



RECOVERY TIPS FOR STAGE RACES, OMNIUMS, & MULTI-RACE WEEKENDS

BY HEAD COACH SCOTT SAIFER

When racing twice or more over a weekend, your between-race recovery activities will determine how well you feel and perform in the later races. Follow this guidance to improve both.

- During each stage or race, eat and drink generously and on a schedule. Do not rely on hunger or thirst to guide consumption. You are fueling and hydrating for the next stage as well as the current one.
- As soon as possible after each event, start eating and drinking and change into dry and/or warmer clothing if needed. Avoid getting chilled. During a 10-20-minute cool down ride, drink a full bottle of exercise drink and eat about 200-300 calories of starchy food while you turn over the pedals easily. If you have another stage coming up the same day, consume something like a bagel, bar, banana, or potato... don't stuff yourself. If it is the final stage of the day, consume as much as 500 calories within 30 min after the finish. Have enough food at the venue so there is no delay in post-race nutrition, even if you have a podium appearance, drive or other delay in reaching your housing after the stage. Use a trainer for the cool-down to help unwind your body and mind. If the weather is hot, roll around for the cool down. In extreme heat, shorten the "cool down" to 10 minutes.
- After cool-down, get out of the sun or rain, off your feet and away from your chamois. The time between races should be spent sitting or lying down as much as possible. When you can, sit with legs up and relax. NEVER stand around chatting after anything but the last stage.
- For between-race meals, eat low-to-moderate glycemic index, high-carb foods with some protein, and drink water. Avoid exercise drink except while you are actively riding and for 20 minutes after. Fuel well with a dinner but don't overeat. Get enough salt to replace what you have sweated away.
- Get some legs-up self-massage. You want a gentle, flushing massage to move blood out of your legs repeatedly. Avoid deep tissue massage during a stage race or multi-race weekend. If you don't have access to a massage therapist, lie on your back with your legs up and give yourself a few minutes of massage on the calves, hams, glutes and quads. If you have several hours before the next stage, include some ice-massage in which you rub your legs with a handful of ice cubes, continuing until the ice melts. Put down a towel so you won't soak the bed or carpet.
- Nap in the afternoon after a morning stage or in the morning before an afternoon stage. Set an alarm to allow time to get to the venue and warm up.
- If the stage race is no longer than a weekend with one race per day, do a full, normal warm up before each day's stage unless the stage is so long that you can count on starting easy, even if others attack from the gun. If there is any chance you will need to go hard from the start, do a full warm up, even before a long stage. (If racing twice in one day, this rule doesn't apply. In that case, ask your coach for the "Two Races in One Day" handout.) In the case of a 4+ day stage race, warm-ups may be shortened before later stages. Consult your coach for advice.
- Active Recovery: If you have a race early in the morning or later in the afternoon, consider an Active Rest Ride (30-90 minutes in the Recovery Zone) in the morning of an afternoon race or the afternoon of a short morning race. This ride should be planned around your eating schedule so that you can fuel appropriately in preparation for, or immediately following, the day's race.
- Bike Cleaning, Repair and Set-Up: Do everything you can to avoid needing to do laundry or work on bikes between events. Bring multiple kits. Bring your bike(s) in perfect working order. When possible, bring multiple bikes rather than trading out bars and wheels around a TT. Bring or utilize a mechanic if possible. Note any bike problems in each stage and get them corrected before the next stage. If you must wrench on your bike, do as much as possible seated in the shade.

Wenzel Coaching Head Coach Scott Saifer, M.S. raced over 300 events including numerous multi-race weekends and stage races and has been coaching professionally since 1992. The coaches of Wenzel Coaching can be reached at 503-233-4346 or www.wenzelcoaching.com.