**Why Hill Sprints?**

**Safety:** It’s a lot harder to incur an overuse injury like a pulled muscle with hill sprints. Hill sprints are one of the few explosive exercises that allow for maximum effort without maximum velocity; no matter how hard you work, you’ll never reach top speed. This is one of the reasons sprints are done on a hill; these workouts are something you can do whenever the mood strikes you unless you live in a flat area like me. Then the treadmill is a good go to. Hill sprints also allow for more evenly distributed training stress. In a flat sprint, the average recreational runner uses mostly hamstrings to move; in a hill sprint, however, the incline increases recruitment of the rest of your posterior chain. Maximum speed work on flat surfaces is often associated with hamstring strains. Your hamstrings will definitely get a lot of work, but so will your glutes, low back, and calves. The load on the body is a little more even. Not only does this help prevent injury, it also allows for easier recovery. Plus, the strengthening work your posterior chain performs will result in increased power. Sprinting on a hill allows you to increase speed, despite the fact that you’re training at sub-max speeds.

**Exposing Weaknesses:** If your aerobic or anaerobic recovery is lacking, you’ll find out after a few hill sprints. If you’ve got a general quad dominance, or poor muscular endurance, hill sprints will let you know.

**Better Striding and Acceleration:** The nature of uphill sprinting requires you to flex your knees and lean forward while you’re running, which is more in line with proper acceleration mechanics. Hill sprints allow you to push your body and generate high leg turnover (cadence) without actually running that fast. Lifting of the toes and ankle dorsiflexion is also required prior to landing. This is associated with power generation and increase in stride length. Quite simply: hill sprints make your muscles more effective at performing sprints on flat surfaces, while also improving your sprint technique.

Hill sprints WILL make you a better sprinter even after just a few weeks. So have fun with these workouts!