



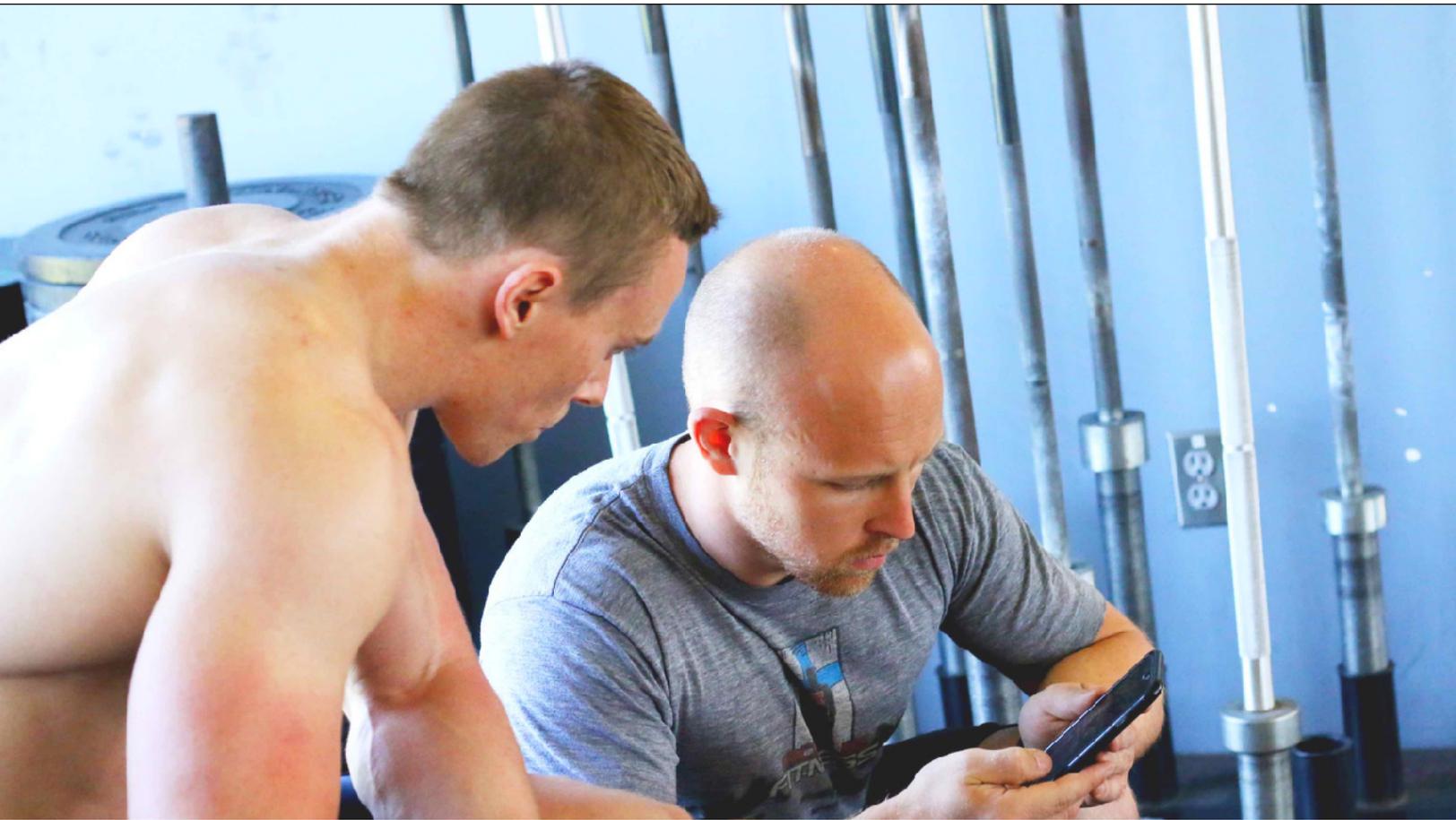
The Training Plan Sherpa

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ISSUE 01

YOUR GUIDE TO A SUCCESSFUL
OPEN

THE BASECAMP

HOW TO PREPARE FOR
YOUR JOURNEY THROUGH
THE OPEN



The 2017 season is nearly upon us!

You have been training hard for months, chipping away at your strengths and weaknesses turning them into opportunities for the upcoming weeks. While you must continue to train through The Open, most of the physical preparation has been done.

