross country championships by 28 seconds. This is still to this date the largest margin of victory in that event.

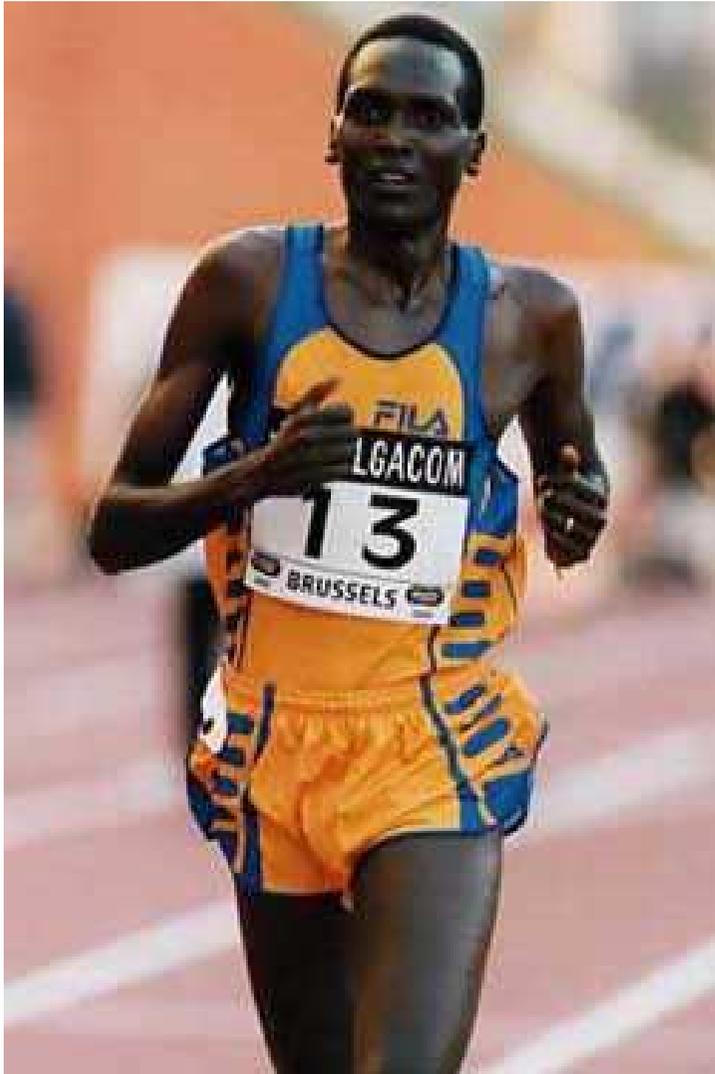
He is a pioneer because his World Cross country win in 1986 came at a time when Kenya was starved of international success.

William Cheruiyot Sigei



1993 and 1994 Champion
10,000m World Record 26:52.23 (1994)

Paul Tergat



Kenya's Greatest Cross Country Runner
5 times World Cross Country Champion

Tergat won five straight IAAF World Cross Country Championships titles, 1995 to 1999, which was a record.

World Records :

10,000 meter - 26:27.85, (in 1997)

Half Marathon - 59:17, (1998)

Marathon - 2:04:55, (2003 at Berlin)

Tergat once said, "*Cross country is what I always liked most. It was my world, my passion. Before the IAAF introduced the short course in 1998, all the world class athletes from 1500 m to the marathon were in the same race.*"

Vivian Jepkemoi Cheruiyot



2011 IAAF World Cross Country Championships, in the process assisted the Kenyan team to a team title.

Vivian Jepkemoi Cheruiyot



Represented Kenya at the 2000 and 2008 Olympics.

Had Silver in 2007 IAAF World Championships

World champion in 2009

Silver at the 2010 IAAF World Indoor Championships

African champion, Commonwealth Games champion and IAAF Continental Cup champion,

Holds the Commonwealth record for the 5000 m with her time of 14:20.89.

Best of the Rest



Hellen Chepngeno

- 1994 Champion

Florence Jebet Kiplagat

- Two-time Champion 2009 and 2010
- Current 10,000m Kenyan record holder with her best of 30:11.53 minutes.

Emily Chebet Mugei

- Two-time Champion 2010 and 2013.

Factors contributing to Success



- The Kenyan rural terrain suitable for cross-country. The distant school boys girls cover daily to and from School, going uphill and downhill.
- Lifestyles of rural Kenyans and exposure in early life - heading animals, hunting small game, a lot of walking (no cars, train, cycling)
- Cross is an aerobic event. Majority of the athletes lives in the high altitude areas of Rift Valley, Mt Elgon and Embu (between 2100 and 2500m above sea level).
- There are a good number of cross-country events in Kenya that athletes can use for build up

Factors contributing to Success



- Most athletes train as a group (Team) in schools, Military, camps/clubs hence comfortable running in great numbers.
- Rich cross-country history, a tradition set by Ngugi and Tergat (Role models or Idols).
- Easy and economical. Does not require well-to-do facilities in Rural settings. Use footpaths, roadsides, open trails cutting across grassland, forests etc.

Cross Country Calendar



NOVEMBER

End of 1 st Week	1 st Cross Country
Mid Month	2 nd Cross Country
End Month	3 rd Cross Country

DECEMBER

1 st Week	4 th KCB/AK Cross Country Series Meeting
2 nd Week	5 th KCB/AK Cross Country Series Meeting

JANUARY

1 st Week	6 th KCB/AK Cross Country Series Meeting	
2 nd Week	7 th KCB/AK Cross Country Series Meeting	
3 rd Week	AK Institutional Affiliates	
Last week	Sub Regional Cross Country Championships	All Districts

FEBRUARY

1 st week	Regional Cross Country Championships	All Provinces
A day before National XC	AK/AR Meeting	
3 rd Week	National Cross Country Championships Cum Trials	
3-4 Weeks	Residential Training Camp – World Cross Country Teams	Embu

MARCH

6-5 days before	Departure of World Cross Country Team
Last Week	IAAF World Cross Country Championships

Hosting the IAAF World Cross Country Championships



Mombasa, Kenya successfully hosted the 35th Edition of the IAAF World Cross Country Championships on 24th March, 2007.

469 Athletes representing 64 countries participated in the event staged at the Mombasa Golf Club.

The theme for that event was 'Cross Country Comes Home' Kenya lived up to the theme with overwhelming victories in both the men's and women's junior races. The senior men's and women's team also put up a brilliant display of strength and team work that saw them lead Kenya to a 20th team title.

Relation to Track and Road Running



- Keep the athletes fit ahead of track and later the Road running. Keep runners on their toes (no major break before track)
- Build the endurance capacity before specific training for specific track event,
- Cross country training makes track and Road running easier as there are no obstacles and breaking of speed as results of curves and corners.

IAAF World Cross Country Championships



- It is believed that the World Cross Country is the most difficult races to win.
- At major championships, athletes compete in separate individual events, whereas in the IAAF World Cross Country Championships they compete against one another in only one race. Thus, the competition is quite fierce.
- Several Olympic Champions have gotten their start as World Cross Country Champions: Carlos Lopes, marathon, 1984; John Ngugi, 5000 m, 1988; Khalid Skah, 10,000 m, 1992; and Kenenisa Bekele, 10,000 m, 2004 and 2008. Numerous other champions have medalled at the Olympic Games or the World Championships, or have set World Records.

Lowest Points of Athletics in Kenya



1976-1980

Many athletes from Kenya would have medaled in Montreal and Moscow, as they were in their best e.g. Henry Rono and others

The World as a Global Village

We can achieve through our Sport

Dube Jillo



The Success Of Ethiopian Athletes at the IAAF World Cross Country Championships



Ethiopia first participated in an IAAF International Cross Country event in 1981.

The so called the "Green Fled" name also given to Ethiopian Athletes.

Achievements



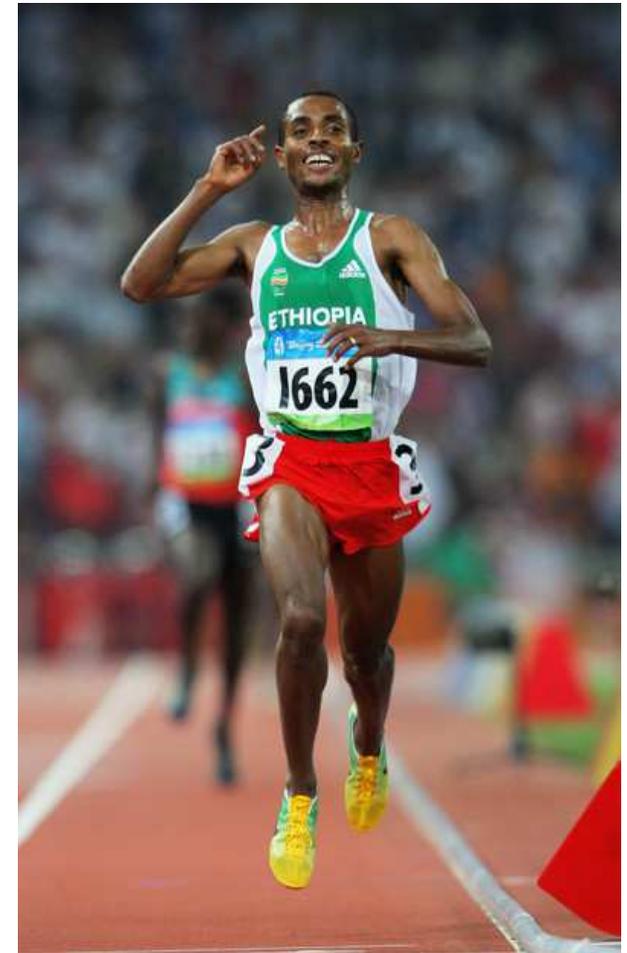
Mohamed Kedir
Rome 1982 - Gold

Bekele Debele
Gateshead 1993 - Gold



Kenenisa Bekele

- World Cross Country record holder with 6 long course and 5 short course titles.
- From 2002 through 2008 he took both short and long course titles.
- A feat no other runner has accomplished.
- Greatest ever male cross country runner to have graced the sport.



Achievements



Gebregziabher Gebremariam
Amman 2009 - Gold



Imane Merga
Punta Umbria 2011 - Gold



Derartu Tulu
Vilamoura 2000 – Gold

Achievements



Gete Wami
Stellenbosh 1996 – Gold
Belfast 1999 – Gold
Ostende 2001 - Gold

Tirunesh Dibaba
St. Etienne 2005 – Gold
Fukuoka 2006 – Gold



Ebrahim Jelian
Edinburgh 2008- Gold

Genzebe Dibaba
Edinburgh 2008 – Gold
Amman 2009 - Gold



Success at the World Cross Country Championships



Ethiopian Athletes have had great success in both Male and Female categories.

- Reasons why Ethiopian Athletes success at World Cross Country Championships is really special.
- Special because the high altitude running at high altitude is not quite as easy as at sea level

Success at the World Cross Country Championships



- Ethiopian Athletes training at high and challenging altitude 2500m and above
- While at the same time getting to know the most fascinating history.
- Culture and natural attractions of Ethiopia the land of Runner
 - High altitude training
 - Mountain training

Mountain Training



Continuous running on undulated surface

Up Hill / downhill

Fartlek

General Phase:

Daily training

Benefits of Mountain and Cross Country Training



To development

- aerobic Endurance
- Speed
- Strength
 - Strength Endurance

To develop these qualities we strongly mixing types and the training area with challenging trail and landscapes.

Categorised Season



To development of periodised training program to enhance the performance of National team Cross-Country, Junior, Senior category in Ethiopia.

