



Greetings and welcome to the Next Level Newsletter, Volume IV, Issue IV. There's a race season among us!

Straight to OSB athlete news:

- Alex Jones qualifies for the **Ironman World Championships** at IM Arizona, taking 3rd AG
- Cori Downing takes 1st master and 5th female OA at Powerman Alabama
- Todd Barzcak takes 5th AG at Powerman Alabama
- Saidel Perez wins his AG at the UCF 5k
- Trung Lively finishes the Croom Fools 50 mile Ultramarathon run in 9 hours
- Kathy Larkin PRs by more than 10 minutes at the Cherry Blossom 10 Miler
- Jeff Zipperer wins his AG at Xterra Miami
- Courtney Wagner PRs her 5k time, taking 1st AG
- Bri Gaal wins the Azalea Festival Triathlon, while Marty takes 5th
- Robin Williams PRs her 5k at the Subaru Women's Triathlon
- Macall Dyer takes 5th AG at the Subaru Women's Triathlon in St. Pete
- Steve Vaughn PRs by 2 minutes at the Winter Park 10k
- Saidel Perez PRs at the Winter Park 10k
- Kathy Larkin PRs at the Wirefly National Half-Marathon
- Mark Procheska PRs at the Wirefly National Half-Marathon
- Robin Williams PRs at the Bay to Bay 12k

Training Tips – the bike leg of any triathlon

[Coach Marty Gaal](#)

The bike leg of most triathlons takes up 50% or more of the total race time. Your training should appropriately reflect this. However, there are also a number of actions you can take (or avoid) during race week and within the race itself to gain a bit more time and drop that bike split.

Pre-race:

- Ride the course. This will help you learn the turns and twists, and will allow you to eyeball most of the hazards you'll encounter.
- Get a bike tune-up, or at least clean your cassette and chain. Accumulated grit will create extra friction – which slows you down.
- Put on new tires for big races. Worn out treads are more likely to flat or slip.
- Warm up on the bike before sprint and Olympic-distance races. The more you've trained, the longer your warm up should be. Bring a bike trainer if the race site won't let you take the bike out of transition.

Race:

- Stay in the aerobars as much as possible. The only reason to leave the bars are when you're taking a corner, getting a drink or eating, during steeper climbs, and sketchy situations involving other riders or vehicles.
- Maintain a realistic steady effort throughout the race, especially on climbs. Power meters and heart rate monitors are good for this.
- Keep your eyes peeled for upcoming hazards – and avoid them.
- For longer races like 70.3 and Ironman, use the first few miles as a warm up.
- Corner aggressively – but within your ability. Lean into and accelerate out of the turn. In a sprint, stand up and get back to speed as quickly as possible.
- Make yourself known. Yell "on your left" or "passing" when approaching slower cyclists from behind.
- Don't relax at the top of a climb. Ride up, over, and through it.
- On long, steep downhills, level your feet and 'tuck' your body into as aerodynamic a position as you can muster. Break or sit up only if you're not comfortable with the speed.
- On windy days, you may be able to get a slight draft while staying outside the draft zone of another rider. On normal days, you can get a 'mental' draft by fighting to keep stronger cyclists in sight. Don't sit on anyone's wheel though – your only cheating yourself (as well as the rest of us).
- If you have an aero helmet, remember to keep your eyes looking forward, not down. That tail doesn't do any good sticking straight up in the air.

Training Tips – Dealing with anxiety before a race

[Coach Brianne Gaal](#)

Race season is upon us, and with that means becoming nervous before a race. It happens to everyone – from veteran athletes to complete newbies. If you don't get excited, you should! Nerves aren't a bad thing – and there is a level that is ideal prior to your race. Being too nervous or excited can waste a lot of mental and physical energy, while not being excited enough might lead to you being a little too lackadaisical during the race. So how to deal with nerves? There is no tried and true way, but some of the following tips may help you in your next race.