However, there is still plenty you can do to ensure your success this year. Our guide (together with the ones in the coming weeks) is your ‘**sherpa**’ to help you climb to your absolute peak performance in the 2017 Open.

With just about a week to go before the 17.1 announcement in Paris, you are still at the “Basecamp” phase. The next few days are your opportunity to prepare yourself before the final week of the “Climb” towards The Open begins.

In this edition, your Open Sherpa will guide you on:

Training
Preparation and logistics
Mindset and mental toughness
Recovery
Nutrition

Thank you for being here,

Jami Tikkanen
The Training Plan

What is a sherpa anyway?

Sherpas are highly regarded as elite mountaineers and experts in their local area. They were immeasurably valuable to early explorers of the Himalayan region, serving as guides at the extreme altitudes of the peaks and passes in the region, particularly for expeditions to climb Mount Everest.

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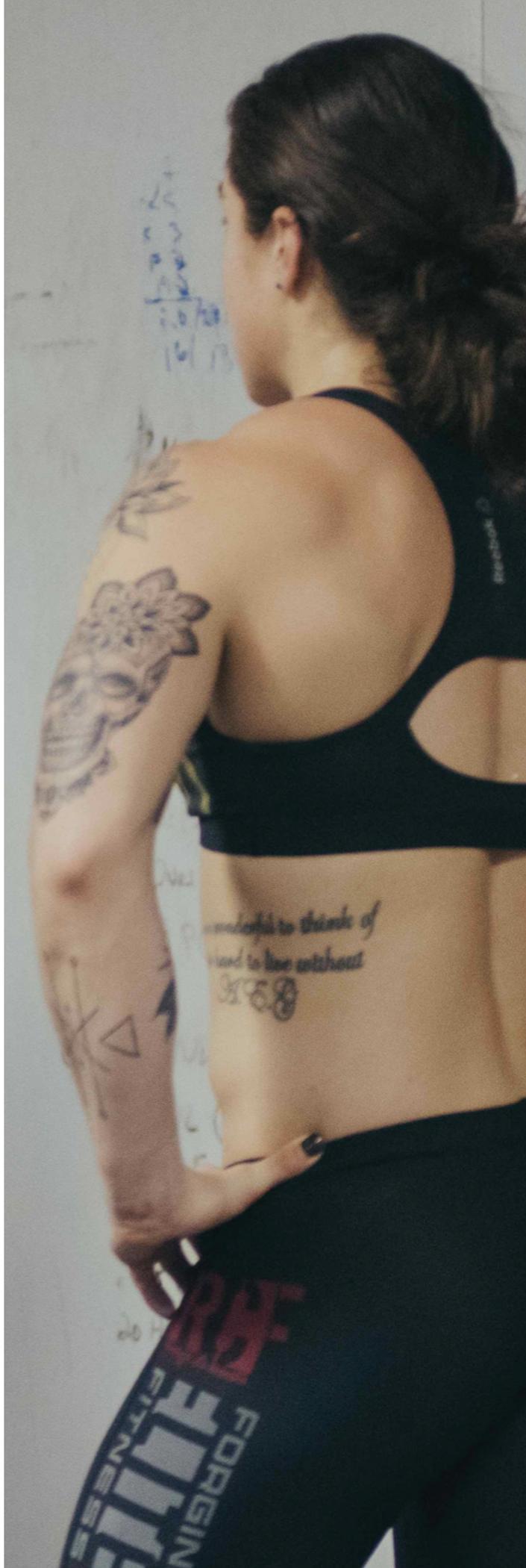
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Training

We hope you have been working hard (and smart) in the past weeks and months leading to this moment. You should be feeling a little tired from the work load and ready to give yourself some time to adapt before The Open. This is not the time to add more but to subtract the non-essential, to create the room for your body and mind to shed off some of that fatigue you have been accumulating.

As you reduce the volume of your training this allows you to keep the intensity in the sessions that matter. This close to a competition your training time is best spent doing work that most looks like The Open (look back to previous years events), fine tuning your movement efficiency and doing what you can to solve your range of motion limiters (such as poor overhead position, considering the dumbbells featured in this years competition).

If you have identified movement limiters (such as inability to perform a common movement like a muscle up), and haven't yet began to work on these, there is still some time to make a difference.

In summary, your time is best spent on few high intensity sessions (perhaps repeating old Open workouts), solving movement problems (skill, range of motion or to a lesser degree strength by "greasing the groove") and doing recovery work (longer, easy aerobic conditioning in sports specific context).

