

Harbor House 400 – Ride for New Beginnings

FUELING FOR THE LONG HAUL

One of the basic questions that arises in the training cycle is, how should I eat and drink for those long, hot days coming up in a few weeks. There is a simple system that many long-distance cyclists have used to come out of a 100+mile ride still smiling.

Drinking: Water is always the best fluid replacement, but if you prefer something with more taste, products such as Gatorade have proven highly effective in restoring fluid and chemical balance. One should use caution when using fluids other than water. Each person's system is different. Some energy fluids contain high fructose corn syrup, a sweetener derived from corn that can be unsettling to one's stomach. During the training rides test out what works best. Limit the intake of diuretic fluids, such as, coffee and soda containing caffeine, and alcohol. Too many those types of beverages may cause dehydration. If you need a daily fix of coffee, by all means, drink it, but try to limit the amount consumed.

Use this rule of thumb:

- **During the Ride:** Consume at least 20 oz. (approx. one water bottle) every 20 miles or 1 hour, whichever comes first.
- **After the Ride:** Consume at least two more 20 oz. bottles before going to bed that night.

This will reduce the chance of dehydration.

If your urine is dark yellow, you are probably not getting enough fluids; this is a sign that you may be dehydrated. Some other symptoms of dehydration include: Sluggish performance, increased heart rate, dizziness, and muscle cramps.

Eating: Eat. Eat. Eat. This is not a diet exercise. Many riders come back for the Ride *gaining weight*, not much, but perhaps a couple of pounds.

Here is an example of caloric output. Studies have confirmed that one's body burns approximately 50 calories per mile of riding, not to mention the "after burn" of when you stop riding for the day.

So, on a typical day ... one may burn

- 4000 calories, (80 miles x 50 calories per mile)
- 2250 calories, simply living
- 6250 calories of intake needed to balance the burn off

*So, on a typical day, one would have to **TRIPLE** one's normal intake just to break even.*

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The price of skimping will be a lack of energy and an overall fatigued feeling the following days. This will probably be accompanied by a nasty disposition.

While Riding: At the SAG stops, take advantage of the good treats they offer. They set out foods that will provide energy and keep you going. And they have plenty of variety. In addition to consuming the high energy foods at the SAG stops, one may use the high energy products available, e.g., GU, Powergel,

Hammergel, Powerbars, Clif Bars, etc. The same caution noted about high energy drinks applies here. Use carefully; if it causes discomfort, drop it.

Before Riding: Eat a decent breakfast, staying away from high fat foods such as bacon and sausages. Personally, I disregard the foregoing completely. My group finds it beneficial to ride about twenty miles and then find a diner to eat a 'traditional' breakfast. Others find that policy lunacy. The fact is, however, that fat takes much longer to digest than say, fruit, and this extra energy used for digestion is better used in your legs.

After Riding: Studies have shown that after a session of vigorous, aerobic exercise, a "window" opens in one's system that allows for muscle replenishment at an accelerated rate. This window is open for 2 - 3 hours once the day's ride has ended.

So ... Eat a nutritious dinner. Enjoy that ice cream.

More Tips:

*Try out Energy products BEFORE the big ride so you know your system can handle them. Choose the one best for you.

*Prepare your next day's riding food before going to bed, taking into consideration the length of the day.

*Eat foods high in Potassium and Calcium. Doing this WILL prevent muscle cramps. These foods include bananas, milk, etc.

*Take a multivitamin every day to make up for whatever you may miss.

Using these guidelines will help you dramatically during our ride. Above all keep a positive attitude as you go. Don't think of how far you have to go, but how much fun it will be when you get there!

If you have any questions, call Bill at 732-363-0899 or 732-284-0094.