- Cross country season From September – March
- Track season From April – August
- Road race season From September – June

Event Category Groups



Six to 12 athletes each group category

- 6 k/m group
- 8 k/m group men and women
- 12 k/m group
- 4 km group

In both genders

Event Category Groups



Age Category Groups

- Junior (18-19)
- Senior (20 above)

In both Male and Female category

Performance Category Group

- Novice level
- Intermediate level
- Advanced or elite level

Cross Country Training in Relation to Track and Road Running



- Direct and inverse relation b/n track and road training and cross country
- X-Country under the umbrella sport of Athletics is natural terrain version long distance track and road running
- Increase confidence for next track season
- Build team Spirit

Cross Country Training in Relation to Track and Road Running



- X-Country training to develop on excellent aerobic condition for the track & road race
- Speed training on the track to develop a very good speed for cross country and road race
- X-Country training is very special for both track and road races
- X-Country races is involving different obstacles and challenges

Sample Micro cycle

Junior 6km

Period: General Preparation Programme



Date	Training content	Training goal	6km		Intensity level	Training place	Starting time
			By time	By distance			
Monday	CR on undulated terrain	To develop Aerobic endurance	15'	3km	75%		1:00
			50'	12km			
			10'	2km			
			75'	17km			
Tuesday	Short interval 7x 600m with [2' easy run]	To Dev .Speed	15'	3km	100%		1:30
			35'	4.2km			
			10'	2km			
			60'	9km			
Wednesday	Regenerative CR on undulated terrain	To develop Aerobic endurance	101'	2km	70%		1:00
			40'	8km			
			5'	1km			
			55'	11km			
Thursday	Up Hill run 10x300m [easy run back]	To develop Strength endurance	20'	4km	85%		1:30
			9'+20'	3km			
			10'	2km			
			59'	9km			
Friday	Long CR on undulated	To develop Aerobic endurance	15'	3km	75%		1:00
			50'	12km			
			10'	2km			
			75'	17km			
Sunday	Extensive endurance 4x2000m with	To develop General endurance	15'	3km	95%		1:30
			22'+12'	8km			
			10'	2km			

Sample Micro cycle – 11th Senior 12km

Period: General Preparation Programme



Date	Training content	Training goal	Training type	12km		Intensity level	Training place	Starting time
				By time	By distance			
Monday	Long CR on undulated terrain	Aerobic endurance	Warming up	20'	4km	75%		1:00
			Main session	90'	25km			
			Cool down	10'	2km			
			Total	120'	31km			
Tuesday	Short interval 10x 600m with[2' easy run]	Dev .Speed	Warming up	20'	4km	100%		1:30
			Main session	16'+20'	6km			
			Cool down	10'	2km			
			Total	66'	12km			
Wednesday	Easy run	Aerobic endurance	Warming up	20'	4km	70%		1:00
			Main session	70'	18km			
			Cool down	10'	2km			
			Total	100'	24km			
Thursday	Hill run 15x300m[easy run back]	Strength endurance	Warming up	20'	4km	85%		1:30
			Main session	14'+25'	4.5km			
			Cool down	10'	2km			
			Total	64'	10.5km			
Friday	Long CR on undulated terrain	Aerobic endurance	Warming up	20'	4km	75%		1:00
			Main session	85'	23km			
			Cool down	10'	2km			
			Total	115'	29km			
Sunday	Extensive endurance 6x1600m with[3' easy run]	General Endurance	Warming up	20'	4km	95%		1:30
			Main session	29'+25'	9.6km			
			Cool down	10'	2km			
			Total	79	15.6km			

Summary/Key Elements



- Sustainable cross country running culture in Ethiopia
- Keep the discipline
- Cross country compulsory
- Long term development system
- Improve athletes performance for all events and at all levels (regional, national and international levels for all categories)

- Short XC races e.g. 4 km XC contributing for a progressive transfer of EVENT
- Short to long race
- Very important for middle distance Athletes
- To reinstall short XC race
- To reinstall yearly XC WC

Benefits:

- Allows training for track events
- Avoids the road race boom
 - No consistent training
 - Structural overload = injury

A Physiological and Philosophical Perspective

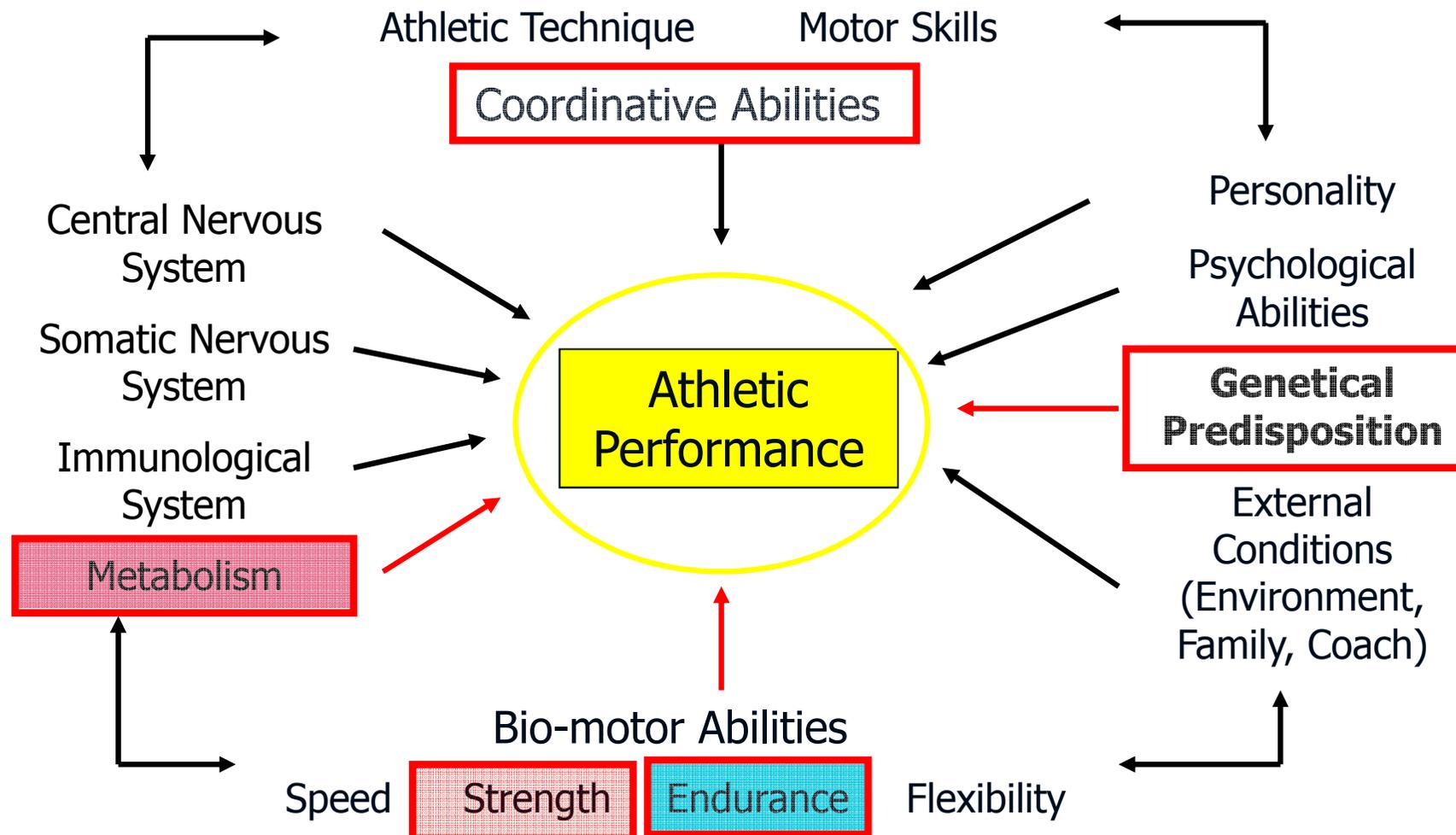


Cross Country Training & Competition Performance Limiting Factors Crosscutting Adaptations

Günter Lange gunter.lange@iaaf.org
Malek El Hebil malek@iaaf.org

Athletes who achieve high level results in cross-country races are likely to achieve similar high level performances in track or road races, however vice versa is not a must.

Contributing / Limiting Factors of Athletic Performance



XC Profile



- Undulating (up/down) Courses

- Ground Conditions
(firm/mud/snow/ice/water)

➔ **STRENGTH / TECHNIQUE**

- Obstacles (natural/artificial)

➔ **ANTICIPATION & RIGHT & LEFT SIDE**

- Distance 12/8 – 8/6 – 6/4 km

➔ **GENERAL ENDURANCE
ENDURANCE STRENGTH**

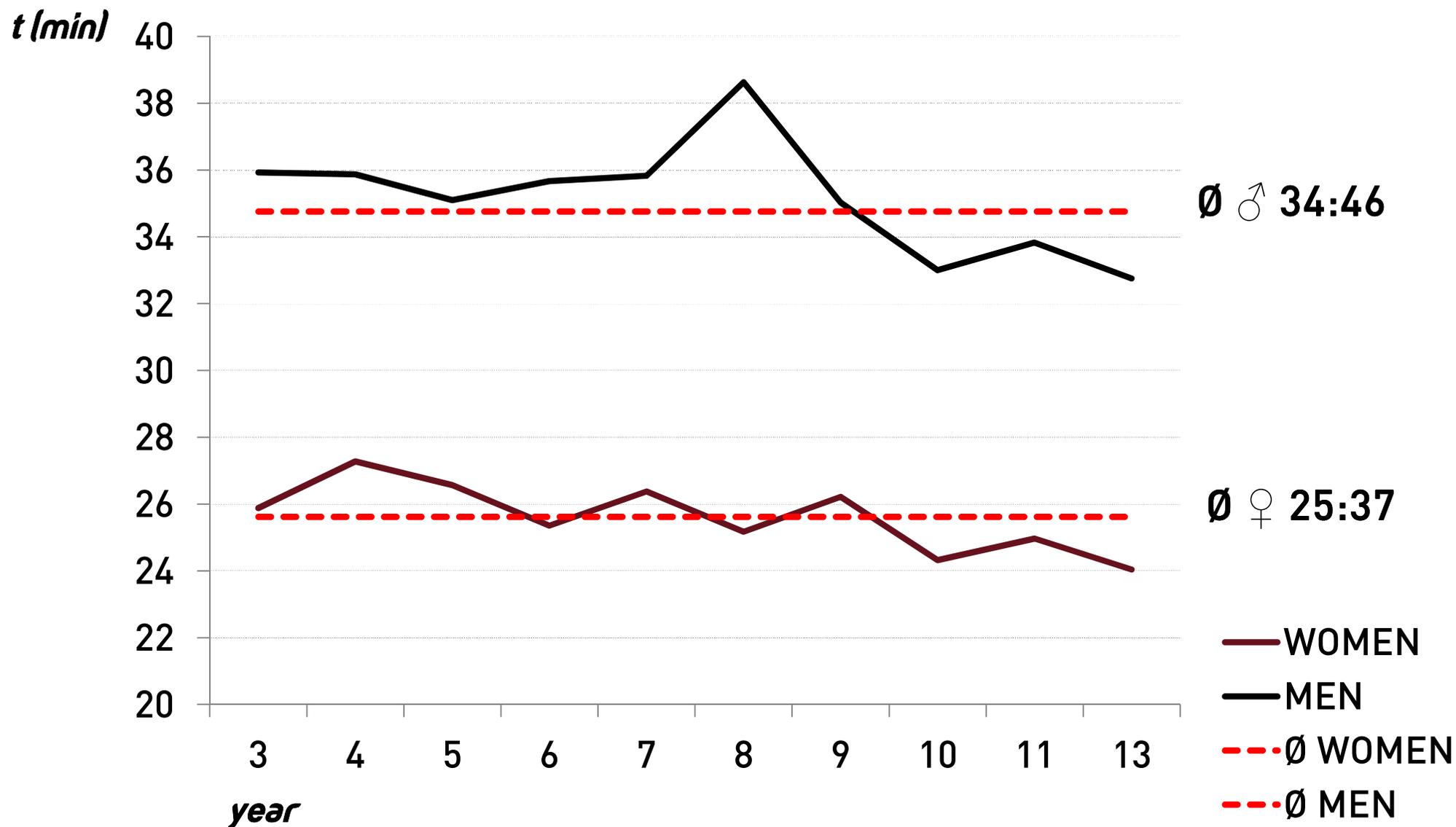
Bio-motor Abilities → Adaptations



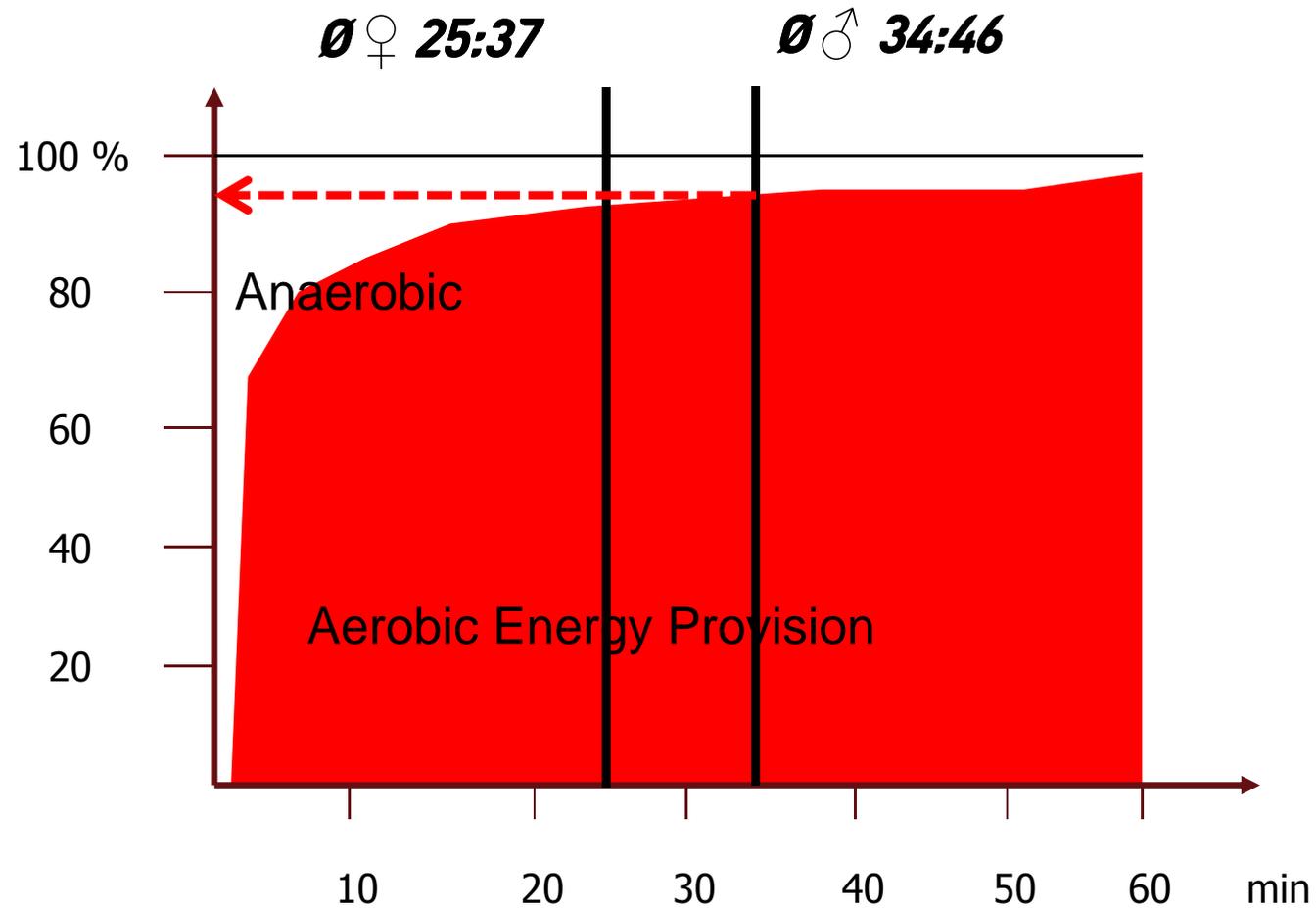
The coach needs to know the relative importance of the necessary biomotor abilities for each event

