



End of Season Kick

by Coach Frank Duncan

It's August, hot and humid, and the alarm just went off at 4:30 a.m. You have to get up for a run before going to the pool for a 3,800 yard workout and a bit of lifting before going off to the office. Then its work, work, work, a quick lunch time run and maybe try to take a nap without the boss catching on. At the end of the day you get on your bike and do hill repeats. After the ride you eat whatever you can and try to give your significant other some attention, and then do it all over again the next day.

This is no way to live, unless you're a pro, and then, well it's your job! A lot of athletes come to me and want to know why they're training harder than ever but not getting any faster.

This is the best time of the season to remember "LESS IS MORE"! If you have been working hard all summer then now it's time to give your body a break.

Rest gives the body time to replenish energy stores and repair damaged tissues. Exercise, or any other physical work, causes changes in the body such as muscle tissue breakdown, depletion of energy stores (muscle glycogen) as well as fluid loss. Rest allows these stores to replenish and tissue repair to occur. Without sufficient time to repair and replenish, the body will continue to breakdown from intensive exercise.

Start with sleep. If you are not getting at least 8 hours of sleep a night, you're not doing yourself any good. Sleep is when your body does its best repair work. When you don't let your body do its job at rest, it may not work its best on race day.

Some of you may feel that if you are not out training constantly, you won't succeed. In addition to giving your body a break, your mind needs time away from training. So if you are making excuses to explain why you are not hitting your training times ("It's too hot"; I didn't fuel right"; or "I should have worn my flats"...) then you are missing the point. Give yourself a break (literally).

This may sound hokey, but find a quiet, cool place to calm your mind. Start by taking several deep breaths, and as you release them, let the negative energy flow out. Keep your mind focused with calm, clear thoughts. This time should not be spent thinking about triathlons or training. Think about being on a beach or walking through a forest.

Make time to reconnect with you family and friends. Take a weekend and make it about them not your training schedule. A weekend away from training will not send your season into a tail spin.



Lastly, the question you should be asking yourself is: Am I having fun? If you're not, you're not doing "it" right. Remember, all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, or in this case, a frustrated triathlete. You may just need some well deserved rest.

You train and race because you love the sport and what it brings to you. Take the time to rest and you might just race faster and enjoy the sport even more!