

ENDURANCE RACING CLINIC NOTES

Know the Race Rules and Race Status (support and rider)

- Know when you can get support/change bikes
- What is legal when you have an on-course mechanical? Receive help? Run out and forfeit the lap? Finish the lap?
- Do you have to finish a lap between 11am and 1pm to be official?
- Support Crew Duty: Tell your rider if they need to do 1 more lap to keep their place. When in doubt, go back out.
- Do you have to carry/handoff a baton, water bottle, etc.? If so, have a hand-off plan.
- When do lights need to be on the bike? When do you have to turn them on?

First Race Questions and Tactics:

- What are **your** goals and expectations?
- What are the goals and expectations of your teammates (if racing on a team)- make sure they are in line with **your** goals and expectations
- Tell your support crew upfront what they will need to do to motivate you when you are really hurting and at your worst. This does NOT apply to injuries, just mental breakdowns. For example, you may say you want to quit, but you really expect them to keep pushing you. Should they gently coax or give tough love? Or do they let you rest?
- When to take caffeine, advil? How much?
- Sleep vs. no sleep?
- Self Supported? No problem. Just takes a little more advance planning- mix out your drinks as much as possible ahead of time and keep them labeled in a cooler. Have extra clothes, gloves, socks, tools, spare parts etc. organized. Have food organized, prepared, and easily accessible. Have a watch or clock in your pit area so you can keep track of time yourself. Have your lights charged and if possible mounted on a 2nd helmet.
Organization is the key word here.
- Time budgeting tactics:
 - Pick a time increment that is a ballpark average for lap time. Example: 24 hours in the race, goal = 12 laps, so 2 hours each lap.
 - In the beginning, each lap (ride + pit time) you complete under 2 hours puts time in the bank. When it gets late and you slow down, you can dip into your "savings" without hurting your overall race goal.
 - OK if it starts getting away from you. The important thing is to be aware of each lap's time. BE FLEXIBLE- anything can happen in a race, if needed redraw out your goals based on how the race is going for you.
 - Know in advance how often you want to pit (ie. Every lap or every 2-3 laps) and know how long you want to spend at the pit. If you have support crew, make sure they get you in and out in this amount of time.

Prepping for your first Race:

- Long rides: saddle time more important than speed. MTB is better than road riding.
- A 4-6 hour ride at your race pace (a sustainable speed / level of effort) will show you a lot about your bike setup and what you need to eat/drink per hour
- Bike comfort issues to resolve **before** the race:
 - Bike fit, shock setup and pre-load
 - Saddle comfort, height/tilt
 - Bars, grips; bar ends give you more hand positions
 - Gloves, clothing & shoes (need more padding?)

Don't try an unproven setup in a race.

Food/Drink:**Electrolytes:** (eCaps, Endurolytes, Elite)

- Experiment prior to the race. Some may upset stomach or cause more cramps

Sport Drinks: Hammer HEED, Sustained Energy, Power Bar, Champion Nutrition Revenge, Cytomax, Gu20, Cliff Powder, Accelerade, Gatorade...

- *Try to keep a couple flavors available and change them up often.*

High Energy drinks: Endurox, Ensure, Slim Fast

- *Be careful trying to get too many calories at one time.*
- *Aim for no more than 400 calories in an hour if you are still riding.*

Liquid Food: Gels

- *Experiment prior to the race, some riders have stomach problems with too many gels.*
- *Do not toss your wrappers.*

Bars, Fig Newtons, OCPs, etc.

- *These will get harder to eat as the race goes on due to dehydration and mouth soreness, so do not plan your whole race around them.*

Real Food: Have real food on hand: pasta, salty chips, leftover pizza, PBJ, Ham & cheese sandwiches, pasta with olive oil or pesto**Caffeine sources:**

- Flat cola, BURN, Caffeinated gels
- Coffee is a really bad idea if it upsets your stomach (ask Javaun)... Eddie uses coffee with lots of soy milk when it's cold and has no problems so maybe Javaun is a big baby ;)
- Green Tea

Riding Prep:

- Pre-ride the course: If there are areas where you expend too much energy, find better lines or know that you will walk the section. Know the problems up front.
- There is no shame in walking a technical section or hill that you will waste time and energy in, or possibly injure yourself if you're not comfortable in it. Save the ego for your other rides and be smart. Cyclocross skills are a plus to have in situations like this.
- Learn to shift prior to the transition in a turn or up hill.
- Keep track of your lap times during your pre-rides. Use this to come up with a realistic expectation for your race lap times.
- Be as efficient as possible. Don't hammer hills. Efficiency in turns, use your momentum and brake efficiently.
- Keep your legs moving on the descents, you will feel better when the next climb comes.
- Find "recovery areas", places where you can catch your breath while still moving moderately, even at your worst.
- Improve your downhill and night riding skills

Support Crew and Preparation Tips:

- Attach light mounting brackets to bike and helmet (if using one helmet) BEFORE the race to save time.
- Nice to have someone who can do basic maintenance (lube bike, adjustments, fix flats)
- Log your rider's transitions:

- Write down all food/drink consumed during pit time and recent lap, sunscreen/chamois cream applied, advil/caffeine/electrolytes taken, clothing changed, batteries changed.
- During the race, this will remind them when it's time to refuel you or change equipment and you can plan ahead of their next pit. (Mix bottles, warm food, get shorts and electrolytes ready)
- Also a good post-race evaluation tool.
- Chamois cream regularly
- Be really, really nice to your support crew

Timeline: Make Up Your Raceweek and Raceday Plan:

It greatly helps put your mind at ease when you have detailed plan so you know what you need to accomplish before the race as far as logistics and physical/mental preparation. You'll have less to worry about.