Bio-motor abilities are also performance-limiting factors if they are not developed to the necessary level

XC WC 12 km Men / 8 km Women Performance 2003 - 2013



Aerobic / Anaerobic Energy Provision



Share of energy supply mechanism during different track and field events (MADER / HARTMANN)



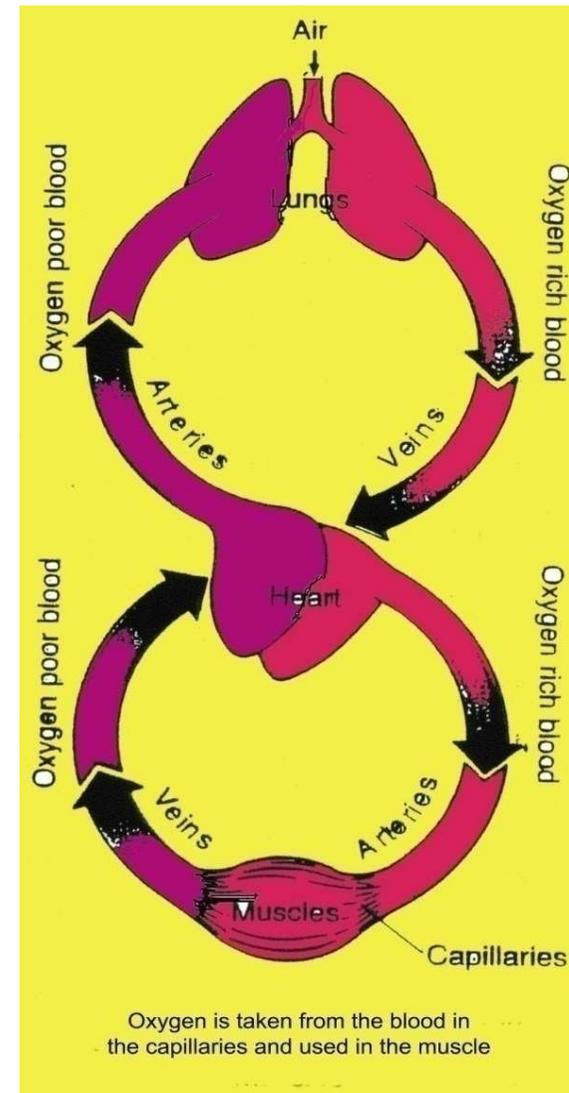
distance	ATP / CRPH %	anaerobic-lac %	aerobic %
30 m	80	19	1
60 m	55	43	2
100 m	25	70	5
200 m	15	60	25
400 m	12	43	45
800 m	10	30	60
1500 m	8	20	72
3000 m	5	15	80
5000 m	4	10	86
10000 m	3-2	12-8	85-90
marathon	0	5-2	95-98

OXYGEN TRANSPORT V_{O2max} (ml/min/kg)

ADAPTATION

- lung surface
- Hb
- heart size
- muscle mass
- mitochondria

%
15-20
20
50
35
300

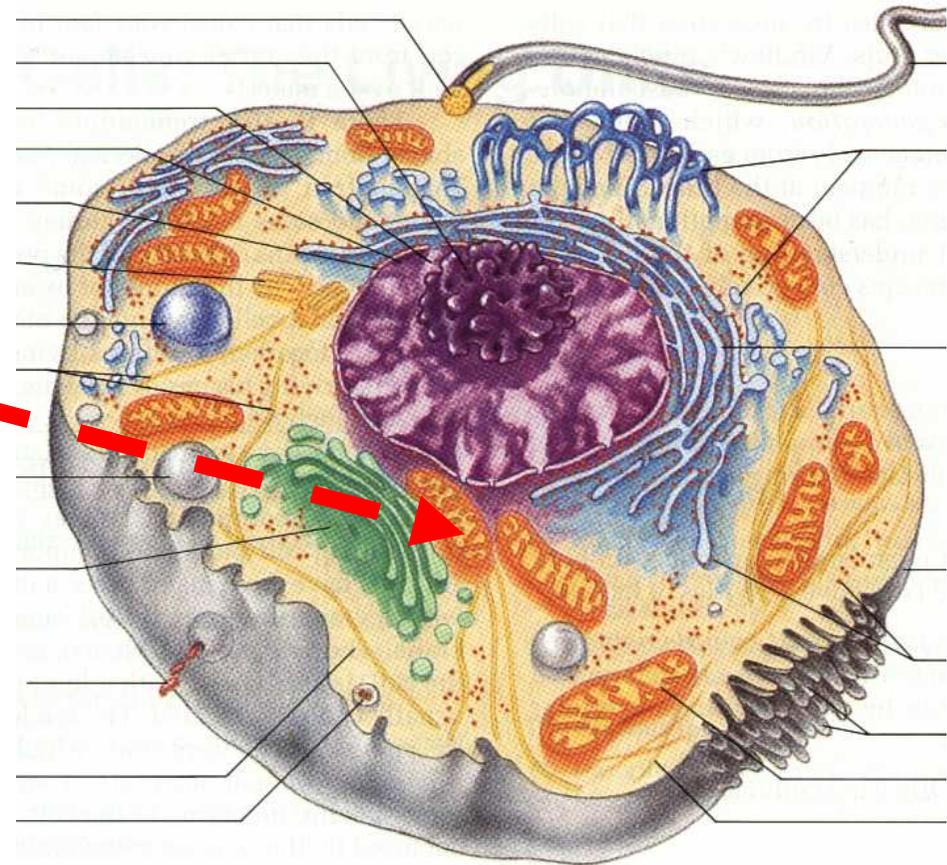


Mitochondria

aerobic respiration
“Powerhouses” of cell

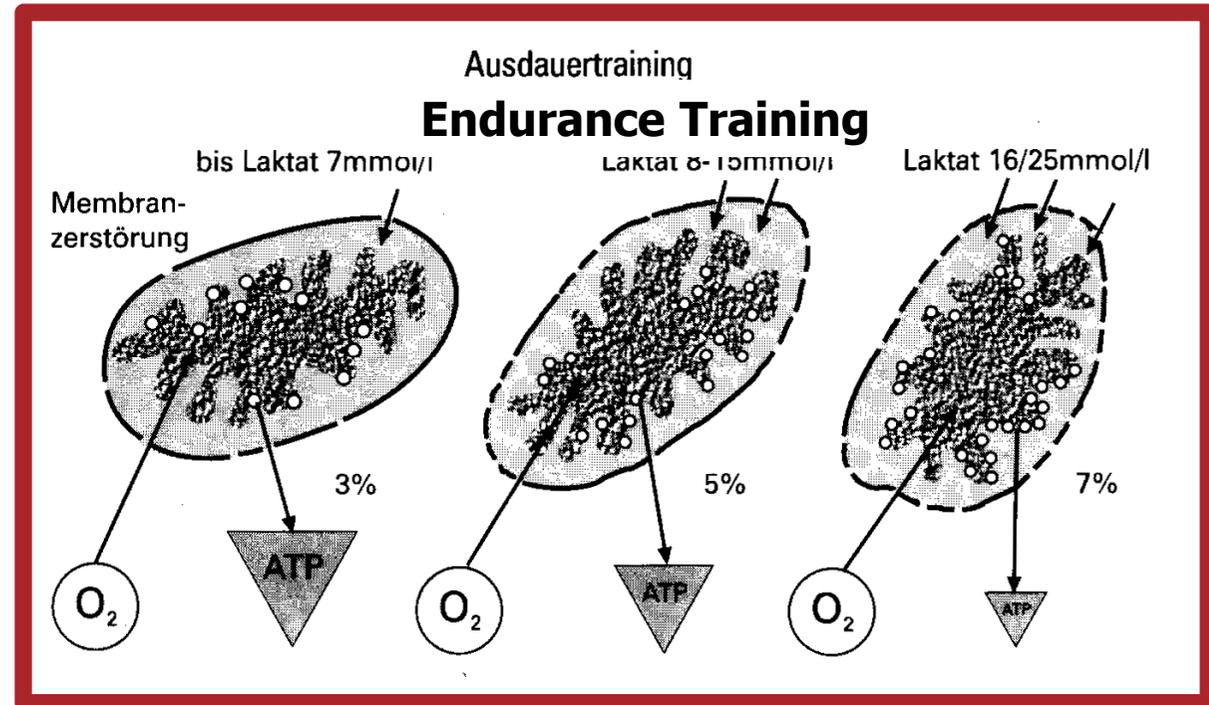
Adaptations:

- Amount 28%
- Size 73%
- Surface 40%
- Location



Impact of Acidose* on Mitochondria

Lactate [mmol/l]	Damage %
7	3%
8 - 15	5%
16 - 25	7%

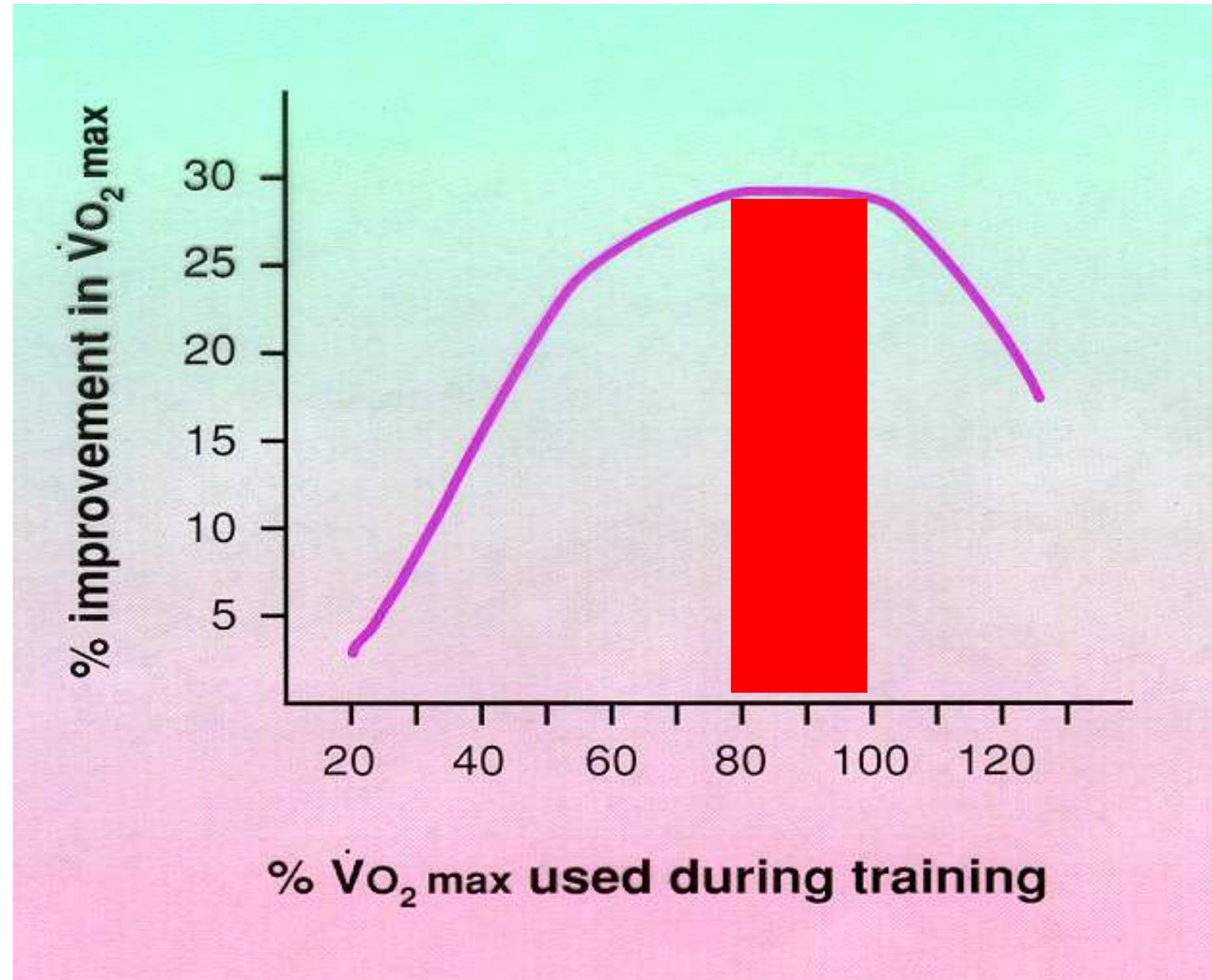


Neumann (1993)

