



# El Tour de Tucson 2008

## Intermediate program: Improve Your Time

Guidelines for a *competitive* El Tour  
de Tucson



# Cardio & Strength Training

No substitute for time on the bike!

1. 12-15 hrs per week w/ 2 long rides (4+ hrs) and at least 5 rides per week total if possible
2. Moderate intensity, strength work, big gear work, hills, tempo, intervals
3. Learn anaerobic threshold (AT) and train by HR or power
4. Total weekly hrs should contain: 50-60% in heart rate zones 1&2, 20-25% zone 3, 10-15% zone 4, 5-8% zone 5 and above
5. Group rides-Two long, hard group rides per week like Wed & Sat; Sun can be a long endurance ride only
6. Don't be afraid to over-reach and really challenge yourself as long as you allow for recovery at some point



# Nutrition on and off the bike

- **Prior to workouts-** Light meal, mostly carbohydrates: bagels, eggs, fruit, oatmeal, yogurt, fruit shake
- **During workouts-** Bars, gels, high carb foods, whatever works with your stomach, 200-300 cal/hr if possible
- **Immediately following workouts-** recovery drink/food, high carb & protein, 4 to 1 carb to protein ratio, within 20 min, try to replace burned 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/hour, familiar foods, gel flask is fast & easy, bars, bananas, sandwich, etc.
- **To lose weight-** Create a 500 cal/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?

- El Tour is mostly a moderate effort due to the length but you are trying to race so you are going to have to go hard at the start, river crossings, hills, and the finish!
- Learn your limitations on hard group rides & long endurance rides, learn to recognize early signs of problems
- At El Tour start hard and find a fast group to hang with, it can be over your head as long as you can position well and sit in most of the time to conserve energy
- Anticipate problems like turns, changing wind directions, rivers, hill, etc., and get to the front *beforehand!*
- Stay in the top 10-15% of the group you're in all the time!
- Conserve energy all the time! Critical!



# 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 weather)
  - Dress in layers to keep core warm
  - Rain jacket if necessary



# 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 near front
- **Start-** Plan on going hard from the gun to get position
- **River crossing #1-** come into and out of it near the front of your group. Ride as far as you can, and run the rest; now you can wait and rest a bit while everyone scrambles to get through. Flat resistant tires are critical!
- **River crossing #2-** Same deal but the first one through may try to launch a break group, plan on being there to decide if you want to go or not
- **Hills-** great opportunity to launch a break but make it count or don't go
- **Wind-** this race is windy, be an expert at drafting and positioning as many times the wind forces a split and if you're in the back you're gone
- **Finish-** Come into the last 2 miles near the front of your group and stay there; 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 at the win
- **Trouble Spots-** Tons! Be heads-up all the time! Potholes, cops, cattle guards, motorists, river crossings, glass, heavy braking, inexperienced riders and poor skills in many cases



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