

Rules for 24hr Racing

The start

- Line up reasonably early at the start, don't be right at the very back.
- The start should be taken at a very brisk walk or maybe a slow jog.
- Always remember that the further ahead the rider is after the run, the fewer incompetent people will need to be overtaken in the early stages.

Rest stops

- The rider should not get off the bike and sit down every lap. This is when the aches and pains and palpitations show up. Once every 6 hours is recommended, but this all depends on conditions. Poor conditions will mean more rest is needed.
- Try and keep rest stops to a minimum time. There were probably about 15 rest stops at SITS. If you assume 5 mins a time that is 1 1/4hrs spent not racing. Some of the stops were almost 20 minutes. 3 of those is an hour. Would you like to work out the maths???
- The pit crew should keep an eye on the clock and gently chivvy the rider back into the saddle. However, the rider shouldn't be made to feel pressured for time.

Food

- A proper high carb meal should be eaten both the night before and a couple of hours before a race. Meat balls and rice or Spaghetti Bolognese are a good idea.
- A proper meal should be eaten once every 6 hours during the race. This should be as palatable as possible, i.e, preferably sloppy and not too heavily flavoured.
- Recommended meals are pasta/rice and chicken in a sauce, noodles made slightly watery, etc.

- Some food should be taken every lap to keep carb levels up. 1/2 torq bar and 1/2 banana seems to work well.
- Sweeties should be available every lap, as well as something savoury/salty.

Drinks

- Care should be taken on drink strength. They should be weak enough to be palatable, but not so weak to be rendered useless.
- 2 small bottles should be provided each lap. 1 electrolyte and 1 carb works well.
- Drinks should be varied in flavour.
- A glass of water should be available every lap to prevent dehydration.
- A cup of coffee should be provided every lap through the night. This is when the mind and body want to give up and a warm caffeine drink is very helpful.
- A can of full fat coke should be available every lap, but not necessarily offered unless the rider is a) tired, or b) requests it.

Psychology

- Don't worry if some laps seem really slow. Other racers also have their problems and will have slow laps as well.
- Don't worry if the end laps seem to be tailing off. Other people will also be tailing off and are more than likely lurking as well.
- The rider will want to withdraw from the race at some point during it. The pit crew should agree that they ought to withdraw and then put them back on the bike and send them out anyway.
- The pit crew should not react to any whinging/sulking/yelling or any other bad behaviour on the part of the rider. They don't mean it, they're just taking out their temper about squeaky bikes/failing lights/punctures/incompetent riders on the first available person.

- The rider always has more energy left in the tank than they think they have. It's amazing how much faster they could go if they had to.

Physical Symptoms

- The rider will complain of the following physical symptoms which may safely be ignored by the pit crew (with a big show of sympathy, obviously):
 - Throwing up
 - Palpitations
 - Heavy legs
 - Sore or loss of feeling in various parts of the body due to bending something the wrong way cos they fell off.
- The rider may complain of the following physical symptoms which may need action:
 - Throwing up combined with the rider no longer sweating
 - Broken bones poking through the skin
- Always have the first aid kit, complete with asthma inhalers, ready at the feed point.

Equipment

- The pit crew should always have a few basic tools with them. A leatherman and a set of allen keys are a good starting point.
- Have the lights ready to go on the bike an hour before it's looking like it will go dark. It's always a lot darker in the woods than it is at the campsite.
- Don't rely on the radios, they are a massive help, but have a habit of not working.

The Finish

- Don't lurk! It's possible to gain or lose up to 3 placings through a lurking decision.
- Always make sure you race right up to the finish. The person one-second ahead of the rider at the line may be a direct competitor.