



El Tour de Tucson 2008

Advanced program: Winning the event

Guidelines to *winning* El Tour de Tucson

(or ways to give it a good try!)



Cardio & Strength Training

Literally do as much volume as you can!

- 18-25 hrs per week w/ 3-4 long rides (4-6 hrs) and at least 6 rides per week total if possible
- Moderate to high intensity, on and off the bike strength work, big gear work, mountain climbs, tempo, intervals, sprinting is a must! Prepare for a breakaway situation
- Use your anaerobic threshold (AT) and train by HR or power, do specific threshold training and VO2 work
- Total weekly hrs should contain: 50-60% in heart rate zones 1&2, 20-25% zone 3, 15-20% zone 4, 10% zone 5 and above; you will need massive endurance and the ability to maintain threshold pace for long durations
- Group rides-Two long, hard group rides like Wed & Sat and 2 long endurance rides. For locals, the Shootout and Mt. Lemmon!
- You will want to force some super compensation by overreaching and allowing for adaptation



Nutrition on and off the bike

- **Prior to workouts-** Light meal, mostly carbs: bagels, eggs, fruit, oatmeal, yogurt, fruit shake
- **During workouts-** Bars, gel, high carb foods, whatever works with your stomach, 200-300 cal/hr if possible
- **Immediately following workouts-** recovery drink or food, high carb & protein mix, 4 to 1 carb to protein ratio, within 20 min, normal meal soon after, replace lost calories
- **Throughout the day-** 60-70% carbs, 15% protein, 15-20% fat, clean foods, lean meats, pastas, rice, fruit, veggies
- **Race morning-** Similar to every other day! This is not the time to change anything, eat 2-3 hrs prior to start
- **During the race-** 200-300 cal. per hour, familiar foods, gel flask is fast & easy, bars, bananas, sandwich, etc.
- **To lose weight-** Create a 500 calorie per day deficit



Hydration

What and how much should you drink during the event?

- On average athletes lose 1 liter of fluid per hour and up to 3/hr in extreme heat/humidity
- A fluid loss of 3-5% body weight will have a dramatic negative effect on your performance
- May have to drink between 1-2 liters per hour in the race, make sure some or all contain carbs
- Start with 3 bottles and get 2 more at the second river crossing from a friend, there's no stopping in bike racing! 😊
- Ideally, learn to urinate off the bike---sorry ladies!



Pace

What intensity level should I try to maintain?

- You have to be in the lead pack no matter what or your race is over, do everything you have to start there and stay there!
- El Tour is a moderate effort due to the duration but you are trying to race so you are going to have to go EXTREMELY hard at the start, river crossing, hills, and finish; you may also have to contend with a long break
- After the second river crossing is where the winning break may go, come into that river in the front and out in the front or your day is likely to be done
- Anticipate problems like turns, changing wind directions, rivers, hill, etc., and get to the front...or just stay there!
- Stay in the top 10-15% of the group you're in all the time!
- When you are not making a move you need to sit in



Clothing

Tucson weather can be unpredictable. It can go from cold at the start and hot at the finish; or cold at the start, warm in the middle and cold again at the finish. Be prepared!

- Start with as little gear as you can tolerate to conserve space and weight
- Take clothing you can put on and take off based on conditions
 - Arm and leg warmers that you can remove
 - Jacket, vest, skull cap, & ear warmers
 - Toe/foot warmers (plastic bags if wet conditions)
 - Dress in layers to keep core warm
 - Rain jacket if necessary
- Flats: bring a Co2, you may be able to add air and get back to the group but no way will you fix a flat and come back



Recovery

Adequate recovery during training is as important as training!

- Recovery time for 5 hrs aerobic riding is 12 hrs
- Recovery time for 20 min anaerobic is 36 hrs
- Replace burned calories daily
- Follow each workout with a recovery drink or food in a 4 to 1 carb to protein ratio (within 30 min when possible) then eat normal meal soon thereafter
- Adequate hydration not only during workouts but throughout the day in general
- Shoot for 8-9 hrs of restful sleep per night
- Be objective about fatigue and overtraining signs: do not ignore!



Course

- **Start position-** get there early and line up on the front
- **Start-** Plan on going hard for the first 10 miles to get position
- **River crossing #1-** come into and out of it at the front of your group, you can ride nearly 100% of these if you start in top 5; this will allow you to wait and rest a bit while everyone else scrambles to get through, flat resistant tires are critical!
- **River crossing #2-** many times the winning break leaves just after this crossing, through the neighborhood, up the climb...
- **Hills-** great opportunity to launch a break but make it count or don't go...it rarely works in this race due to all the chasing tandems
- **Wind-** this race is windy, be an expert at drafting and positioning; many times the wind forces a split and if you're back you're gone
- **Finish-** Come into the last 2 miles near the front of your group; with 1k to you need to be in the top 10; you need to be top 5 around the final right turn to have a chance
- **Trouble Spots-** Same as every race but add in the rivers and inexperienced riders; the final selection will be 50-70 riders; always stay in the top 20 to respond to breaks and avoid crashes



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