**free radicals*

Optimal Training

Percentages of improvement in $\dot{V}O_2\text{max}$ with various training intensities (WILMORE / COSTILL, 1994)

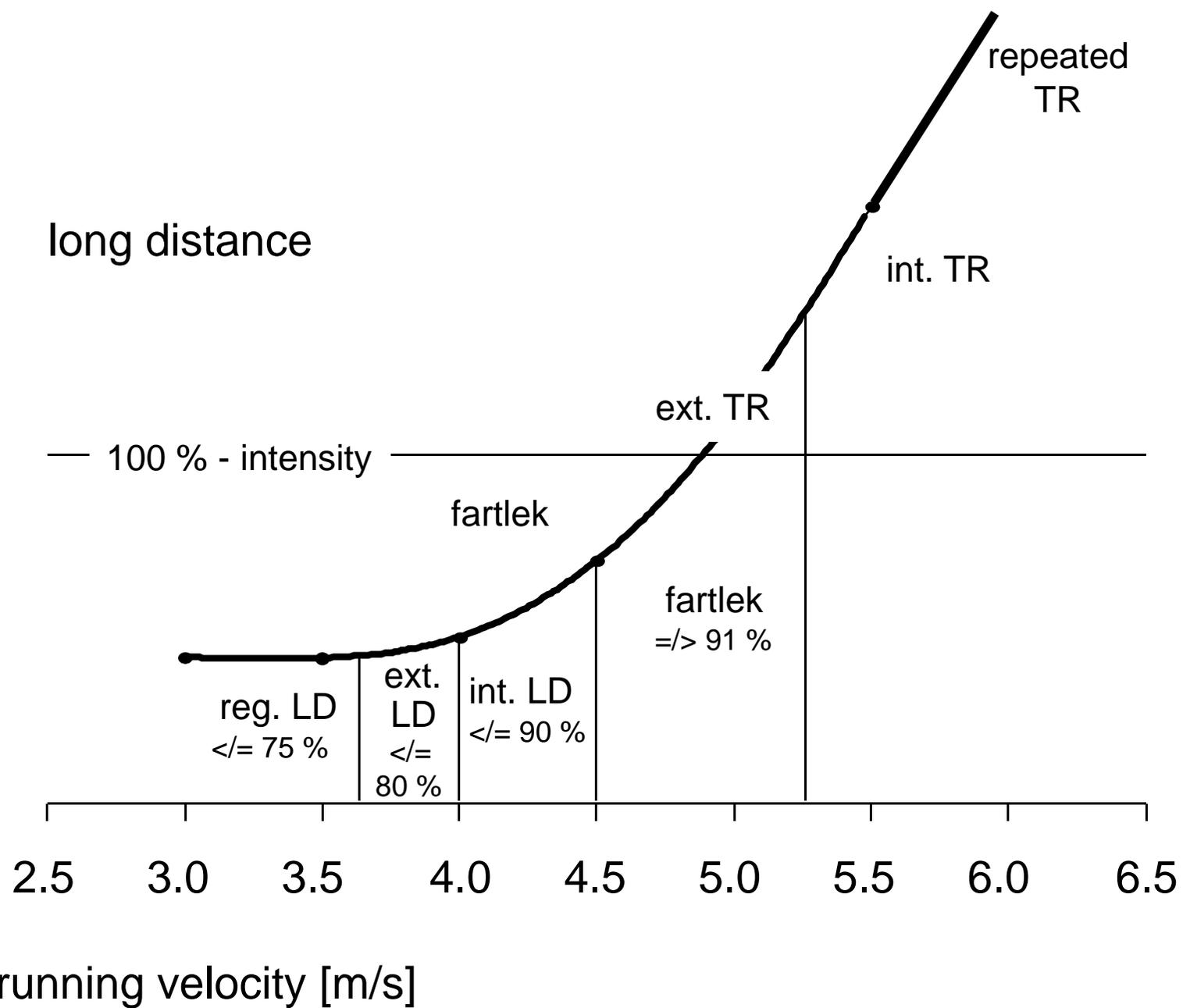




***RUN MEDIUM PACE IN
ENDURANCE TRAINING
TO RUN FAST IN
COMPETITION***

lactate [mmol/l]

10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0



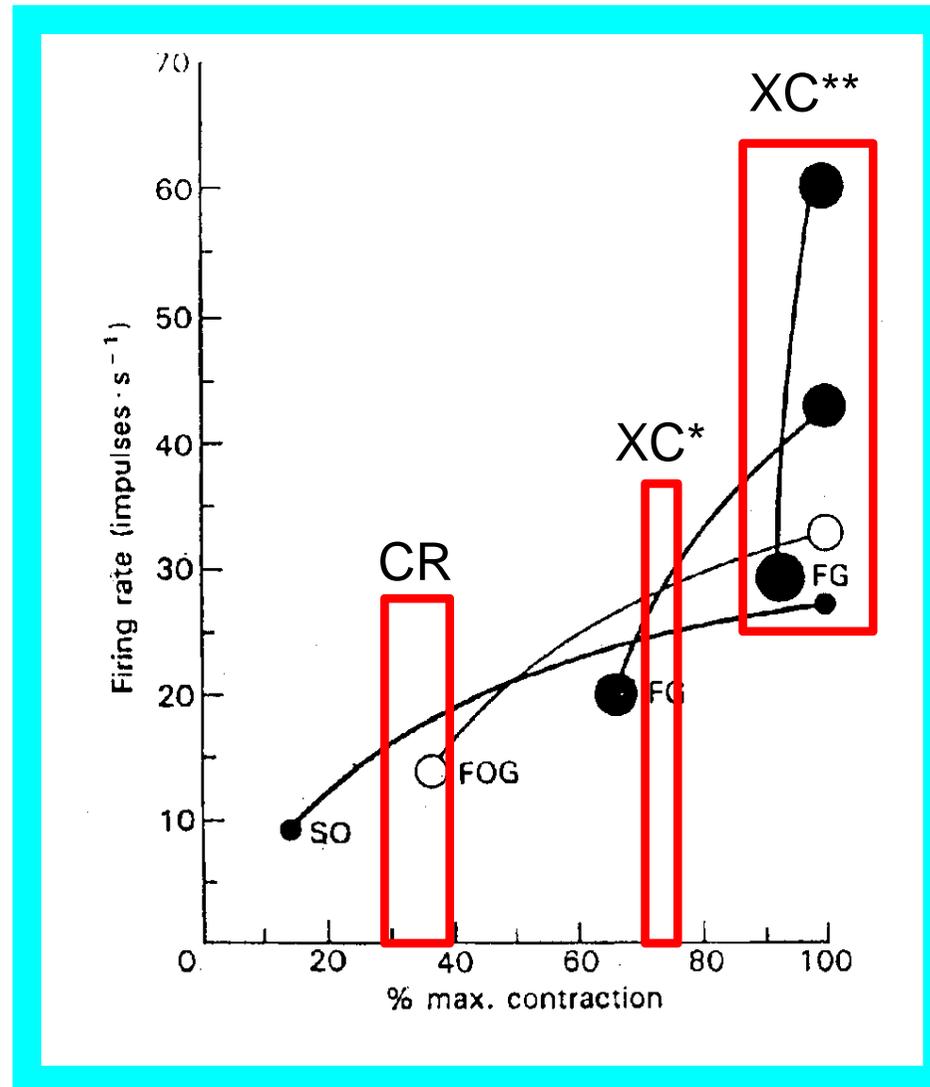
Classification-scheme on the lactate-performance-curve for long distance running (velocity at 4 mmol/l lactate = 4,86 m/s) according to selected training methods (NIESSEN, 1995)

Cross Country



The basic difference between track running and cross country lies in the different types of load placed on the **muscular systems** – sharp variations over the country and a “constant” load on the track

Intensity / Recruitment



* *short / steep incline*

** *eccentric Phase*

Endurance Strength



	Endurance Strength (UP HILL)	Adaptations	
Load intensity	50 – 60 %	Muscle mass	+
Volume	95 – 110 % of Competition (t)	Enzymatic adaptations	+++
Sets	1 - 2	Mitochondrial adaptations	++
Rest intervall	Complete rest 30' – 45'	Resistance against neuronal fatigue	+++
Slope Uphill (Mesocycle)	Decreasing 7° -5° - 3°		
Number of workouts per week	1 - 2		
duration of the period (weeks)	6		

Techniques Required

- Anticipation (ground conditions)
- Tight bend running
- Downhill “fast running”
- Clearance of obstacles with both legs
- Sustained fatigue
- Pain threshold
- “Impact” with opponents



IAAF Competition Rules

Rule 250



XC should be done especially on grass with natural obstacles

Avoid:

- very high obstacles
- deep ditches
- dangerous ascents/descents
- thick undergrowth
- crossing of roads/macadamized surface

IAAF Competition Rules

Rule 250



XC training / competition should include:

- Loop 1500m – 2000m [Water / Sponge]
- Total ascent per loop at least 10m
- “natural” undulating course
- Smooth curves
- Short straights

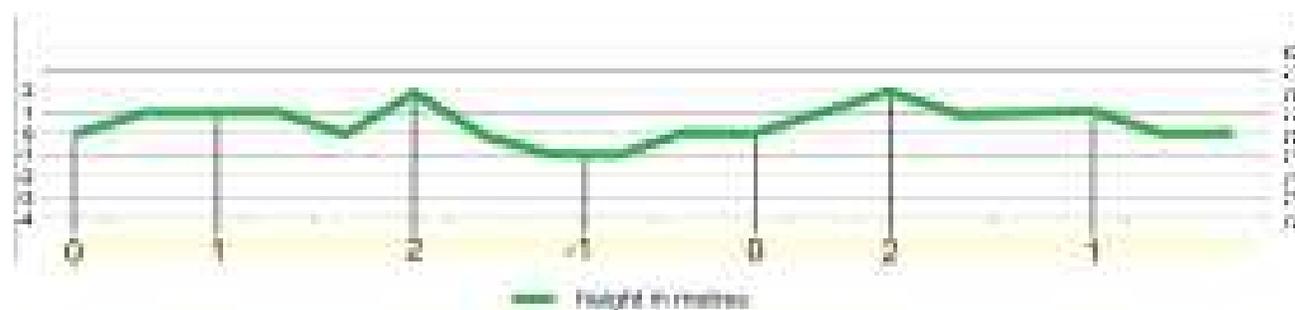
IAAF Competition Rules

Rule 250.1



There are extreme variations in conditions in which Cross-Country Running and Mountain Running are practised throughout the world and it is difficult to legislate international standardisation of this sport.

