



## 50 Mile Ride for Project Rwanda Event Preparation

*(Reprinted with permission from the Warrior's Society web site)*

Stating the obvious... 50 miles on a mountain bike is a long way. Even though our 50 Mile Ride event is not a "race", and we are selecting a route that's not very technical – it's still a flat-out long distance. We want you to enjoy this experience – so please take it seriously and prepare yourself in advance!

Our friends at the Warrior's Society, the SoCal experts in hosting long-distance endurance mtb events, have given us permission to share their tips for event preparation (reprinted below):

"For athletes, water regulates body temperature like antifreeze and lubricates joints like quality motor oil. However, experts caution that gulping too much water during endurance events can result in an unexpected breakdown. Most athletes know they need to replenish water lost in competition to avoid the energy drain caused by even a slight case of dehydration, but many are unaware that over consumption can lead to hyponatremia, a rare but potentially deadly condition.

Hyponatremia is too low a concentration of sodium in the blood. Experts are unsure of the cause, but many believe that drinking too much water thins the body's sodium stores. Sodium is pivotal in regulating the balance of water in the body. Sodium helps draw water through tissues. A mountain biker may feel as though he is carrying a reservoir in his belly, but he will still feel dehydrated.

Though still quite rare, symptoms of hyponatremia - which include bloating, nausea, headaches, cramps and disorientation - has occurred in riders in our events. Untreated hyponatremia can lead to collapse, convulsions and sometimes death.

Experts are by no means warning against water. By far, dehydration is more common than overhydration. Yet, vigilance before, during, and after the ride may prevent hyponatremia. In the days before the event, increase your intake of salt, which contains sodium. That doesn't mean you need dump a carton of Morton's salt on every meal. "Instead of adding sugar to your morning oatmeal, add a little bit of salt, and don't look for low sodium foods leading up to the event," says Lisa Dorfman, author of "The Vegetarian Sports Nutrition Guide: Peak Performance for Every-one from Beginners to Gold Medallists" (John Wiley & Sons, \$16.95).

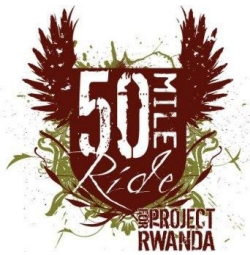
During the event, riders can snack on food such as pretzels - low in fat and protein, with high carbohydrate and sufficient sodium levels. Take sips of fluid, maybe 2-4 ounces, every 15-30 minutes. Instead of straight water, alternate at each fluid station between water and Gatorade. When you finish, grab another sack of pretzels and wash them down with a sports drink. If you decide to use a supplement or change your diet, be sure to try these changes for a couple weeks to see if they are effective. **DO NOT MAKE CHANGES IN YOUR EATING OR DRINKING THE DAY OF THE EVENT!!!!**

## **Event Preparation (continued)**

We also recommend you eat meals high in carbohydrates such as pasta in the 2 days prior to your event. This will give you the fuel you'll need for the first 3 hours of the event.

We shouldn't need to tell you that your bike should be in good working order. It is important that you be prepared to do minor repairs if needed. You should have the following tools with you during the event and know how to use them: chainbreaker, multi tool (spoke wrench, allen wrench, etc.), Spare tube, Tire pump, Tire patches, Optional: duct tape, chain lube.

Bring enough water and food to last you through your ride or between stages. Depending on your ability and the temperature the day of the event, you should be prepared to carry at between 2 and 4 quarts of water at the beginning of your ride and between stages. If you do not perform well in the heat bring the upper limit, keeping in mind the advice given on hyponatremia. Try to eat at least 260 calories per hour. What I recommend is to eat a packet of gel type food (Cliff Shot, etc.) every 1/2 hour with a Clif bar every hour. Mix in bagels, boiled potatoes, pretzels, apples etc. Eat and drink before you need to and you'll do OK, if you don't, be prepared for pain.”



***Train hard, prepare properly, have fun.***