



## Pre-Race - October 2009 – RVM Training Newsletter

By Bruce Deacon

### Your Best Day...When It Counts

By now, all of the hard work has been done and there is very little that can be gained through more training. Don't get me wrong...there is still a lot that can be done to make sure that you have the race of your life on October 11th.

Here are 10 tips to making sure that you race well:

#### 1. Rest

Science has shown that a even three months of no training will only drop your fitness by about 15%. So for sure, a week of lighter training won't make you lose your fitness. In fact, it will make you faster. By taking it easy, you will let your body recover from your hard training and move to a new level of fitness. Keep to easy jogging and light work at marathon pace.

#### 2. Sleep

Get some extra sleep. Try adding a few extra hours early in the week so that if nerves make sleep difficult the night before the race, you will not feel the full effects. Science shows that we can "bank" sleep. The most important night's sleep is two nights before race day.

#### 3. Carbo Load

Beginning Thursday morning, start to consciously choose foods that are rich in complex carbohydrates. These can include potatoes, sweet potatoes or yams, brown rice, whole wheat spaghetti, slow cook oatmeal, some cereals, etc. This is not at the exclusion of other nutrients; your body still needs vitamins, minerals, proteins and fats. Just try to eat a bit more of the carbohydrates and a little less of the other good stuff. Don't pig out! Eat normal portions. Be careful not to fat load by accident by filling up on cheesy foods, nuts or fatty meats.

#### 4. Be Positive

Psychologists have found that those that race to their best approach race day with a positive state of mind. They see it as a challenge and an opportunity to shine. They tell themselves that this is their big payday where all of those hours of training will pay off. "This is my big chance" and "I'm ready for a great one" are the types of thoughts running through their minds in the days leading up to the big event.

#### 5. Take Care of the Details in Advance of Race Day

Proper planning precedes perfect performances. Work out where you will park, how you will find your family, when you will leave home for the start, etc. Figure out what you will eat on race morning. The rule of thumb is don't eat anything you haven't had during your training. Now is not the time to test out whether you can stomach that egg and bacon sandwich.

#### **6. Don't Overdo Things the Day Before**

Take things easy the day before the race, and don't spend too much time on your feet. Try to reduce the stress in your life by avoiding being really busy or running around doing pre-race errands. Limit the time you spend wandering around sight-seeing or checking out the Expo. Take the time to get caught up on your TV time, leisure reading or napping.

#### **7. Dress for Success**

Ideally, you should feel a bit cool standing on the start line. If you are comfortable at the start, you are likely overdressed. If it is cool and expected to warm up in the first hour or two of the race, then consider wearing a throw away layer of clothes that you can ditch when you get warm. Your best friend on a cool morning are a pair of tube socks. At the start they are pulled up to your shirt sleeves to give you that long sleeve feel, but as you warm up they are rolled down to be only gloves. As you really warm up, they are tossed to the side of the road.

#### **8. Pace Yourself**

The excitement of the race, the crowds at the start, and the uncertainty of what exactly we can run per kilometre all challenge our efforts to run an evenly paced race. On race day, situate yourself among others wanting to run a similar time, by asking those around you their anticipated finish times. There is no use pushing towards the front if those around you will then be pulling you out at a faster than planned pace. Don't try to "bank" time during the first half of the race...aim to run only slightly faster than race pace during the first half.

Break the race into thirds. The first third of the race is run at a pace that you know you can hold for the full distance. By the second third of the race, you are warmed up and feeling great. Gradually begin to pick up the effort, using the kilometre markers and your stopwatch to keep track of your pace.

#### **9. Fuel Up Along the Way**

Drink water regularly and take the gels and other fuel that you have practised in training. Race day is NOT the time to experiment with gels for the first time.

#### **10. Have Fun!!**

Enjoy the moment. There will be difficult times in the race, but overall it should be a great time. Very rarely do we get to mix with thousands of people all trying to achieve a similar goal. So remember, no matter how tired or sore you get...save enough to smile for the camera as you cross the finish line.

#### **Questions, Questions, Questions**

Do you have questions about your training? Now is the time to ask. Email Bruce Deacon at [coachbruce@royalvictoriamarathon.com](mailto:coachbruce@royalvictoriamarathon.com).