

TRAINING TIPS from Carmichael Training Systems (Week 11 of 12)



The final countdown: The final prep before your event By Carmichael Training Systems

Congratulations! The Tour de Cure is right around the corner. Here are some things to think about as you approach your big event:

The days before:

- Lay out your riding clothes and pack your gear into a bag. This prevents the stress of an early morning search for your favorite shorts - and the horror of leaving one riding shoe at home. Check the weather and adjust your gear - do you need tights, arm warmers, or a rain jacket? Better to have the option of wearing it that morning than leaving it at home. Make sure you have padded cycling gloves and sunglasses to protect your eyes and reduce fatigue from glare. Don't forget the sunscreen.
- Lay out the food – energy bars and gels, drink mix, cookies – that you are going to bring with you on the ride. Make sure you have what you'll need.
- Check your tool kit to make sure you have the basics: a tube, a tire lever, a pump, and an allen tool.
- Nutrition – Carbo-loading isn't what it used to be. There's no real need to pile on the pasta for 2-3 days before a big ride. One day is enough, and there's no reason to go overboard. A moderate increase in carbohydrate intake the day before your ride will ensure your glycogen stores are topped off. Also, the day before your ride is not the time to start a diet. Your weight is whatever your weight is at this point. It's more important to make sure you're well fueled than to worry about your weight.

The day of: We're going to talk more about preparation for the day of your event next week, but I want you to starting thinking and planning how you're going to approach the day of your ride.

- Have a good breakfast 2-3 hours before the ride. Load up mainly on carbohydrates, such as cereal, bagels, or pancakes. Don't eat anything out of the norm for you, as you don't want to have your stomach rebel on you. This is not the time to try something new. Make sure to be sipping on water or a carbohydrate drink all the way up to the start of the ride, and then throughout.
- Ride at your own pace. One of the most common mistakes is getting seduced into a group you have to struggle to keep up with. You can't hold that pace for 100 miles. Find people riding at your speed.
- Use your time at the rest stops wisely. It's okay to stop and take on food and drink, just don't lose too much time by hanging out and socializing too long. It's better to stop 5 times for 5 minutes rather than one big stop for 1 hour. Try not to eat too much at once - munch lightly and take some food and drink to go.
- If you're doing one of the longer routes, take it easy for the first half. Avoid digging too deep on climbs (keep your breathing under control, if you're panting uncontrollably you're going too hard). This keeps your legs fresh for the last half.

Remember, everyone is strong in the first half, but it's the last 50 that you really find out about yourself.

- Stay hydrated with water or carbohydrate drink. Drink at least one 20-24 ounce water bottle every hour you are on the bike. To cue yourself to drink, set your watch to beep every 15 minutes to signal you to take a few mouthfuls of fluids.
- Vary your riding position. Move your hands from the drops to the brake lever hoods to the top of the handlebar. Stand on the pedals and arch your back for relief; do slow neck rolls and shoulder shrugs to prevent upper body stiffness.
- Divide the ride into segments, and prepare a strategy for each. If fatigue sets in, don't dwell on the miles remaining. Instead, concentrate on form, efficiency of motion, and drinking and eating adequately. Think about completing each segment one at a time; as long as you're going your pace and being smart with hydration and nutrition, you can go a lot further than you might think you can.
- Ride with a friend who has a similar time goal. The companionship and conversation will help the miles pass more quickly.

By taking good care of yourself in these last few weeks and getting things ready in advance, you'll make sure to have all the things you need to make your ride go smoothly, and you can be confident that you can not only complete the ride, but enjoy the journey!

Carmichael Training Systems Founder and Head Coach Chris Carmichael is the 2012 National Spokesperson for the American Diabetes Association Tour de Cure. This article is part of a series of articles prepared by Chris and the coaches at CTS to help you prepare for your Tour de Cure event. For more information on CTS and to sign up for our free newsletter and a chance to win a signed copy of "The Time-Crunched Cyclist" book, visit www.trainright.com/register.