

Training Tips to improve your Race Day Enjoyment from Performance Coach - Rory Coleman

Train 'Like a Champion'...

Start by picking an event that matches *your* ability, download the event's training plan (most events have one) and start living the life of an athlete in training. A good plan will lead you through a 12 week period called a 'Macrocycle' which will safely build your endurance, strength and speed leading you up to your Big Race Day. At the start of the plan ask yourself, 'Can I see myself sticking to it?' and, 'Do I have a clear picture of myself crossing the finishing line?' If you do, print out the plan, write on it the reason *why* you are doing it and put it on your fridge as it will let you and everyone else in your household know what you are letting yourself in for.

Don't 'Eat the fridge'...

It's hard to know what to eat when you are in training - you will hopefully tone up and lose weight during the 12 week period. The best approach to a cleaner diet is to try becoming 'processed food free', avoid eating bread as it is high in calories and bloats your stomach and only have 2 pieces of fruit/day - fruit is very high in natural sugar, especially bananas. Refined sugar is added to a lot of processed foods and fizzy drinks so always look at the sugar content in grams on food and drink labels and divide it by four (as there are 4g sugar/teaspoon). As an example, there are 35g (more than 8 teaspoons) of sugar in a 330ml can of cola. Reducing your alcohol intake or abstaining for the whole twelve week cycle will also make you feel far more energised, reduce your calorie intake and maintain your barriers to fulfilling your new cleaner lifestyle pledge.

Press the 'Reset Button'...

Life gets in the way of training for *everyone* and if you miss a session don't add it to the next one. Forget what you've missed, move on and concentrate on the session that you have planned for the day ahead. If it all gets too much, press your 'Reset Button' and re-read the reason *why* you entered the race in the first place. You'll feel that initial burst of energy and excitement again and you'll soon be back on course for the start line.

Give yourself 'Some Time'...

Getting fitter, faster and leaner doesn't happen overnight, it's more of a journey. If you stick to your programme it will deliver the results you are looking for. There is nothing better than knocking a couple of minutes off your best 5km training run, friends saying you're looking years younger and having to tighten your belt on your trousers. BUT, it takes time and patience - it WILL happen but don't be put off in the first few weeks if your training and weight aspirations aren't being realised - patience and commitment are KEY during the initial weeks of your training. There are other benefits to be enjoyed from sticking to your schedule too - it gives you that 'you time' away from your busy work and home-life schedule and allows you to de-stress and feel good about yourself. Make this *your* time to shine...

Who's in 'Team Me'?

Build your Team around you. Get your husband/wife/partner onside and they will be able to see your daily training commitments from the plan - it really helps. If you have a friend or colleague training for the same event, they will help keep you motivated and committed to training dates and times. You will need properly fitting, supportive training shoes - your local running store will have lots of experience and knowledge you can tap into. Go for a health check at your GP Surgery, have your blood pressure and your weight monitored and any health issues answered. You can add years to your lifespan by cleaning

up your lifestyle. Find a good physiotherapist - a fortnightly sports massage will revive any tired muscles and help with injury prevention.

Think positive, 'Be Positive'...

It's a great motto and one that really delivers as there is nothing worse than having to do something you are feeling negative about. If you are a social media user, post your fitness progress but only with positive comments and try to see the upside of obstacles you will encounter over the weeks ahead. Clean up your act - a cleaner car, house and workspace will make you feel a whole lot better about yourself and improve your outlook and race day performance. You are investing a lot of time, money and energy in your race so make sure you get the most out of the experience.

Race, 'Celebrate and Recover'...

On Race Day do your *Best* as there is nothing worse than saying you could have done better or run faster - you will only regret it later when you reflect on your performance. When you've crossed the line, make sure you take time to celebrate your achievement and recover fully before progressing to your next challenge. Before deciding on your next challenge assess your 12 week journey - evaluate the parts of your training that worked and those that didn't and make sure you take them into account in your next training plan.

Good Luck with your Training,

Rory Coleman

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