Belgrade 2013

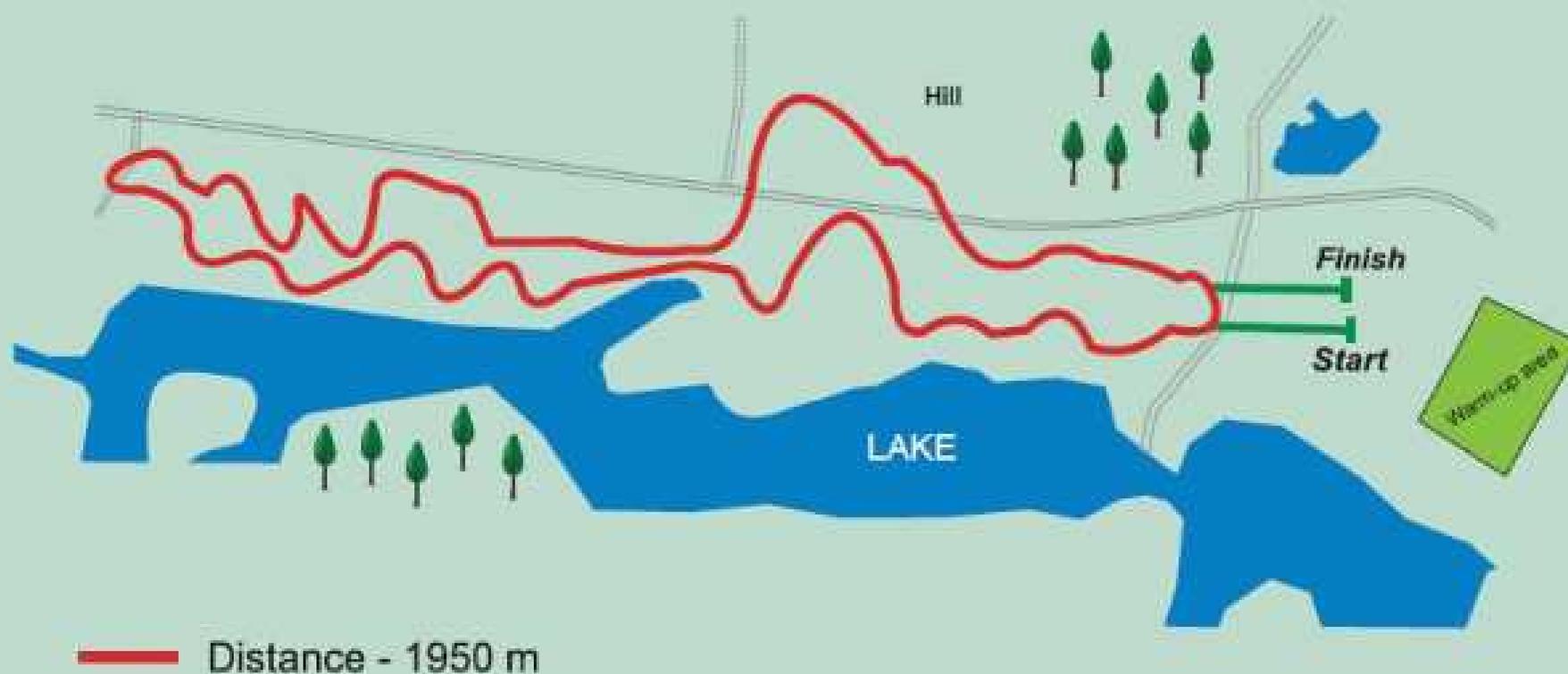


Punta Umbria 2011

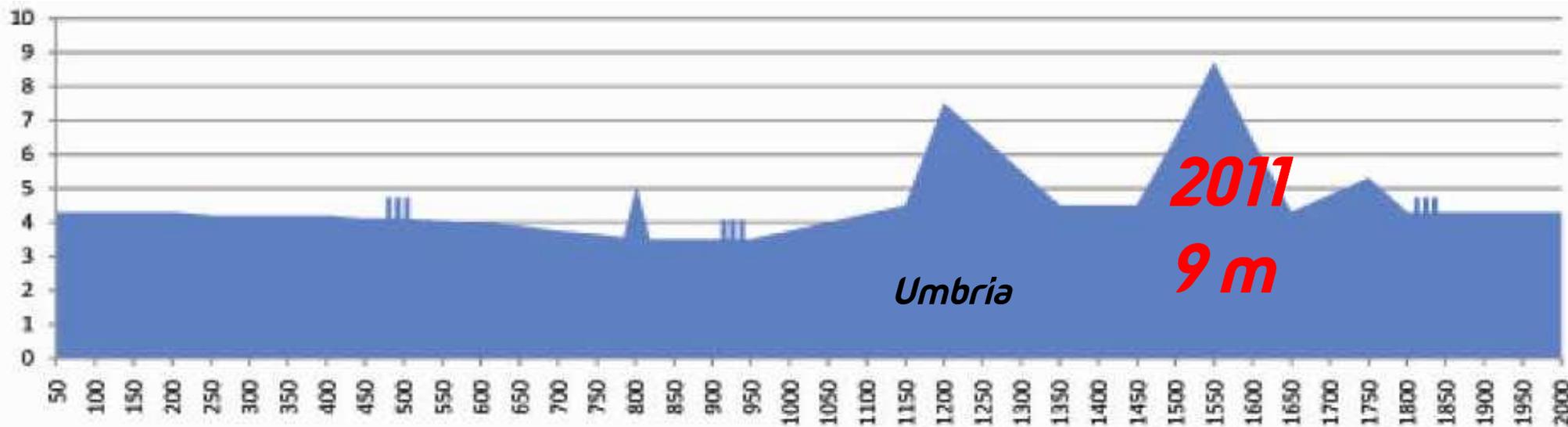




IAAF WORLD CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS BYDGOSZCZ 2013



Profile XC WC



The Value of Cross Country Running



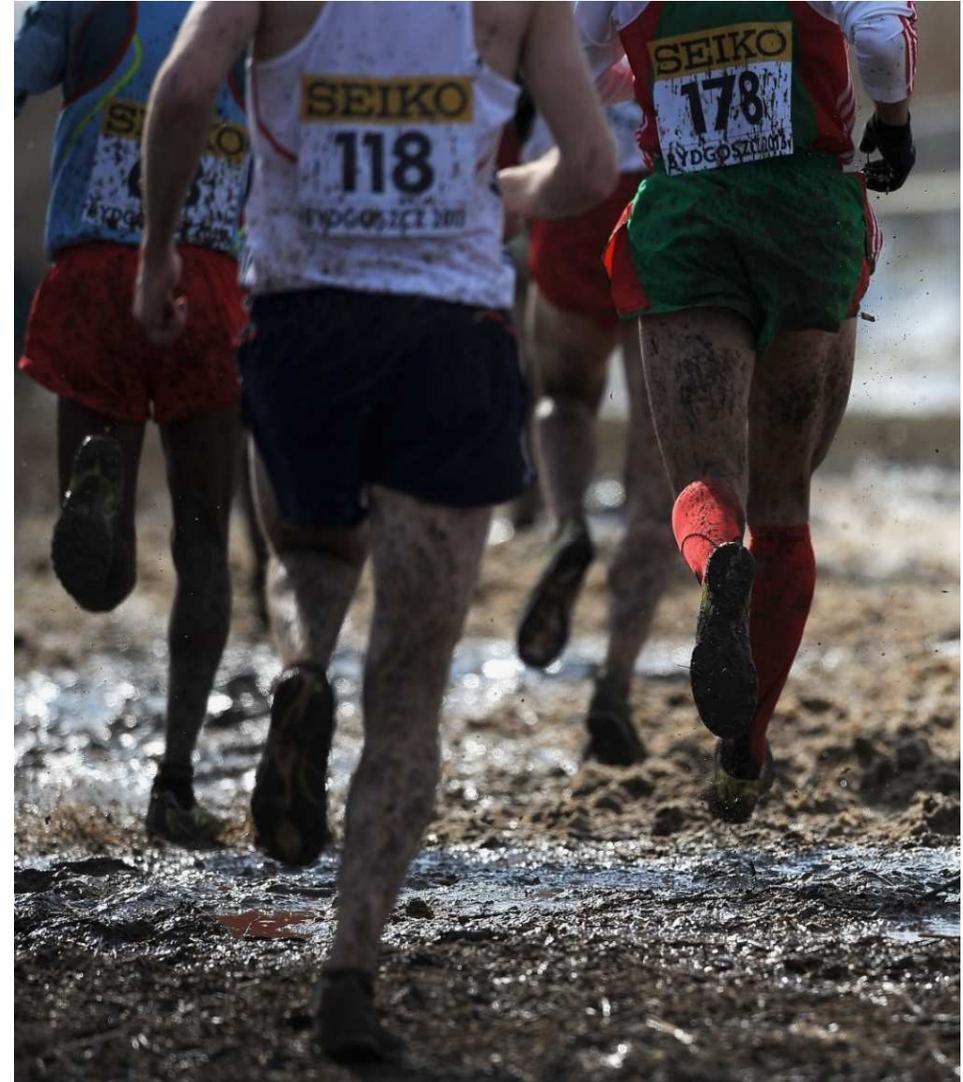
- Develops leg strength and aerobic fitness
- Enjoyable as well as challenging
- The variety makes it much more “fun”
- Increases confidence – showing athletes they can overcome a physical challenge
- Builds “team spirit”
- Develops a courageous approach to running

Training Benefits for Track Runners



Improved:

- Muscular strength
- Neuronal variability
- Aerobic Capacity
- Mental Condition
- Posture
- Robust ankle, knee & hip joints
- Confidence



Training Benefits for Track Runners

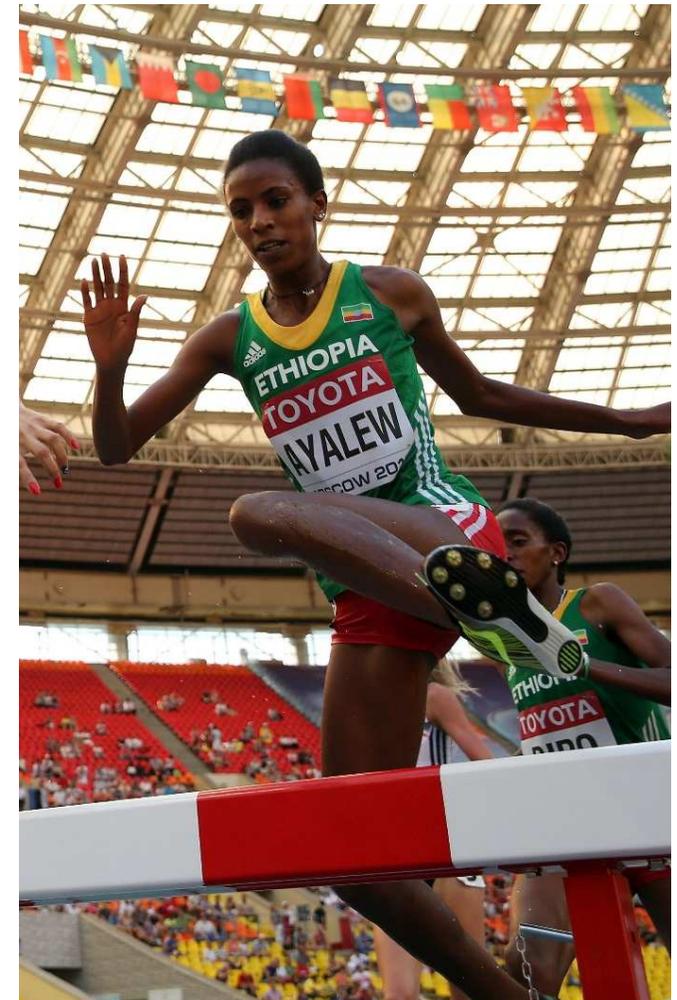


- Capacity to vary the muscular tension with the changes in rhythm
- To be alternatively aggressive and completely relaxed
- Capacity to react instinctively, without necessarily following a pre-ordained scheme

Cross Country $\leftarrow = \rightarrow$ Steeplechase



General Endurance
Endurance Strength
Event Specific
Endurance
Skill/Technique
“Broken” rhythm



Gold Medals: XC & OG



<i>YEAR</i>	<i>ATHLETE</i>	<i>XC WC</i>	<i>OLYMPIC GAMES</i>
<i>1984</i>	Carlos Lopez	G	Marathon
<i>1988</i>	John Ngugi	G	5000m
<i>1992</i>	Khalid Skah	G	10.000m
<i>2004</i>	Kenenisa Bekele	G	10.000m
2008			

Ngugi's Statement...



“During my training, I was using cross country as a base and a gauge for track. I could predict my performance on track based on my cross country performance. If I had a good cross country period I knew definitely my track period was going to be even better”

John Ngugi, 2nd December 2013

In summary...



The Cross Country competition allows one to:

- ✓ Predict the track performance (M&LD)
- ✓ Assess the quality of training adaptation
 - Metabolic
 - Neuro-muscular
 - Mental



Participation in the IAAF World Cross Country Championships

Member Federations

Jose Maria Odriozola (ESP)



“Cross country is how I started running as a teenager, and I still remember the sense of freedom and enjoyment that came from running on natural pathways, being at one with nature.”



Participation at the IAAF World Championships



Contrast between rising interest to take part in European Cross Country Championships and the declining participation by European Athletics Member Federations at the IAAF World Cross Country Championships.

Participation at the IAAF World Championships



Some Comparative Facts

Dates

- Beginning of December EA Championships vs end of March WCC
- For many countries the difficult weather conditions
- In January February and March do not allow athletes for outdoor training and good preparation
- Many prefer to compete indoors or on the road circuit
- The WCCC is too close to the spring outdoor events and can interfere with the programmed preparation for the summer season.

Participation at the IAAF World Championships



Change of the coaches philosophy concerning the cross country events.

In the past, it was the best way to educate physically and mentally all kinds of runners.

Many top middle and long distance athletes compete and train during Autumn and Winter at Cross Country races and circuits (ex. J.L.Gonzalez, Abascal, Cacho, Estevez, Higuero, Casado in Spain).

Today is only a goal for a few athletes because the very high level of the African runners makes very difficult to obtain good results and they prefer to compete on more economically profitable road races (with also more media coverage).

Some ideas to recover the interest for World Cross Country Championships

To convince the running coaches that cross country races are the best school for the development of all kinds of runners (from distance to marathon)

That the Autumn-Winter training programme should be full of running workouts on the forest trails

To look for spectacular demanding courses with reasonable good surfaces
To find nice venues, when the weather conditions can be pleasant at the end of March

Venues with nice flying connections and good accommodation

Some Ideas



Other important factors to improve participation at World Cross Country Championships

To help potential organisers with easier economic conditions

To transfer the IAAF prize money to provide incentive the participation of Member Federations, not individual prize money but for team results

To make the circuits easier to follow by spectators and especially TV viewers:
2km laps, all equal, to match the distances;
6km for juniors (men & women)
10km for seniors (men & women)

Good TV production with partial results for teams at each lap (possible with transponders)

Interviews before and after with stars

2015 IAAF World Cross Country Championships - Guiyang, CHN

- I know the place as Organisational Delegate
- Very nice and scenic circuit with hilly parts
- Very good accommodation with a fantastic park nearby to train
- Very enthusiastic LOC
- To further encourage participation IAAF should increase subventions for teams
- Maybe celebrities race like in Punta Umbria

Jean Gracia (FRA)



*General Director
French Athletics Federation (FFA)*



- **Cross-country is a traditional event in France**
- **French Championships organized for 124 years (since 1889)**
- **Many qualification rounds before the National Championships :**
 - **“Interrégionaux” (8)**
 - **“Régionaux” (30)**
 - **“Départementaux” (95)**

- **France has organized many Championships :**
 - **International Cross Country Championships = 9 times in 1908, 1913, 1923, 1929, 1935, 1947, 1953, 1961 and 1970 (Colombes, Juvisy, Maisons-Lafitte, Vincennes, Auteuil, Sant-Cloud, Vincennes, Nantes and Vichy)**
 - **IAAF World Cross Country Championships = 3 times in; 1980, 1990 and 2005 (Longchamps, Aix-les-Bains and Saint-Etienne Saint-Galmier)**

