

Ohio High School State Mile Champions

Introduction

"Hey coach, what does it take to win state?"

It was my first day back coaching and a young man on my team asked me this simple question, to which I did not have a good, clear and concise answer. It seems natural that a coach should know exactly what it takes to win state. There are coaches who were themselves high school state mile champions and others that have coached one if not more state mile champions. But nowhere is there a handbook describing the exact workouts and requirements needed to win the Division I State 1600m race.

The Ohio State High School Athletic Association has been awarding the mile and 1600m state championship since 1911. If this many runners have won the race, then what it takes to win the race should not be a mystery.

So herein lies the purpose of this book - to document what the winners of the state mile and 1600m race did in order to win.

The Process

The quest to find the answer started with some basic conversations with runners that I knew and who had won the state mile. These informal discussions took place at meets and other locations where I would run into these acquaintances. After two or three of these informal interviews I started to format the questions and document the answers. I soon ran out of winners that I personally knew. The next step was to get a list of state winners and find the runners that had set a new meet record, won multiple years, or had a significant impact with winning the race. Once I tracked down these people I conducted phone interviews.

For these interviews I created a list of approximately two dozen questions geared towards finding the winners' trends and methods rather than trying to document daily workouts. Almost everyone knows how to run a hard quarter mile repeat workout, but the questions go beyond the standard interval workouts to determine the critical as well as the noncritical factors that are essential to winning the Division I State 1600m.