

Springtime is approaching. Possibly sooner than some skiers would like and in time for those who have cabin fever. Regardless of how the weather tempers, the time for outdoor activities preparation needs to begin. Training To Be Balanced (T2BB) LLC receives many performance goals to begin running, biking, climbing, and kayaking. We have those who want to run his/her first 10k to those who are inspired to climb 5.12. In order to achieve these performance goals and other goals such as triathlon participation, key understanding of current information to “perform better” is imperative to comprehend.

T2BB adopts a philosophy similar to the information in the *Core Performance Endurance* book by Mark Verstegen. Endurance athletes must alter his/her mindset of what is believed and subscribed to when it comes to endurance training. One of T2BB mantras is “that which got you here isn’t what’s going to get you the next level.” Mark Verstegen writes, “What you did when you first started training is not what you do today, and to get you where you want to be tomorrow. Remember, that first rule of investing, the merical for financial services: ‘Past performance is no guarantee for future return’.”

Jessi Stensland, a professional triathlete, forwarded the *Core Performance Endurance* book to help signify a change in the thinking of endurance athletes. “It’s not about how much you train, it’s about how well you train.”

She continues to express the surprise of conventional wisdom in the endurance world. For example, “Endurance athletes long have been told to utilize weight training only in the off-season, and even then to perform only low weight and high-rep routines. If you think about it, we’re already doing low-weight, high rep routines with each step running and each stroke in the water or on the bicycle. Do the opposite, performing a lower number of reps with higher weight in order to gain strength and power. You’ll also [need to] train your neuromuscular system, giving you better control over body and your effort.”

At T2BB, everyone goes through a short, functional movement screen regardless of performance goals. This screen helps determine weak areas and energy leak areas that must be addressed first. We call it the “clean up” phase of preparing the body to undergo the rigorous stages of continuing pounding activities such as running. For example, if one of your gluteus muscles (or glutes) are not firing properly it will shorten your stride length down, thus creating an energy leak that effects workouts of efficiency. Take care of your body and it will take of you.

Mark Verstegen makes the best examples of taking care of your body. “Think about how well you take care of your automobile or bicycle. You’re always taking it into the shop for preventive maintenance and upgrades. A bicycle might need a new hub or shifting mechanisms. Perhaps it requires lighter wheels or tires. But before you can consider any of that, you have to make sure you have the best frame to build from. Otherwise, you defeat the purpose of the upgrades and in fact could make the situation worse.”

“The same is true with our car. You don’t think twice about paying for regular oil changes and maintenance. It’s a significant cost, but you undertake it because you want the car to run optimally and for as long as possible. Isn’t it amazing that most of us, even dedicated athletes, don’t make a comparable investment in our own short-term and long term maintenance? We take better care of equipment with limited life spans than we do of our own bodies.”

The hint is...less is more, believe it or not. For example, running longer and harder or only running for the time you have neglecting movement prep exercises before and after a session is hazardous to the longevity of your activity. In addition, the mindset that one must literally run himself/herself into the ground in order to achieve better performance is the typically frame of mind that many endurance athletes undergo. Ever wonder why “all of a sudden” he/she has knee or hip pain after beginning a program of endurance training, even casual jogging or running?

If you want to start any routine, running or just working out, one must cover the all the bases. Just like eating meals, the meals needs variety. The body needs variety for training, especially endurance athletes. Improve biomechanics and core fundamental movement patterns instead of following traditional formulas of workout out with inefficient movement patterns until the body breaks down.

T2BB uses the mountain climber exercise, not only for conditioning, but also for the teaching of driving through (activating) the glutes and hamstrings together, not independently. Starting Position: Runner’s start position with hands

on floor. Movement: (1) Drive bent knee back while bringing straight leg up to chest. (2) Switch feet back and forth vigorously. (3) Repeat for prescribed amount of time. Considerations: Drive foot backwards using glutes and hamstrings. Avoid lifting hips up and down during movement. You Should Feel: Glutes, hamstrings, quads, and core.

Look for T2BB's next article (April 8) as we explore specific applications of training for endurance.