“It is not the will to win, but the will to prepare to win that makes the difference”  
Paul “Bear” Bryant

The preparation for the Mercersburg girls' soccer team must begin over the summer. The workouts have been designed to achieve these goals:

1. Build a strong aerobic base  
2. Improve athleticism, agility and power  
3. Develop soccer skills

These three areas are all equally important and require a different type of training. It is important to remember that any opportunity that you have to play soccer, either full-size 11 v. 11, or smaller sided games need to be taken advantage of.

Aerobic Fitness –
Aerobic Fitness is the foundation of soccer-specific fitness. Without a strong cardiovascular system, you will not have the energy to perform at a high level throughout a game or practice. Two workouts per week lasting 30 minutes each is a minimum for increasing aerobic fitness. You can run, bicycle, swim or do any other activities that you enjoy. The basic expectations coming into preseason include being able to run 3 miles at a moderate pace and to be able complete a timed 1.5 mile run in 11 minutes 15 seconds.

Interval Workouts
A soccer game involves more short, high-intensity movement than sustained, moderate-intensity movements. For this reason, off-season soccer conditioning should include some interval running.

The basic format for an interval running workout is an easy jogging warm-up followed by several high-speed running efforts separated by short rests, and finally a jogging cool-down. In general, the high-intensity intervals should last 20 to 30 seconds and the rest periods should be equal in length.

These workouts increase a player’s ability to recover between periods of hard running and play during games, so you’re not spent after the first half. One to two interval workouts per week would be adequate. The basic expectation coming into preseason is to be able to complete the following spring workout:

1. Sprint 400 yds (walk 400 cool down) two times  
2. Sprint 200 yds (walk 200 cool down) 2X  
3. Sprint 100 yds (walk 100 cool down) 2X  
4. Sprint 50 yds (walk 50 cool down) 2X  
5. Sprint 25 yds (walk 25 cool down) 2X
Ball Work

No matter what position you play, it is important that you have a high level of “feel” for the ball, and feel comes from nothing else but accumulating experience with a ball on your foot (all parts of it), not to mention your thighs, chest and head. Juggling is one good way to develop ball feel, I have attached a workout designed to improve your ball work that should be followed at least three times a week. Simply going outside and juggling a ball for 10-15 minutes everyday will lead to noticeable improvement in ball control once the season begins. The basic expectation coming into preseason includes being able to juggle 10 times using only your thighs, 10 times using only your feet, and 5 times using only your head.

Workouts –

The workouts are designed over the nine-week period beginning Sunday, June 27 and lasting until Pre-season begins on September 1st. The workouts get progressively harder as the summer progresses, so it will be important to begin the workout in the beginning. It is very important that you warm-up and stretch before each workout. In hot weather, do your workout in the early morning or the evening hours and be sure to drink a lot of water. It is very important to begin each exercise with your muscles warm and ready to perform. I have attached a dynamic warm-up that you should always do before your workouts to reduce the likelihood of injury. If possible try to find a soccer playing friend to complete the work out with you., Don’t forget to try to find opportunities to play, and you can always go outside and practice juggling.
Dynamic Warm – Up
(Perform before each conditioning session)

-High Knee Walk – Stepping forward, grabbing the shin of the opposite leg and pulling the knee towards the chest. Extend the stepping leg and get up on the toes

-High Knee Walk with External Rotation – Grasp the shin (instead of the knee) with a double overhand grip and pull the shin to waist height. Extend the hip of the supporting leg while rising up on toes

-A-skip Gentle skipping designed to put the hip musculature into action. No emphasis on height or speed only rhythmic action

-Heel ups (running with kicking heels up in the back) – Shifts emphasis from hip flexors to the hamstrings. Actively warms up the hamstrings as well as move the quads through full range of motion

-High knee run – Similar to running in place with a small degree of forward movement. Emphasis is on maintaining an upright posture and getting a large number of foot contacts. The key to this exercise is to maintain perfect posture

-Backward Leg-ups – While walking backwards bend at the waist and simultaneously touch your right hand to the ground and kick your right leg back. Do 7 times with each leg

Walking Lunges – While walking forward, take a large step and go into a lunge position. Hold the lunge position for three seconds while you twist your torso

Carioca - As you move sideways allow your trail leg to first cross over the lead leg and then go behind the lead leg. Do this while facing in opposite directions

Backward run — Emphasis is on actively pushing with the front leg while reaching out aggressively with the back leg.

