



How I Stay Fit

I have always enjoyed watching track meets, especially the sprints, although I never competed in high school or college. At age 14, I began smoking just to show that I was “one of the guys” and was sure I would never become addicted.

20 years later, I was sitting in front of my TV with a beer

in one hand and a cigarette in the other watching the 1968 Olympics. I realized that if I didn't quit smoking, I was heading for serious health problems so I put out the cigarette, threw away the rest of the pack and began what became a 35 year career of jogging.

However, I never lost my desire to be a sprinter. One day when I was 71, I was doing a sprint workout at the Stanford track and met a lady named coach Joy. I asked her if she would coach me and that was the beginning of my achieving a life long dream.

At age 72, I competed in my first track meet, and later that year was at the World Masters Athletic Championships in Riccione, Italy leading off the 4 x 100 relay for the USA team.

There are two main ways that I use to maintain my physical fitness level.

I compete in the 100, 200 and 400 meter sprints in the 75 to 79 age group and in September, will move up to the 80 to 84 group.

My training consists mainly of workouts at the track, usually three times per week. I begin with a warm-up phase where I stretch all of the main muscles involved followed by a series of dynamic exercises designed to warm up those muscles. This usually takes around 20 to 25 minutes.

After the warm-up phase, I generally do one of two main types of workouts - speed (for the 100/200) and speed endurance (for the 200/400). These consist of running various types of sprint repeats at 80 to 90 percent of top speed with short breaks in between. The workout portion usually takes about 30 minutes. I then finish the workout with a short warm-down jog and series of stretches.

Sometimes I jog 2 to 3 miles on the weekend or will go to the gym to do core work, especially if I have a minor injury.

Doing yard work is just as important for my fitness as my track workouts and view it as a form of cross training. I have a fairly large piece of “woody” property that requires constant maintenance which I do manually using a pick and shovel for digging, sledgehammer and wedges for log splitting, etc.

The most important benefit for me, however, is just feeling good all the time and being able to do most of the things I could do 40 or 50 years ago.

Bill Kaspari is a retired electrical engineer who is about to turn 80. Thanks to his fitness routine, he is still able to enjoy the activities he loves most - competing in national and international track meets, working at his property in Portola Valley, California and, most of all, doing active things with his grandkids.