- **Last IAAF Cross Country Championships in 2005**
 - **Successful organization with 46 000 spectators during the two days of the competition.**
 - **No good results for the French Team :**
 - **Best French Junior Man = 90th (out of 132)**
 - **Best French Junior Woman = 85th (out of 117)**
 - **Best Man in the short race = 47th (out of 141)**
 - **Best Woman in the short race = 35th (out of 106)**
 - **Best Man = 29th (out of 94)**
 - **Best Woman = 23rd (out of 94)**

FACTS



- France is one of the five countries participating in all IAAF World Cross Country Championships
- At 2013 European Cross Country Championships, participation of a full team (6 x 6 = 36 athletes)
- At 2013 World Cross Country Championships, participation of small team (12 athletes)

POTENTIAL ISSUES



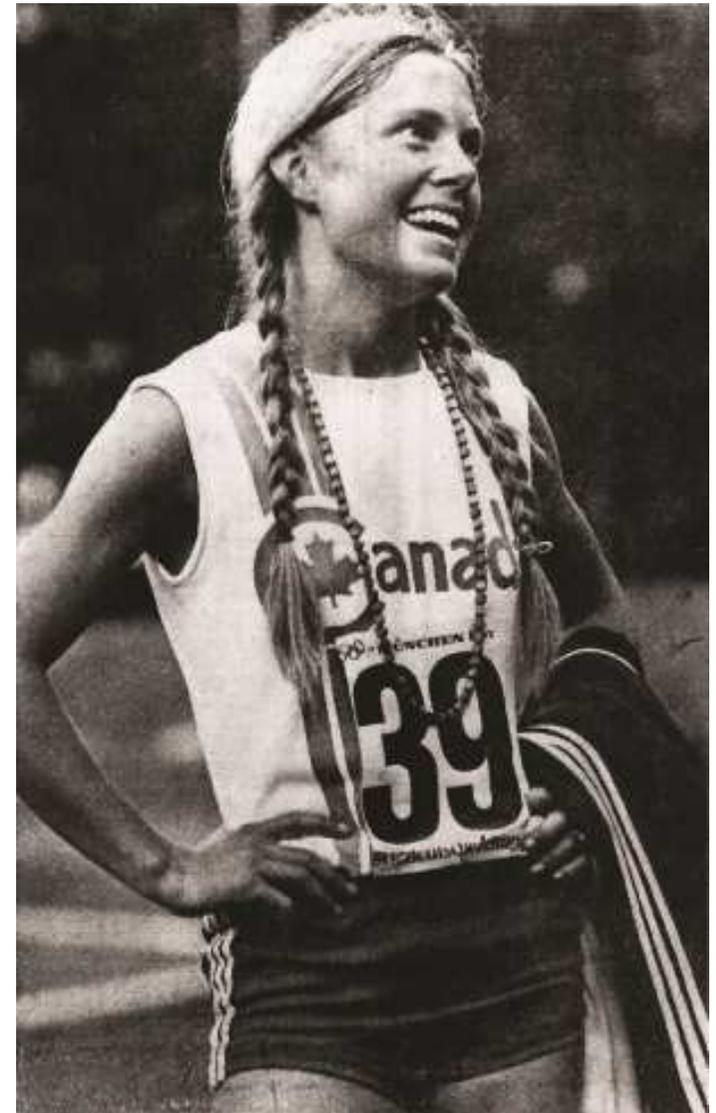
- **Most of French athletes are not at the same level as African athletes**
- **Same issue for most European countries :**
 - **Strategical choice**
 - **Economical issue**
- **Citizenship change too easy**
- **European Cross and World Cross Country Championships not at the same time of the year**

- **World Cross Country Championships every year end of February / beginning of March**
- **Reduce the number of athletes per team**
- **More severe rules for citizenship change**
- **Create a “Continental Cup” with prize money within the World Championships**
- **Create a “World Cross-country Day”**
- **Championships courses with more difficulties (avoid hippodromes)**

Thelma Wright (CAN)



“Cross country allowed me to excel in a time when 800m and 1500m were the longest Olympic events for women. Representing Canada for the first time at cross country at age 17 dared me to dream.”



The Role of World Cross Country in Athletics Canada's Programmes



“ each of us has an obligation to make the best of his (her) talents... governance has the obligation to create the framework which we can do so ”

Margaret Thatcher

We all have a vision & passion for XC,
just some have a different outlook...



Why Bother?



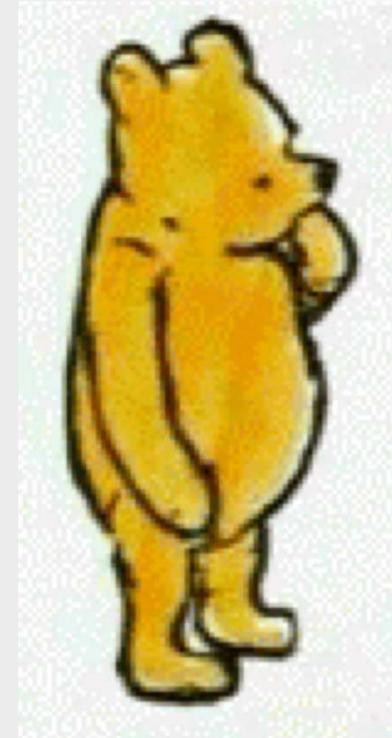
Not Worth it



I Can Do it



Let me Try



Why Not?

Negatives we fight – are they not the same ?

- **Non-Olympic Event**
- **No World record**
- **Lack of prize money, sponsorship and media coverage**
- **Conflicts with road-racing calendar**
- **Weather and seasonal factors**
- **Few host cities**
- **Declining athlete participation**
- **Focus on other events where we can excel**

Are we any different in North America Europe? Or the rest of the world?



School & Collegiate
Programmes account
for incredible
participation in USA &
Canada



Mohammed Ahmed

NCAA XC 5th 2011
4th World Jr 10,000m
27th Jr WXC 2010
22nd Sr WXC 2013



Cam Levins

NCAA XC 4th 2011
NCAA Champion
5,000m & 10,000m
3 x Canadian XC Champion

Simon Bairu

NCAA XC Champion: 2004, 2005
7 x Canadian XC Champion
Canadian Record 10,000m



It's Not Worth Trying



- Self-funded teams
- Cross Country Season finished in December
- Ice & snow mid November – late March
- Too hard to win
- No emphasis on Endurance for past 20 years
- Road racing more lucrative
- No invitations to IAAF Cross Country Permit meetings



It's hard to train in Canadian winters for WXC in March.

And still harder for Canadian athletes to pay their way to WXC!

In a Culture of Ice Hockey, Snow & Ice...and Beer...*Why Run?*



**Focus on the process:
the outcome will take
care of itself**

**Attitude and
perspective is
everything**



**An endurance-based
approach is one of the main
contributing factors to
success throughout a long
racing season.**



Lynn Kanuka Williams

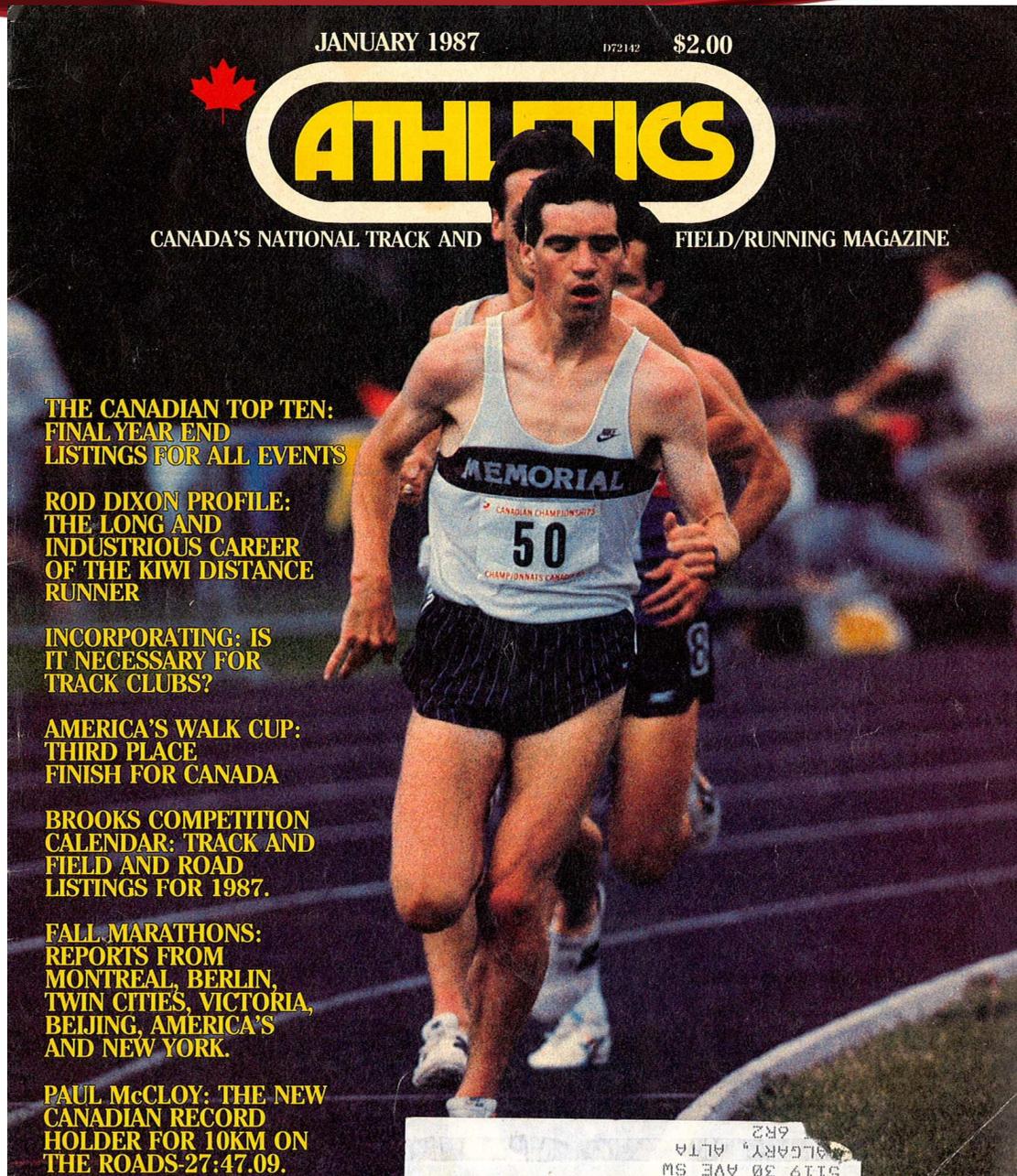


“World Cross Country was pivotal for me and launched my commitment to high-performance athletics.”

- 7 World XC appearances: 1979 – 1989
- Team Bronze 1983
- Individual Bronze 1989
- Bronze 3000m '84 OG
- 5th 1500m & 8th 3000m '88 OG



Paul McCloy



“ He was single-minded, immensely focused on what he had to do and very, very tough.”

“ For a young Canadian and from Newfoundland to boot, to finish so high in the most competitive event on the athletics calendar for distance runners—in a year already dominated by African athletes—was truly exceptional.”

Past results show is possible

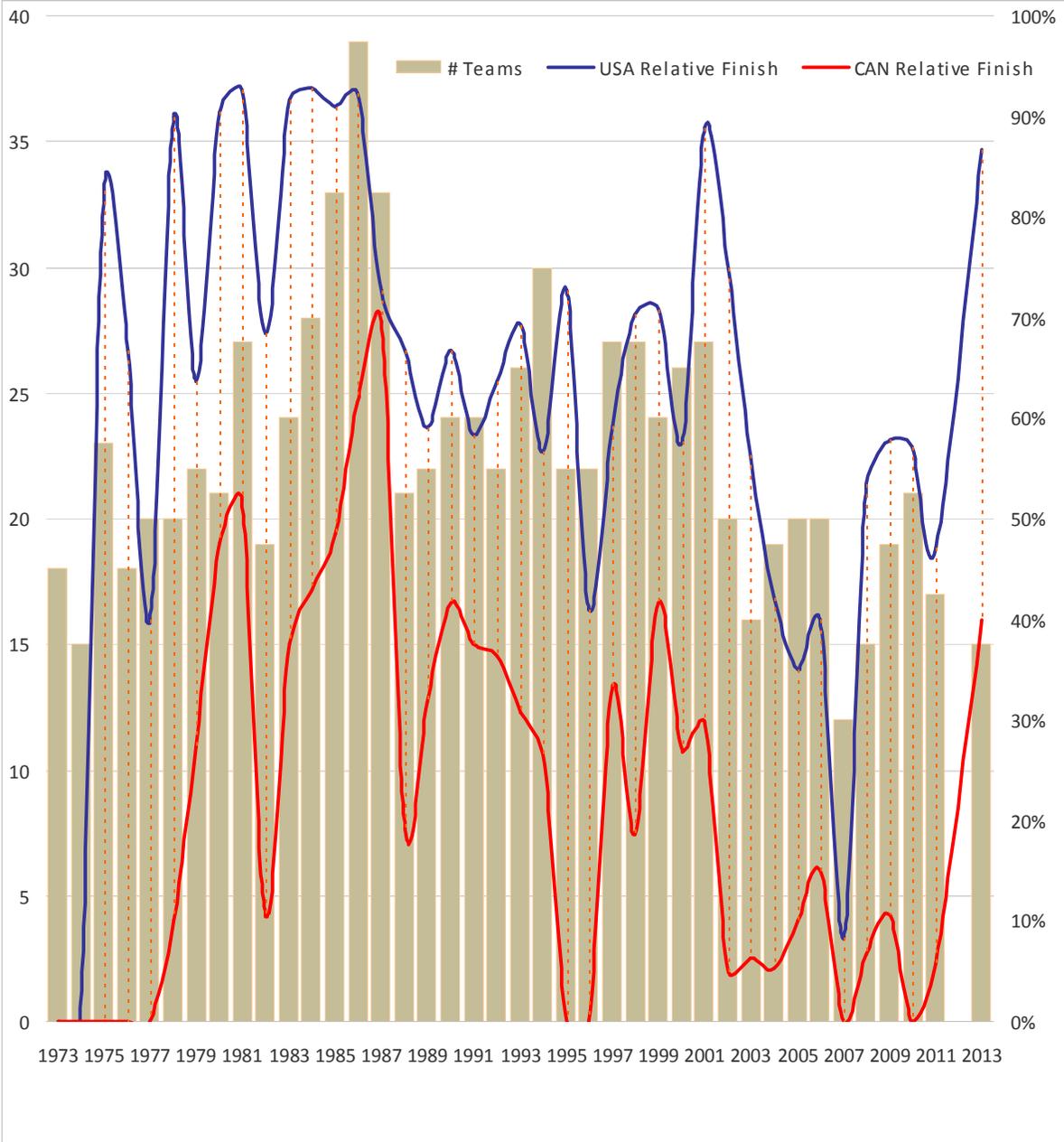
There are always athletes who excel

Exposure to the best allows for success

“ Now I have faced such a high level of competition I’m not intimidated. I’m confident I can get up there at the front of the race and compete no matter what. ”

