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The Pre-Race Routine

An important part of being ready for a race is making sure that you don't break the rhythm that you've been striving to hold all these months. As you have figured out by now, holding your biorhythm is about being organized and planning ahead. This is key when getting ready for a race or an important group ride. Maintaining a pre-race routine is crucial to being physically and mentally prepared for a race.

The Days Before

Most of your preparation should be done before the day of the race. You should NEVER tune up or dial your bike in the night before a big race. All of the running around and finding lost articles of clothing should be done in the afternoon the day before the race. It shouldn't be delayed until 10pm on race night. You should be prepared enough to go to bed early and make sure you get good rest. You should...

- Know what the weather is planned to be on race day, and pack appropriately. You do not need to bring every piece of cycling gear you have 'just to be safe'. If you are truly prepared, you should have the clothes you need for warm-up, your racing, and cool down clothes to get into immediately after the hard race. You do not need to have 9 jerseys that clutter up your car and bag. Having a cluttered bag makes you have to pull

everything out in order to find a sock or armwarmer and ruins any organization you may have had.

- Have your pre-race meal or breakfast made or at least planned out. It is a very good idea to have your pasta and drink cold in the refrigerator so you can just warm it up and eat it in the morning. This is key so that you make sure you can wake up relaxed and with enough time to get a good meal in before your race.
- Have your directions, license, and car keys ready. This goes without saying. However, many experienced racers know what it is like to be late because of lost keys, directions or wallets. It is a good idea to keep a spare license in the handlebars of your bike (just inside the bar end of your handlebar). This way even if you've lost your wallet somehow, you would still have what you need to race.
- Your bike should be cleaned. Everything on the bike should be cleaned, chain, wheels, bottom bracket area.... This is responsible bike ownership and professionalism. You NEVER show up to ANY race with a dirty bike. This represents your sponsors horribly and makes you look like you are not prepared or simply do not care. Don't ruin sponsor relationships because of lack of bike maintenance.
- Have water bottles in a cooler or in the fridge filled up and ready to go. Including post race recovery drink.

Race Day

You pack everything in the car and drive to the race. Since you are so prepared from getting ready the night before, you should not have to be running around and doing much during race day. You should arrive at least 1.5 hours early so that you have a half an hour to register and dress, and 1 hour to warm up and pre-ride the course.

Your warm up should consist of some very hard efforts. You should bring your heart rate to the "red line" at least once. This means you are sweating and have drank a bottle before the race even starts, especially if it is criterium.

After the race you should have your recovery drink made and ready to drink. You should also have a long sleeve jersey to put on if it is below 75 degrees outside. DO NOT get a chill by standing around in sweaty riding gear after your race. You immediately put on dry riding cloths and go for your cool down ride.

These are just the basics. Eventually this preparation will become second nature to you. If you have any questions or ideas about things you think you should do before your race please don't hesitate to call and ask CCNS.

-Charles Coaching and Nutrition Services