Here's a sample:

1 week prior:

- Gather your gear: food, clothes, bike tools, tent, stove, cooler
- Taper your training
- Bike in final condition

3 days prior:

- Finalize arrival plans with you, support crew
- Double-check all gear lists and buy any needed items
- Eat well and hydrate

2 Nights prior:

- Your most important sleep night
- Hydrate, eat well with good carbs/fat/protein balance.

Night before the race:

- Try to get some sleep,
- Eat a big meal with good carbs, good fats, and some lean protein.
- Begin loading the car.
- Stay away from caffeine and alcohol.

Race Day:

- Eat a good breakfast, leave by 7
- Mental preparation
- Arrive at course by 8 and setup.
- Eat a bit more to top off carbs.
- Get a good warmup if running in a LeMans start.

Race Strategy and Tactics

Do you go out hard? Go out conservative? It depends on your goals.

Are you in contention to be competitive? If so, you probably want to go out harder on the first lap and then back off on your second lap. Ride at a pace you can sustain while keeping an eye on the competition. Have your support crew help with this. If you are feeling good towards the last lap or two of the race, push the pace hard if you need to.

Are you just riding for fun and the experience? If so, you probably want to start out at a steady endurance pace that you know you can sustain for the long haul. Try to keep your lap times as

consistent as possible for the duration of the race. Again, if you are feeling good towards the end, push it if you can.

What is your race pace? Discover this during your training and pre-rides. Know how hard you can push and sustain, without blowing through your lactic threshold or going anaerobic.

Competitors? Are there people to watch? Should your support crew be looking at times or other riders' performance and pit routines?

Pitting and Transition Area (TA) strategy

For solos:

- Will you require breaks?
- If you want the fastest possible transitions, have a plan to coordinate changing of bladders/bottles, swapping of bikes (if you have more than one), changing of clothes. Communicate Have a plan for rotating and charging light batteries and swapping quickly (don't go out with a dead one). Labeling batteries helps.
- When arriving at pit, tell your support person if you had any problems: mechanicals, medical, physical, etc or if you feel any discomfort. They will be more coherent and can address with a solution, and remind you to replace spent supplies (tubes, CO2, etc).
- If you do have a mechanical, tell your support people exactly what it is (i.e. can't shift from middle ring to granny). Decide whether to swap bikes or continue.

For Teams:

- Be warmed up and in the Transition area EARLY. Always expect your teammate to set their personal record on the course.
- Always check-in first thing when you get to the TA.
- Call for your teammate when they come into the TA. If you are the rider, have the baton ready to pass and make a clean exchange.
- If you just finished a lap, cool down/stretch as needed. Eat and drink immediately before you lose stamina. Take advil/electrolytes as necessary.

Mentally prepare for the 1-4 AM time when many people hit the wall.

- If you have a support crew, tell them that you may need extra encouragement at this time of the race.

Etiquette:

- As a soloist, you will usually receive extra consideration
- You are entitled to ride a good line, you don't have to constantly pull over or dismount.
- That being said, be considerate and allow other riders to pass when the trail allows. (Like any race, it is the passer's responsibility for passing, but you don't want to cause an accident either.)
- Be very gracious, positive, and respectful and you will get more support from other riders and spectators. You will need their encouragement to perform your best.

Equipment:

Always use proven gear, never try new stuff.

Organize your gear in waterproof containers. Large plastic bins with labels are good.

- At least 4 pair dependable, broken in shorts.
- Layers are good: arm/leg warmers
- At night: tights, windbreaker, long jacket, skull cap
- Extra gloves, glasses
- Lights: have multiple batteries (borrow, rent)
- Hydration pack vs. bottles

Extra Bike Parts:

- Ideal: extra bike of similar quality to your primary rig
- Second best: a backup bike that is rideable (even a hard tail). Can also pull parts off it.
- Other options: extra wheelset, extra derailleur.

Important Extras:

- derailleur hanger
- tires
- tubes
- CO2
- Spare chain. Carry a masterlink with you
- Pre-cut cable housing
- Brake pads
- Saddle
- Bottle cage
- Any part specific to your bike that support or other riders will not have.

Recovery:

- Heal any injuries (overuse, crash, etc.)
- Mental and physical healing
- Reflect on what you did and did not do well
- Make notes so you can look back to them for the next time
- Right after the race – take recovery drink, food, supplements
- For the 2 weeks following the race – eat lots of good for you foods, or just eat lots and drink lots of water. Use recovery supplements, vitamins, etc.
- Take days off, start back in with low intensity spinning, nothing hard for at least a week- maybe longer depending on the length/level of effort in your endurance race

Further References:

The following articles can be viewed on the BURN 24 Hour Challenge Website at <http://burn24hour.com/articles.html>

24 Hour Solo: The Mental Game

by Eddie O'Dea - BURN Sponsored Rider

Support System

Eddie O'Dea

Efficiency

Josh Seldman

Eddie O'Dea races competitively in 12 and 24-hour races throughout N. America for Kona Bicycles & Cartecay Bike Shop, qualifying at the 2004 BURN 24 Hour Challenge and competing at the World Solo Championships in Canada in 2004. Check him out at www.eddieodea.com

Joshua Seldman operates a coaching and training camp service named Love In Motion. He had great success as a professional mountain bike and Cat 1 road racer including back to back 24 hour solo wins at the 24 HOA at Conyers, GA in 2001 & 2002 and a solo win at the 12 Hours of Razorback over Tinker Juarez. Joshua has worked as a CTS Elite coach, a coach for the 2004 Tour of Hope, and was a director sportif for Jittery Joes Pro Cycling Team. He attended the University of Florida where he earned his B.S. in Exercise Physiology, specializing in Sports Psychology. Joshua can be reached at joshuaseldman@yahoo.com.