“ One of the big things is I came to understand just how good the world is at running and it made me all the more determined. It gave me a good understanding of just how hard you need to work and just how good you need to be. ”

Senior Men's Teams



Paul McCloy

- 15 World XC appearances: 1981 - 1996
- Best performance Jr 16th - 1981
- Best performance Sr 8th - 1987
- 1987 World Championships
- 1988 Olympics - 10,000m
- CDN 10k Road Champion 1986 - 27:47.09



Simon Bairu

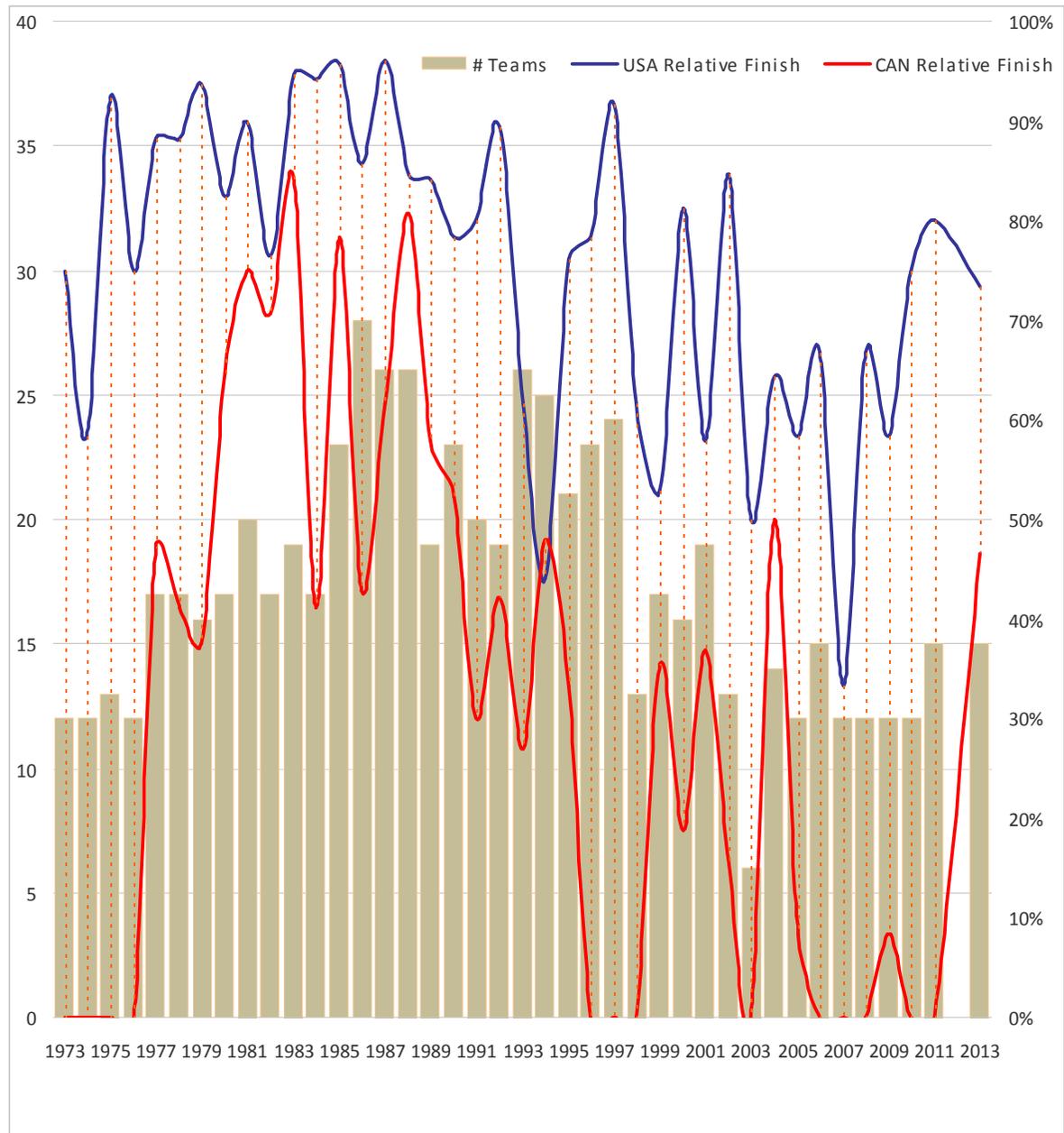


“ Deemed the most outstanding single performance on or off the Track for a Canadian in Athletics that year ”

12th 2010
World XC
3 as a junior
2003 – 52nd
2010 – 12th



Senior Women's Teams



Canada Bronze! 1983



Alison Wiley
Silver



2004 Short Course Bronze

Team Belief – supported our best

5 Olympians

Émilie Mondor - 5000m

Carmen Douma-Hussar -1500m

Malindi Elmore - 1500m

Tina Connelly – 10,000m

Leah Pells - 1500m
4th OG 1996

Courtney Inman



Émilie Mondor 1981 - 2006

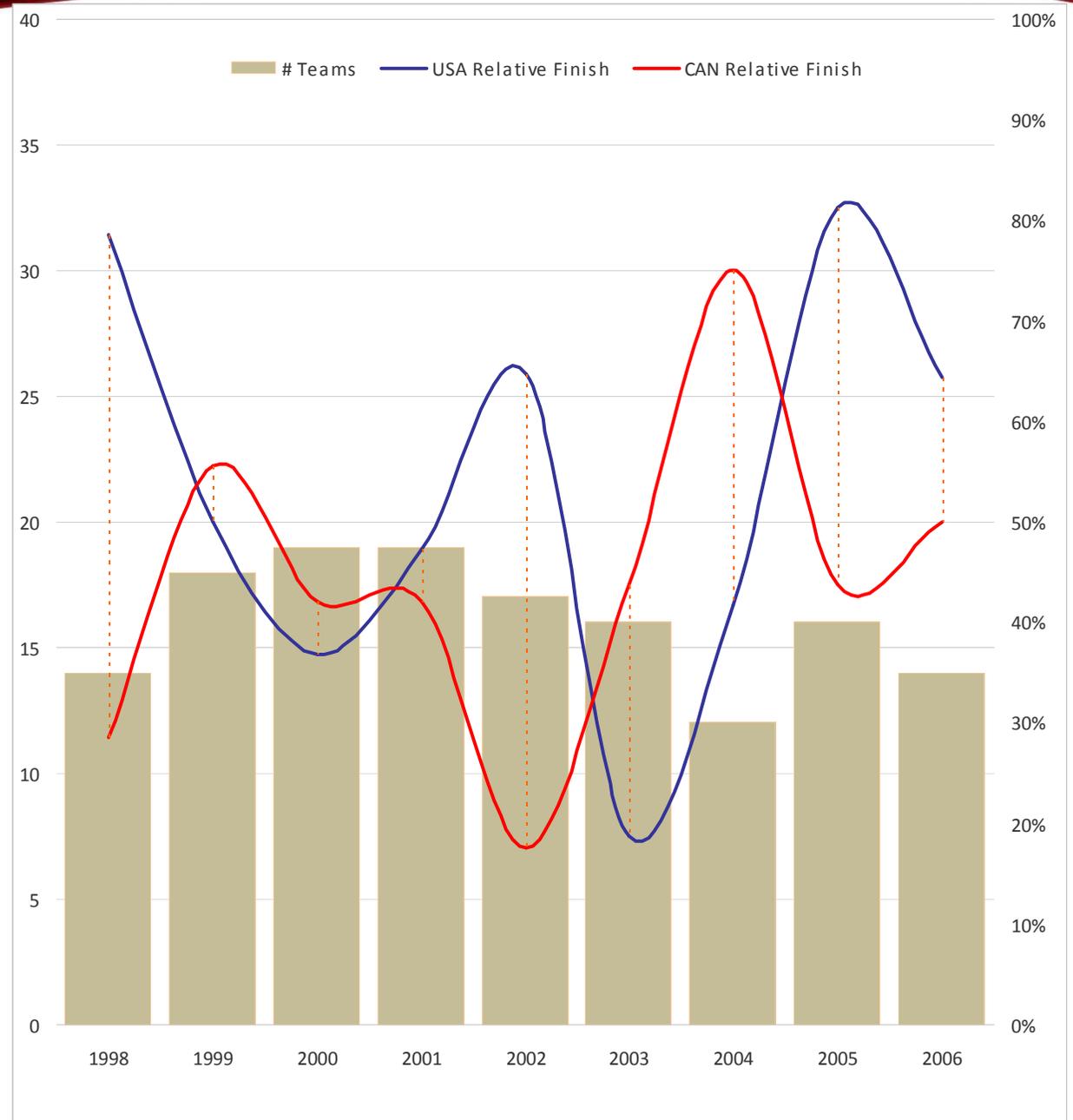


5 World Cross Country appearances
1998 - 10th Jr Race at age 16
2004 - 8th Long & 13th Short Course
2004 - Short Course Team 3rd
2003 - World Championships
2004 - Olympic Games
First 5,000m Canadian under 15:00
minutes

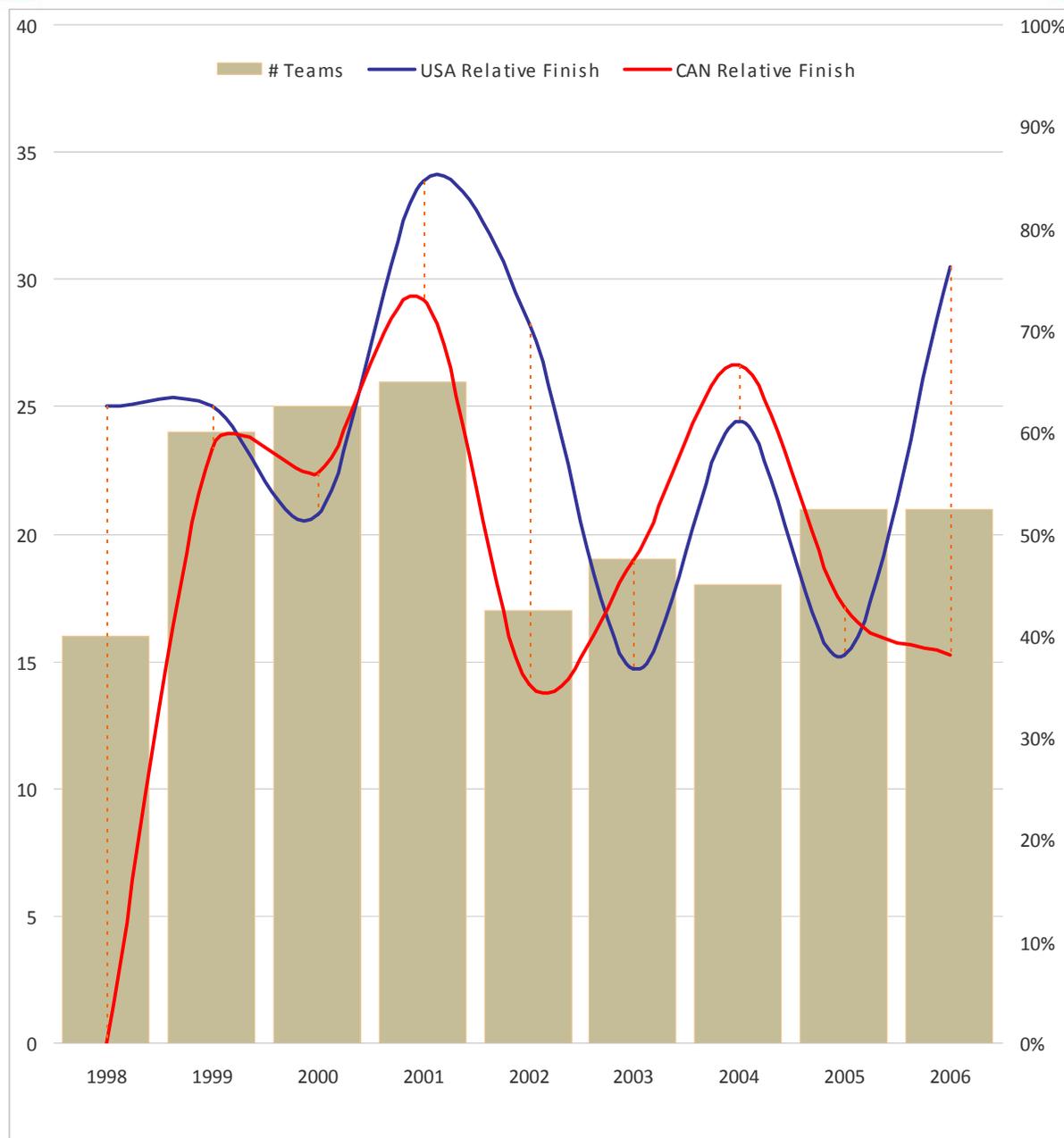
“Émilie was by far the most single-minded, driven, committed female endurance athlete in Canada but it ultimately took its toll.”



