

## THE LANTERN ROUGE

The red lantern is on the end of the train & this is approaching the end of great racing season. I hope everyone got involved in some way with the Nike World Masters Games. There were over 600 cyclists participating. In almost every field there were notable racers many who had maintained a lifelong fitness & can compete at the highest level. I particularly enjoyed watching the Points Races at Alpenrose Velodrome. Racing at Alpenrose will continue through September with Madison Races in the evening until dark. Madison racing is team racing & was named after Madison Square Garden in NYC. Spectating is free.

**The Big Event** can leave the athlete plumb tuckered out. Read this as physically & mentally fatigued. Hood to Coast which may be a lark to some can be the **big event** for others. This fatigue usually means that the athlete's peak, which stays on top for about three weeks, has been passed or used. Evidence of passing peak can be seen in the success cycles of professional cyclists where they win for a time then reappear three months later on a winning streak. The athlete who wishes to maintain top fitness through a long race season must know self very well & be able to exercise exceptional judgment. Here is where the adage **Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance** really applies.

The volume issue is most frequently abused. Inappropriate training & race volume can easily make a mess of high ambitions. Our bodies adapt to the task at hand & when adapting to higher volumes the body becomes more efficient. The body handles the job but sheds the muscles which are least used. Our zippy passing gear just went away in favor of perhaps an ability to go longer. Pro stage racers work very hard at maintaining weight during those events. Six thousand calories a day may be necessary to prevent the body from using protein instead of fat. In spite of constant eating, a long stage race may leave the racer looking pretty gaunt at the end of the event. If one gets a case of the **Agottas** then over-training and static performance may be close at hand. You all know what a **Agotta** is. The best **Agotta** is **Agotta train**. **Gotta Train** & **plumb tuckered out** do not mix. **Gotta Train** may also be a symptom that one's order of importance is out of whack. Training away from your plan or your objective is mostly going through the motions and can be destructive. Some key words here are self management, self discipline, & self control. When **everything** is of equal importance and everything is a **Agotta**, athletics or whatever has become the ruler & its time to depose the ruler or rulers and inject some variety into life.

**Lets go back to the basics** & look at the plan for the season. If you are on form & happy with your performance then that's wonderful--- now go back to the paperwork with your season plan or create a new master. Even a simple diary can be a valuable tool. It is very difficult to be the best that you can be if you must depend on memory to guide you into a new race season with new challenges. The cliché here is **Prior planning prevents poor performance**. Prior planning also insures purposeful performance. How about **AA plan a day keeps frustration away**?

**But Wait There's More**, don't touch that dial! Here are some very rough planning guidelines. When the season winds down, wind down the training by changing activities.

Go play! Go play at something else besides training. Rest does not mean becoming a couch potato. It takes about eighty days to become ~~A~~detrained@but the motor has to have its yearly service. You can play for it now or pay for it later. This last sentence may be awful, but the advice is intentional. The reader is urged to repeat the most trite phrases aloud for best effect.

**The simple plan** is to use early Fall as a recovery transition period. Mid fall can be the time for other sports activities. Late Fall should begin the rebuilding process with weights, and a variety of appropriate activities. Winter can be largely devoted to strength building. Late Winter should have an increase in volume or Base extending into Spring. Specialization usually becomes more pointed during this period. Race preparation begins in earnest at this time. Don't forget to set benchmarks or objectives for each phase. The easy way to think about the latter process is to use the words task & test. Build the strength and then go test in a repeatable manner. You will be best served by your diary or even a calendar. A top cyclist acquaintance described his win as ~~A~~riding within myself@as in under control. Training is best served by being within yourself.

Thanks for reading. Questions are welcome!

Phil Sanders