- Before a race, ask yourself *why* you do this. Maybe it's to challenge yourself, or perhaps it's for another person who doesn't have the ability to race. Whatever it is, think about your reason for being there rather than focusing on things you can't control.
- Understand that the race is here, and whether you feel prepared or unprepared, at this point it doesn't matter. Worrying about your preparation at the starting line is unproductive. Do the best you can on that day and be satisfied with it. After the race you can worry about becoming better prepared for your next one.
- Try to understand *why* you're nervous. Thinking about it logically can help you discover how to deal with it.
- Take deep breaths and visualize a great day.
- Listen to music – maybe to get you excited or maybe to calm you down
- Remember, this is a hobby! This is for fun – don't get so wrapped up that you forget this.
- Recall the hard work you've put in. Use that when you're tired and fatigued during the race. Remember that you're strong and you can get through it.
- Embrace the ability you have to go out and compete. It's odd to think about, but we all know that there are countries where people aren't allowed to compete. And there are a lot of people who simply can't physically compete – be thankful that you can!
- Do the absolute best you can and then BE HAPPY with it!

Maximizing your performance: Carbohydrate loading

By Jennifer Patzkowsky

Are you ready for the big race? Many of you, including myself, are gearing up for St. Anthony's this weekend. To prepare for an endurance race, many athletes load up on carbohydrates. Most often when endurance athletes think about carbohydrate loading, a big pasta dinner the night before a race comes to mind. Often referred to as "carbo-loading" this strategy is simply tapering for the race as your training program dictates and eating an adequate amount of carbohydrate so that you replace any exercise glycogen deficits and fill your muscle stores to capacity. Historically, the carbo loading protocol called for an exhaustive workout one week before a long race (90 minutes-plus) and then consuming a very low-carb diet (10%) for the next 3-4 days while training lightly. Finally, athletes followed a very high-carb diet (90%) the next 3-4 days while continuing to train lightly. This method had many drawbacks. Athletes weren't keen on performing an exhaustive workout just a week before a big race, as the plan required. Also, maintaining a 10 percent carbohydrate diet for three or four days left athletes feeling lethargic, irritable, and tired.

Fortunately other methods were found to be equally effective. A newer carbo-loading protocol known as the "**No-Depletion Carbo-Loading Method**" calls for athletes to eat a normal diet of 55 to 60 percent carbohydrate until three days before racing, and then switch to a 70 percent carbohydrate diet for the final three days, plus race morning. As for exercise, this taper carbo-loading method suggests one last longer workout (but not an exhaustive workout) done a week from race day followed by increasingly shorter workouts throughout race week.

Another even shorter method was developed by researchers called the "**Western Australia Carbo-Loading Method**." During the pre-race week, eat normally while training lightly until the day before a longer race. On the morning of the day before the race, perform a very brief, very high-intensity workout. The aim over the next 24 hours is to consume 12 grams of carbohydrate per kilogram of lean bodyweight, which is a mighty large amount! Less than 10% of calories should come from fat and protein and 90% from carbohydrate – an impossible task without the use of a sports drink. The Western Australia carbo-loading strategy works best if preceded by several days of reduced training so that your body will be rested, regenerated, and race-ready. In fact, several days of reduced training combined with your normal diet will substantially increase your glycogen storage level even before the final day's workout and carbohydrate binge.

The bottom line: Increase your intake of carbohydrates including whole grains such as oatmeal, brown rice, and quinoa; starchy vegetables such as sweet potatoes and squash; and fruits such as apples, bananas and grapes prior to race day. To achieve up to 70 percent of carbohydrate in your diet, keep protein to modest amounts, and fat to low amounts in your diet. An example of a carbohydrate rich meal would be 3 ounces of salmon, 1 cup of brown rice, a baked sweet potato, and a salad. Generally, easy to digest foods, nothing overly spicy, and cooked foods are best tolerated the day before a race.

Jennifer Patzkowsky, MS, RD/LDN, is a competitive endurance athlete who provides nutritional counseling and meal planning to athletes and people interested in improving their health/fitness. For more information on her services, please contact her at (863) 513-2635 or floridardld@hotmail.com.

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Enjoy your sport,

Marty Gaal

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