



From Da' Coach by Coach Will

HOT WEATHER RACING TIPS

1. Don't run in a cotton T-shirt. You've heard it before but I am amazed at how many runners I see during races wearing cotton t-shirts. If necessary wear them during training but on race day wear a singlet or t-shirt made of one of the technical fabrics with wicking qualities. Cool-Max and DriFit are two of the trade names. Cotton is hot and gets heavy with sweat, both factors that will slow you down.
2. Wear Sunscreen. The sun saps your energy and has the potential of burning you, which can also lead to other skin problems like skin cancers. The best product I have found is Banana Boat Sport (wonder if I can get a commission?). It is waterproof and will not dissipate as you sweat.
3. Wear a cool-max hat with open weave. This will allow sweat to evaporate and give you the cooling effect while still protecting your head and eyes from the sun.
4. Wear a lighter sock. I like to wear the lightest and thinnest sock I can find. Your feet will swell more in the heat and the sweat running down your legs pools in the lowest point, which guess what, is your shoes. The lighter weight wicking socks will reduce the swelling and will allow the excess moisture to evaporate.
5. Train in the heat. The best way to be able to race in the heat is to train in the heat, just be sure to follow the instructions listed above.
6. Drink at the aid stations on the course. A 2% loss of body weight by sweating can cause up to a 10% reduction in performance. I know many of you think that slowing to grab a cup of water will slow you down, but it's not drinking that will have a more profound effect. Practice grabbing a cup, pinching the top to form a small opening, take some water into your mouth but don't swallow until your next breath and this will prevent you from choking and getting water up your nasal passages.
7. Stay out of cold rooms. The shock to your body from a really cold room to a really hot race can affect your performance.
8. Continue hydrating after the event. Even if you have taken in fluids during the race your body is still metabolizing fuel after you finish and you need to keep the fluid level high to allow your body to cast off the waste by-products of burning that fuel.
9. Train in the clothes and shoes you will race in. If you normally train in a t-shirt then race in a singlet you are exposing skin to the sun that might not be able to handle the exposure. Not only can this cause sunburn, but can affect your performance during a longer race. Run a few times in the shoes you will race in, don't try anything in a race you haven't tested in training.
10. Sit in an ice bath or stand in a cool body of water. If you are near a lake, ocean or stream stand in the water, the cooling effect will help with your recovery. I always recommend to my athletes that they take an ice bath after a race to reduce the contusions to the muscle fibers and to speed the removal of the toxins left from the metabolizing of fuel. It's hard to do but has great benefit.

Here is a great resource at the Gatorade Sports Science site <http://www.gssiweb.com> .

See you at the races...

Coach Will