

Training Progression Benefit

by Ryan Gardner, LA Roadrunners

Last week after finishing 9 miles I was thinking about running 10 miles the following week. Currently, every week is a new Longest Run for me and I was a little intimidated by the double digit distance. Then it dawned on me that 10 miles is only roughly 10% more than the 9 miles I had just finished. That's not that bad. In my head, 10 miles was a big number before, but looking at it this way is much less intimidating. I realized that there's a definite trend that takes place as the training progresses. The one extra mile each week becomes a smaller relative increase than the previous week.

I decided to look at it graphically and found it interesting. The relative increase in mileage each week gets progressively smaller as the miles go up. Early in the program, when the miles are fairly low, the required increase each week relatively large. In fact, shortly after the mileage goes to double digits the relative increase drops below double digits. At 10 miles the increase is only 10% and it goes down from there which is not so daunting.

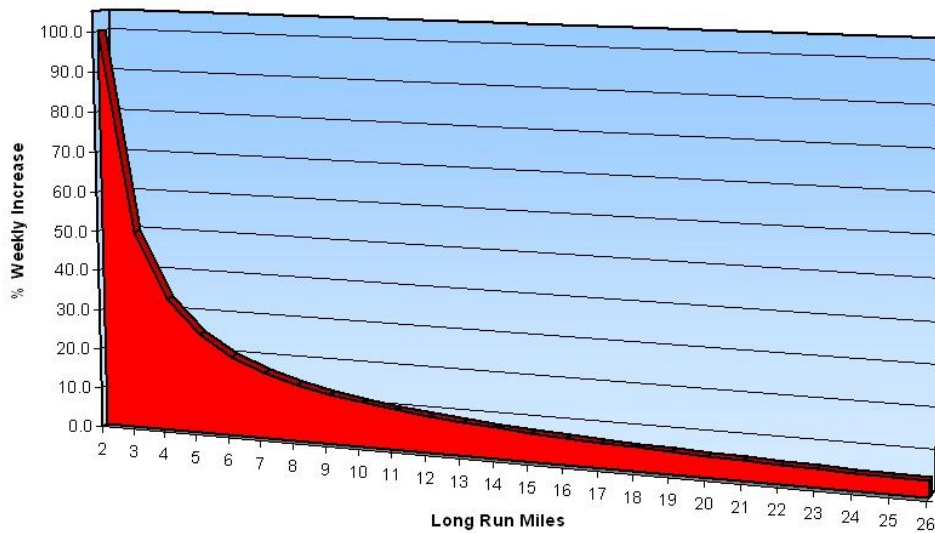
As a new runner this gives me a lot of encouragement. Instead of looking at new Longest Runs as big hurdles, I can think of them as being just a little bit more than what I just completed. In the higher mileage part of the program this thought really reduces the intimidation. 14 miles next week is not that big a number when it's only 8% more than this week.

I hadn't heard this this point being made to new runners before. Maybe because mentors and running authors are always experienced runners and have lost touch with what it's like to be working hard at 3 or 4 miles. Believe me, when I started with Roadrunners I was really working to do 3 miles. When I added one mile to go from 3 to 4 the 33% increase felt like a big jump. Going from 4 to 5 miles was still a big increase at 25%. When the mileage gets into the teens, we are into only single digit increases and that is confidence building.

For me this concept was very encouraging. As the training progresses, I benefit from smaller relative increases. That's why I called it the Training Progression Benefit.

The Training Progression Benefit

As long run miles go up, the weekly increase goes down



Milesrun	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
% increase from previous week	50	33	25	20	17	14	13	11	10	9	8	8	7	7	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4