Forward sprint

Forward sprint – turn to backward run
WORKOUT SCHEDULE 2010

Week 1 (June 27 – July 3rd) – Over this week you should do
2 30 minute sessions of aerobic exercise (run, bike, swim, etc.)
2 days of the ball workout
1 day of Sprint Workout A

Week 2 (July 4 – July 10) – Over this week you should do
1 Timed 1.5 mile run (record your time)
1 40 minute session of aerobic exercise
2 days of ball workout
2 days of Sprint workout A

Week 3 (July 11 – July 17) – Over this week you should do
1 3 mile jog
2 days of ball workout
1 day of Sprint workout A
1 day of Sprint workout B

Week 4 (July 18 – July 24) – Over this week you should do
1 Timed 1.5 mile run (record your time)
2 days of ball workout
1 day of Sprint workout A
1 day of Sprint workout B

Week 5 (July 25 – July 31) – Over this week you should do
2 40 minute aerobic work-outs
1 Sprint workout B
2 days of ball workout

Week 6 (August 1 – August 7) – Over this week you should do
1 timed 1.5 mile run (record your time)
2 days of ball workout
1 5 mile run
1 day of Sprint workout A

Week 7 (August 8 – August 14)
2 days of 30 minute aerobic fitness
2 days of ball workout
1 day of Sprint workout B
**Week 8 (August 15 – 21)**
1 timed 1.5 mile run (record your time)
1 3 mile run
2 days of ball workout
2 days of Sprint workout A

**Week 9 (August 22 – August 29)**
1 5 mile run
2 days of ball workout
2 days of Sprint workout A

**Sept. 1 ----Report for Preseason!!!!**
Soccer Ball Workout

This entire program should take less than an hour. It is important that you do the full series of exercises without big breaks other than the planned rest intervals. It is fine to change the sequence of activities or add/change things to emphasize a weak area or a particular skill. Always stretch first.

Ball Control

5 minutes Jog while dribbling the ball with quick touches changing direction and speed. Use all parts of the foot and stay in a small space where many touches and turns are required.

1 minute Head juggling

1 minute Throw a ball up, control it with your chest, settle it to the ground and move off quickly.

1 minute Thigh juggling

2 minutes Throw a ball up, control it with your thigh, settle it to the ground and move off quickly

1 minute Foot juggling

2 minutes Throw a ball up, control it with your foot before it it’s the ground and move off quickly

200 juggles Using any body part, If the ball hits the ground, keep your count going until you get

Speed with the ball/Agility

Rest by walking for 30 seconds between every stint and exercise

1. Dribble in a figure 8 around markers 10 – 15 yards apart alternating with the inside and outside of both feet. As you dribble around one marker, accelerate to the next as if your were beating an oppoinent. (Do 8 figure 8/s, four with each foot –twice).

Lay out 2 makers about 25 yards apart

2. Sprint dribble to the marker
   Sprint backwards to a starting point
   Spring back to the ball
   Collect it and sprint dribble back to the starting point (twice)

2. From the starting point:
   - pass the ball to the 25 yard marker
   - sprint to the ball
   - collect and sprint dribble back to the starting line (twice)
**Strength**

*Stretch legs before starting this section, rest by walking 45 seconds between stints*

1. 50 ball hops – 2 foot jumping over ball (knees up high)
2. 50 ball hops – 2 foot jumping side to side over a ball, marker or line
3. 20 jump throws - Throw the ball in the air, jump up to catch the ball and throw again before you land. Do consecutive 20 times
4. 15 sit ups and push ups (3sets)
SPRINT WORKOUTS

I am including two different sprint workouts. One is fairly short and can be done in a nearby park or maybe even your backyard. The other one is designed to be done on a regulation track (400 yards). I understand it may be difficult to get to a track several times a week, but take advantage of opportunities that you may get. This workout may be closest to resembling the type of athleticism and stamina required to perform in a soccer match. In both workouts it is absolutely vital that you begin by stretching and warming-up.

Sprint Workout A

1. 5 minutes jump rope – Both feet, left foot, right foot, moving forwards and backwards.

2. Shuttle run – Place 5 cones or any items on a straight line 5 yards apart. Start sprinting from cone 1 to cone 2, then back to 1, then to cone 3, back to 1, then to 4, back to 1, finally cone 5 and back to 1. (repeat 3 times with a 1 minute resting period between runs.

3. Juggling the ball with the entire body for 10 minutes. Record your progress

4. Sprinting – Sprint for 10 yards each time. Two times each
   Start sitting, and then sprint
   Start lying on your stomach, then sprint
   Start lying on your back, then sprint
   Start squatting, then sprint

5. Footwork and Sprint - Do first exercise for 5 seconds, then sprint about 10 strides
   Jog Forward, Sprint
   Jog backwards, Sprint
   Sidestep right, Sprint
   Sidestep left, Sprint
   Carioca, Sprint
Sprint Workout B - To be done at the track.

Warm-up with two easy laps around the track. Stretch then do another lap around the track.

This is a sprint workout so the runs should be done at full pace. Make sure that you cool down by slowly walking the same distance that you sprinted.

1. 400 yd (one lap) sprint, then walk a lap 2X
2. 200 yd (one full straightaway and one full curve) sprint, then walk 2X
3. 100 yd (full straightaway) then walk 2X
4. 50 yd (sprint half straightaway then walk) 2X
5. 25 yd then walk 2X
6. Do a lap cooldown

7. Juggle the ball for 10 minutes
**Self – Evaluation**

It is often helpful to create a work-out journal or your accomplishments and thoughts during your training sessions. On this sheet please include what you thought was difficult, what you are planning on working harder at during the next week of training, and any notes that you think of. It would be great to hand in this Self-Evaluation on the first day of pre-season.

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