Senior Women's Short Course



Senior Men's Short Course



Kevin Sullivan



- 11 World XC appearances
- 4 x Jr: 1990-1993 – 13th
- 7 x Short Course: 2004 – 7th
- 2000 Olympic Games: 1,500m 3:31.71 – 5th (still CDN Record)



Canada's Decisions based on...



- Building a foundation
- Linear steps to provincial and national success
- Cooperation and linkage with High school, Club and University/College programs (NCAA, NAIA, CIS, CCAA)
- Athletes, Coaches willing to prioritize National Team programs and make WXC a goal
- Yearly and Quadrennial planning; development of Endurance programs to include XC
- Structure to attain selection
- Athletics Canada allowance for self-funded Teams
- Funding earned through Area and IAAF Quotas
- Commitment to IAAF Championships as a Member Federation

Selection Process for the NACAC Championship



- Athletes who finish in the top 8 ELIGIBLE places at the National Championships will be considered for selection
- Team selections will be based on order of finish with the top 5 being automatically selectable. Others will be in the selection pool should any of the first 5 be unable to participate.
- In order for a team to be selected, a minimum of 5 ELIGIBLE finishers must declare for the team
- A minimum of 3 of the top 5 finishers MUST declare for a team to be selected in each event
- Individual National Champions ONLY are still selectable in the event a team is not selected

Athletics Canada Objectives

Area Championships



- To enter teams (maximum of 6 athletes) capable of winning the NACAC Championship
- To give individual champions who are committed to Cross Country in 2013 as part of their overall program an opportunity to win the Area Championship
- To give an international competitive opportunity for developing endurance athletes entering or already part of Athletics Canada's High Performance stream
- To use this project as a strong long-term development and strategic planning tool for Canada's middle and long distance running program

Selection Process for the IAAF World Championships



- **Teams are not guaranteed to attend the IAAF WXC Championships**
- **Athletes are required to compete at the NACAC Championships**
- **Teams MUST finish in the top 2 at the NACAC Championship in order to be selectable**
- **Teams must be deemed capable of finishing in the top 1/2 of teams at the World Championship**
- **NACAC Champions and those athletes competing at NACAC and having finished in top 20 at previous World XC are eligible for selection on an individual basis if a full team is not selectable based on their competitive readiness and ability to perform at the world level**
- **Athletes not competing at NACAC cannot displace a NACAC team member who qualifies**

Athletics Canada's Objectives World Championships



- To enter world class teams in IAAF World Cross Country Championships (at least the scoring number plus 1 alternate) capable of finishing in the top ½ of the field as a team
- To have teams finish in the top ½ of the field at the IAAF World Championships
- To enter individual NACAC Champions capable of finishing in the top ½ of the field
- To provide a world level competition for current and future Senior High Performance athletes

Let us try

Junior Men

- Eight Top 10 individuals: 1978 - 1984
- Team Silver 1978: Rob Earl – 2nd
- Team Bronze 1981: Dave Reid – 3rd
- 1984: John Castellano – 3rd



Junior Women

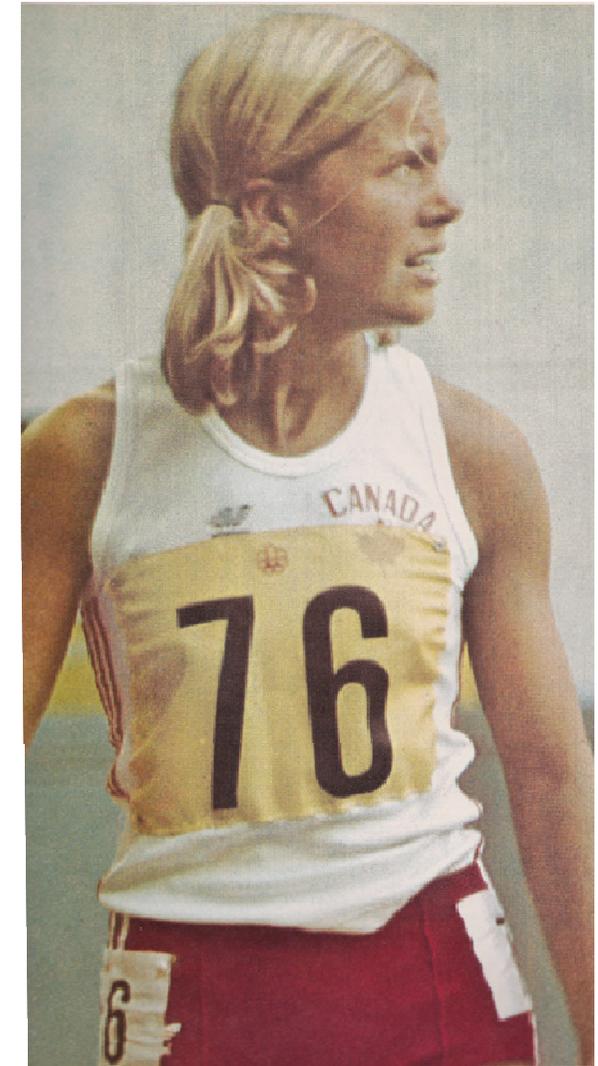
- 1989: 5th
- 2008: 5th



Why Not?

- Cannot win or even place if not at the start line
- Development of youth and juniors to future Olympians and World champions
- What does it take to run with the World's best?
- What it's like to lose. Can our athletes rebound?
- How hard are we willing and able to work?
- Team Concept...athlete goals become meshed with team goals
- Role Models , Local Heroes, Legacy
- Passion, Purpose, Direction
- Advocacy

Passion and Advocacy from the Past



- ICCU XC 1970 –Bronze
- Olympic Games: 1972, 1976 – 1,500m

For the present



“ It’s all about being able to elevate your game...gaining as much experience...so that you can succeed at the next level. ” **Simon Bairu**

“ All our top distance runners, at one time or another, competed for Canada at World Cross Country. Respect is deserved for the athletes that are competitive at such a high caliber event ...often not given recognition for how difficult it can be. ” **Cam Levins**

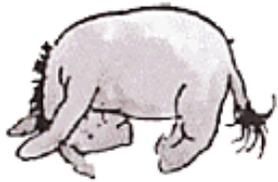
... and Future!



Natasha Wodak
NACAC Champion
2013

24th and 25th
2013 World XC

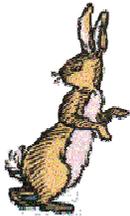
Rachel Cliff
NACAC 2nd
2013



Why bother? We can't win; we are just not good enough.



It's not worth trying with no money or recognition. The results don't lie!



I (we) can but without a World Record to chase, fame & fortune to gain, why not play ice hockey—or football or tennis?



Let me (us) try! Just give us the chance to be on the line.

Why Not? Let things happen and good things will!



We all need Pooh's optimism!

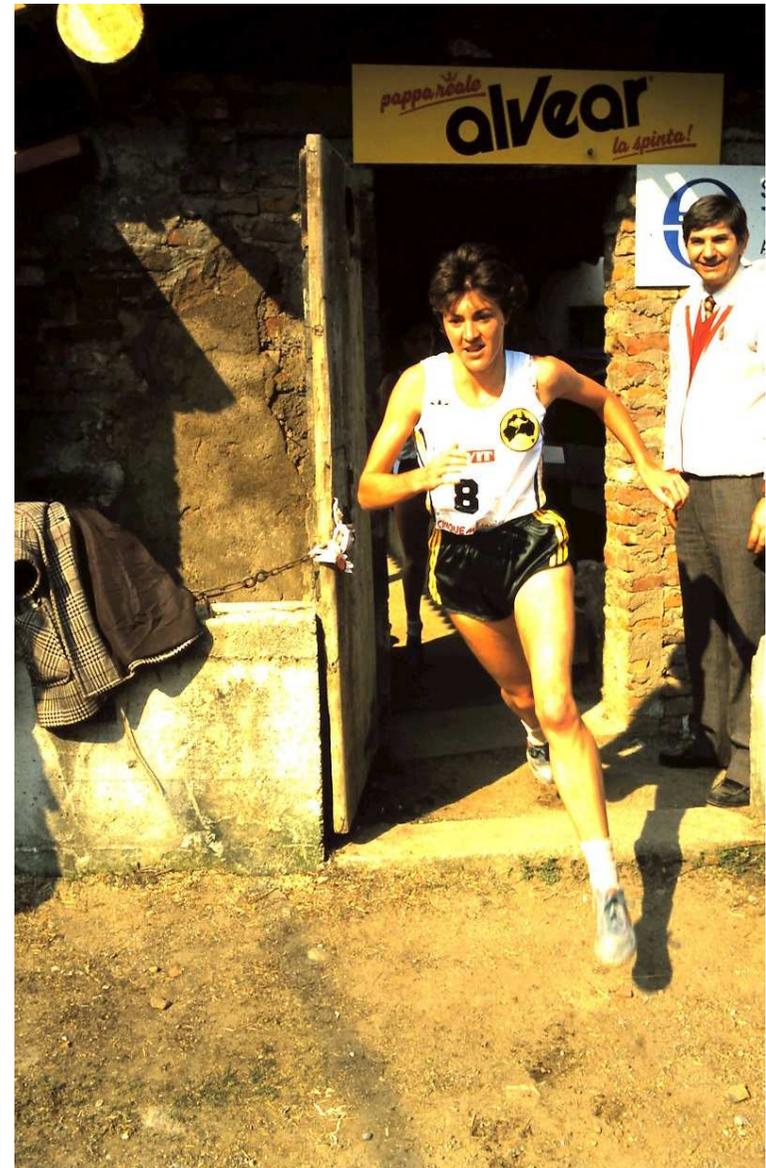


“When you do
The Things that you **can** do
You **will** find the way”

“It's all there in front of you
But if you try too hard to see it,
You'll only become confused.”

Anne Lord (AUS)

“ The World Cross Country Championships is the toughest race in the world. It's not just about the terrain and the conditions; it's about running against the best distance athletes in the world all at once.”



Australia at the IAAF World Cross Country Championships



- Landy, Clarke, Clayton, Deek, Mona, Benita
- Back then everyone raced XC in winter and Track in Summer every week
- 1970s-large cohort of talented articulate distance runners who met and competed at interclub and nationals competition. Pushed national body to participate
- Support from national coaches to participate



- Strong group of female distance runners raced XC regularly, only 'long' races available.
- Success at WXC Deek, Mona, Benita, women's teams event



- Isolated-strong competition within Australia but less exposure to elite competition with initially only international competitions, OG and CG's
- In the past WXC = opportunity for Australian distance runners to compete internationally. No qualifying standards and big teams (9men) meant WXC was something to be aspired to by the best and developing athletes
- In Australia running is not as commercial, less money around for road races etc (some but not as much as USA Europe etc)
- WXCC funded by IAAF and MF



Team Event



- Because XC played such a vital role in Australian distance running development the WXCC were a natural progression.
- The runners in the 70s were articulate and well organised (pushed for teams to be sent and fundraised), built the basis for regular Australian representation
- Australia competed every two years up till 1985 then every year. National distance coach recognised value of this competition



The trial for the WXCC has always been a key event in the calendar

Belief



- As years went by increased competition, WC track, road races, money, managers plus tied government funding, meant that WXCC were not high priority for Athletics Australia's HP department.
- The push to continue to support the event came from the athletes themselves. The distance community became more vocal in its support for WXCC which it recognised for its significant role in Australian distance running development. The distance running commission (DRC) was formed.
- DRC's vigilance to ensure support for WXCC, is the single most significant factor in continued participation



- Australia's continued participation in WXCC has led to various levels of individual and teams success which in turn has provided ongoing funding from the IAAF.
- Prior to this the distance athletes would fundraise if there were funding shortages from Athletics Australia
- Recently junior participants in WXCC have been levied for part of their funding

Team Medals



WXCC represents a goal for Australian distance runners at elite and sub elite levels

- **They accept the challenge...Deek, Mona, Benita, Craig, Collis, women's teams placings**
- **Australians want to compete against the best in the world. (less local exposure to high level events)**
- **They accept the challenge of the WXCC and are not afraid to step outside their comfort zone**
- **Recognise that XC and WXCC are relevant to development in all middle-distance and distance events**

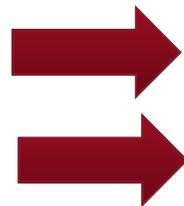


From Deek (1983) to Collis (2013)



- History
- Geography
- Advocacy
- Attitude

- increased funding
- ongoing participation



Ongoing participation

A Truly Global Event

