

Seventeen Tips for Having a Successful RTO Ultra



- 1. Eat REAL food!!! This is important!!** When you shop, don't just shop for snacking foods. You need to shop for real meals made of real food. There may be times where your stomach is blah, but you need to eat a balance of proteins, carbs, and fats to put back what you burn, refuel, and recover all at the same time. Best to find out what you can stomach during your training period and then do at the race.
- 2. Snack foods...** These are important too for the times you need something in the belly... I recommend Lenny and Larry's Complete Cookies, Nature's Bakery Fig Bars, homemade bars, bagels and peanut butter, etc.
- 3. Coffee...** Whether it's straight coffee or one with frills, have some the morning of the race... it's also good to have some double shots on ice ready to go too!
- 4. Sleep...** take advantage of the fact that you are all in one van... there is no need to coordinate times to be at exchanges and such... I recommend at least two little naps during the RTO.
- 5. Bring a change of clothes... check that, bring multiple changes of clothes...** I recommend bringing multiple changes of running clothes. Even if you stink, clean and fresh running clothes are a breath of fresh air... for everyone! I also recommend bringing a change of comfy clothes too. Be prepared for hot as hell and cold as ice!
- 6. Mints!** I'm a huge believer in mints... Breath Savers, etc. Pop one of these in your mouth at the start of each leg, and you feel like you're in one of those minty commercials. Clean mouth, clear mind!
- 7. Tums, Alka Seltzer...** These go without saying... tummy troubleshooter!
- 8. Body Glide...** Yep, for all the nooks, crannies, creases, folds, and chafing areas!
- 9. Perrier and Coca-Cola...** Nothing is better than bubbly on the tummy!
- 10. M&Ms, Reese's PB Cups, Snickers...** these are great foods to have on hand for quick carbs (Fuel!) and some calories!
- 11. Try to secure a safe house along the route...** if possible, try to stop at a team member's home or a friend's home during the RTO. A quick shower means a bunch to the body and the soul.

- 12. Plan at least one double day run and one 8 – 10 mile LSD run per week during your training starting now...** the double day run can be splitting up a 5 – 6 mile run into 3 miles in the morning and 2 – 3 miles after work... or 2 miles and 2 miles. This gets your body used to running at different times of the day and multiple times per day. The 8 – 10 mile run is just good to get time on the road/trail at a slower pace. No need to break speed records. Another tip... plan a team group run in the middle of the night on one of the legs.
- 13. Run Trails... and HILLS!!** Even if you aren't accustomed to the trail, I highly advise turning at least one of your runs to the trail per week because trails are easier on the limbs, all about climbing, and more Zen. Did I mention hills?? Plan at least one run per week that includes hills. If you're feeling frisky, do some hill repeats every few weeks. When you're killin' Kingsbury or Dog Valley, you'll be glad you did!
- 14. Don't be traditional... Be Creative!** When planning on who's doing what legs, you don't have to attack it in a traditional manner. Since most of us aren't gunning to win the whole thing, see if there are creative ways to split up the legs that point to a runner's strengths. Some teams go two legs at a time. Some teams alternate legs one after the other. We are going to find specific legs we want to do this year and tailor our rotation around that.
- 15. Don't take yourself so serious...** It's the RTO! It's supposed to be fun. Don't stress about pace, overall times, possibly disappointing your teammates, disappointing yourself, or any of that other stuff that goes with stressing yourself out. Breathe, have fun, and run!
- 16. Don't forget it's a team thing...** Fatigue, injuries, grumpiness, hunger, delirium... It's all part of the ultra-experience! Make sure to be there to pick each other up, lighten the mood, and cheer on! If a teammate is injured or fatigue starts setting in, have a plan how to split up legs. Remember, you can split up a leg between two or more runners if needed.
- 17. Have fun, decorate the van, blast music (except in Genoa), and laugh often!**

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