

ARE WE THERE YET?

Depending on the driver or passenger, the season journey can be still exciting or a personal obligation to be completed. What happened to "The Plan, The Plan" on our trip to the magic island where everybody gets on the podium?

RDA

Few of us can avoid being regularly derailed, so why should this writer? The major subject is the transitions from season to recovery, to planning & rebuilding but we are not there yet- we must go off the track for fun. The best stuff is probably anecdotal anyway. Sometimes racers miss their objectives simply by not eating well. Just go to a training camp cafeteria or a team trip & check what is on the dinner plates of the athletes. You will see lots of varied choices on the athletes plates. Its even likely that many of these choices are not even ours but handed down from the family & designed in by the "taste & feel" specialists for the food industry. Ours is a "designer food" era. Well now, did you know that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has been working on that subject for over forty years? If you want to know what you are eating, just request the USDA Nutrient Database on CD-ROM. You can also look at the eight volume printed information in many libraries & look at the USDA website <http://www.usda.gov>. There is a neat little food file for kids called LittlePyr.pdf for download on that site. Did you know that Microsoft Works has a template to use to record meals & calculate calories ? Don't forget to pick up a copy of the Recommended Dietary Allowances which can be found in many local bookstores. All this makes for good preparation to work with & find out from a Dietitian what to do.

I asked USCF Endurance Track Coach Graig Griffin what would be a simple way to tell athletes how to pick foods & he said "simple, look for five colors on the plate". Craig's advice goes very well with the USDA LittlePyr.pdf file.

Ben Franklin Again?

Why go off on a toot about food when this is a cycling column? And the answer is! because this is about a part of performance management. This is the waning portion of the race season for most athletes & perhaps a transitional period to different activities. This can also be a period before rebuilding must occur. This is the time to look back on the season and do the old Ben Franklin again. Make a list of questions, you know, the hard stuff beginning at the beginning of the plan and including lots of "did I?". Draw a line down the center of a page & head one column yes & the other no. Make a substantial list of questions. The phrase "I know what to do" is not acceptable. That phrase can make a supervisor, teacher, sales manager, or coach, cringe. If one always knew what to do, then supervisors, teachers, sales managers & coaches would be superfluous.

GOOD SCHOLARSHIP

Have you looked for good prime sources on subjects relating to training & racing? Beware of a friends ego-- everybody wants to be a coach or mentor & much information will not stand any logical examination. You can easily be a victim of undocumented testimonials, and almost any training method or aid can be made to look successful. There are some typical phrases used to sell unproved ideas. Look out for phrases like "Used successfully by many Olympic athletes" & "A recent University Study showed that". These are just about as valid as the phone solicitor who begins his pitch with "you have been selected to receive", yeah right, you have been selected from the phone book as the next prospective pigeon. Ultimately, you are the manager/director of coaching execution. In the athletic endeavor, the best managers are usually the most successful.

THE TARGET

Lets zero in on one issue about training. Time management, even for fun is important and training time management is a happiness issue. Effective use of fun time is just as important as the management of home or professional time. Training time for most busy people is sort of a grab it while you can matter-- its the poor choices which mess it up. When time is short, one can still be effective, just get at it. Here comes another pitch for 20-20-20. Another phrase for this could be called **Using the Hour** . This is an hour workout busted into three parts of twenty minutes each. Twenty minutes of warm-up (half enough), twenty minutes of intervals & twenty minutes of warm-down is the grand plan. This is fun project to plan for this hour so lets do some calisthenics for the warm-up, work into some running intervals, & warm down on the bike. For this, many of you don't even have to leave the neighborhood & for some, you don't even have to leave the house. Blessed is this house for it shall have three floors & a bike trainer. Work the hour right & you have given yourself a upper body workout, running speed or strength & a bit of bike maintenance time.

All the above looks untidy, but, there was a deliberate tweak or two on some of the issues of planning plus an example of effective time use. Of course the journey never ends & we are "not there yet".

Good luck on your next event!

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