

RIBBLE VALLEY AC

Race Preparation INFO

Fail to prepare - prepare to fail!

Some thoughts about race preparation:

It is not logical that after putting in all your hard training you jeopardise your race performance with poor race preparation. Check out the following, and see if any bells ring!

Do you ease back enough in your training for a race?

- Ease the intensity and duration of any running after Wednesday – partly my job as coach!
 - Day before a race should be a total rest day

Do you take into account the level of exercise or games that you play at school - plus your training - in your run up to an important race?

Do you get to the race venue in good time to warm up?

If it's an early race start do you get up early enough to eat breakfast at least three hours before the race? When you do have a meal is it the right kind of food or are you eating food that is hard to digest?

Do you keep hydrated on the way to the race - by having a drinking bottle in the car with you?

Do you take enough clothing and shoes to accommodate any and all race and weather conditions? Try not to race in new shoes or clothing that has not been worn before. It is handy to walk the course in an old pair of studs and keep your racing pair dry.

For cross country races - if you know the course, it is not necessary to walk all of it, especially if it is very hilly - just walking a tough hilly course can sometimes take the edge off your performance. If you do not know the course and arrive late, reconnoitre the back section of the race route as a priority.

Do you have a set routine and warm up procedure? Or do you just do a twirl of the arms and lean against the nearest tree for a quick stretch?

Keep warm and find a nice quiet area for your pre-race warm up routine. Make sure that you have raised your body temperature sufficiently with easy running first and then some quicker short strides close to race start.

You must acclimatise your body to the speed it will be performing from the start of the race.

Tactics:

For races over 200m plan your tactics with several options - depending on how the race develops. Sectionalise the course in your mind - and congratulate yourself in the race, as you run through each section.

Distance Races:

Plan your tactics before the race and have 2/3 options to combat what your competitors may do. Try hard not to become too dispirited if you get stitch or are passed by another runner. All athletes at some time go through a bad patch in a race - don't imagine it is only you who are finding the going tough.

Try hard not to set off too fast, learn from previous races. Although it is important to set off well and get a good position, be realistic in your judgment.

Maintain concentration throughout – maintain a good running style – do not let your arms come across your body – try to run “tall” and like a sprinter (in terms of technique) as much as possible

Sprints:

Sprinters need to concentrate and explode from the gun. Maintain running style throughout the race. Concentrate on running relaxed even when tired or trying to catch another athlete – if you are not relaxed at your shoulders your performance will drop off.

If your competitors are not warming up - **DO NOT FEEL EMBARRASSED WARMING UP** – YOU MUST WARM UP – Science shows us that we cannot run fast unless our bodies have prepared correctly. To give yourself the best chance on the day please warm up as described – people who laugh or stare at you are not worth worrying about – Have the last laugh!

Do not engage in conversations with competitors about their best times etc. – this can be off putting – stay calm, focus on yourself only – do not worry and give your best

In conclusion:

Do not feel to be under any pressure to do well in your racing by anyone other than yourself – **you are doing this for yourself.** Unless you find your racing fun and exciting you will not stay in the sport long. If you don't do as well as you wanted to, always remember there are many more races to come, and with the right race preparation and some good training behind you - who knows!