“Besides the noble art of getting things done, there is the noble art of leaving things undone.

The wisdom of life consists in the elimination of non-essentials.”

~ Lin Yutang

IMPROVE YOUR TRAINING "HYGIENE"

To make the most out of your training sessions and to recover optimally between them, it is essential that you incorporate real warm ups (to prepare your cardiorespiratory and nervous systems), movement prep (to ensure full and safe range of motion) and cool downs (to return your body to rest and begin the adaptation process) into your routine.

You might be surprised that the warm up can take up to 40 minutes of your session. You might need less, you might need more and we appreciate that time constraints might make this challenging. Do what you can today to get started with proper preparation for your sessions.

Cooling down can be as simple as doing 5 minutes of Assault bike, rowing or ski erg while you wait for your heart rate to come down, followed by 5 to 15 minutes of mobility work to restore your range of motion and good movement patterns.

If you are not used to warming up, try this simple template to get introduced to the concept:

1. 5 minutes of breath work (see breathing section later in this guide)
2. 5 to 10 minutes of progressively harder (start easy) Assault bike / row / ski erg, rotate through as wanted, make sure that by the end of it you are sweaty and breathing hard
3. 5 to 10 minutes of specific range of motion prep in form of a dynamic movement flow
4. Specific movement warm up in the context of your training session (grooving in technique, building up load, going through movement progressions etc.)



Logistics and Preparation

Know the rules

If you are going to play the game, it is best you know the rules.

- Read the official rulebook at The CrossFit® Games site
- Read the drug testing policy at the CrossFit® Games site to ensure that none of the supplements you are taking are banned or that you have a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) where appropriate. Remember, you, and only you, are responsible for what you are putting in your body.
- Take the judges course (especially if you are helping others in The Open).
- Make sure your judge has taken the course.

In fact, why not organise a Judge's Course Party right now, where everyone can bring some food, and help each other through any tricky videos in the course?

Make sure you have access to a gym

Does your gym have the necessary equipment *or do you need a backup plan in case something unusual comes up?*

What time will you have access to the gym to perform your workout? *If it's not your usual training time, perhaps you should be doing some workouts at that time now to get used to it.*

Filming your workouts

Do you have a YouTube account to upload your video? Do you know how to upload long videos (15+ mins)?

Think about how you will do the filming and what equipment you need.

Most importantly

Remember to sign up for the Open.

Useful Links

Read the Official Rulebook -

<https://games.crossfit.com/rules>

Read the Drug testing policy -

<https://games.crossfit.com/drug-policy>

Take the Judges course -

<https://oc.crossfit.com/course?id=12>

Open a YouTube account -

<https://accounts.google.com/SignUpWithoutGmail?service=youtube>

Learn to upload 15+ min YouTube videos -

<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/71673?hl=en-GB>

Sign up for the Open -

<https://games.crossfit.com/cf/login?returnTo=%2Fregister%2Fathlete&flow=games>



Mindset and Mental Toughness

As you approach The Open (or any major competition), it is easy to start questioning yourself, your readiness to compete and your worthiness as an athlete.

These thoughts will eat away at your self-image and self-belief, two major determinants of your mental toughness.

Success Journal

One effective way to beat self-doubt is to keep a “success journal” of your training sessions and days. It's a place to record your small victories, lessons learned and (concrete) plans for a better you.

The success journal is designed to systematically build the skill of believing in your own abilities and to stay focused on specific actions for improvement.

The process

At the end of your training session or day, review what happened in training and answer the following three questions:

1. [What three things did you do well today that you can be proud of?](#)

This can be surprisingly hard at first as we have a tendency to focus excessively on our failures and inadequacies rather than our accomplishments. Remember, this is exactly what you are learning to overcome.

2. [Based on today's performance, what's one thing you know you can improve on next time?](#)

This is your opportunity. Choose one, be specific and make sure it something that is within your control.

3. [What's one thing that you can do to move towards this improvement now or in your next training session?](#)

While we hope you are already working on your mindset as part of your daily practise, there is still a lot you can do to take control of your success in The Open.

Start by creating your first entry in your success journal today!





Recovery

The Open represents the longest competition period in most athletes training year. Entering the next 6-weeks feeling fresh and ready, both physically and mentally, is essential for your success (and wellbeing for that matter).

The key to better recovery now is to appreciate the work you have done and to give your body the room to adapt by reducing your training volume for at least a few days (see training).

In the next few pages, you can find other recovery tips we suggest for you to follow.



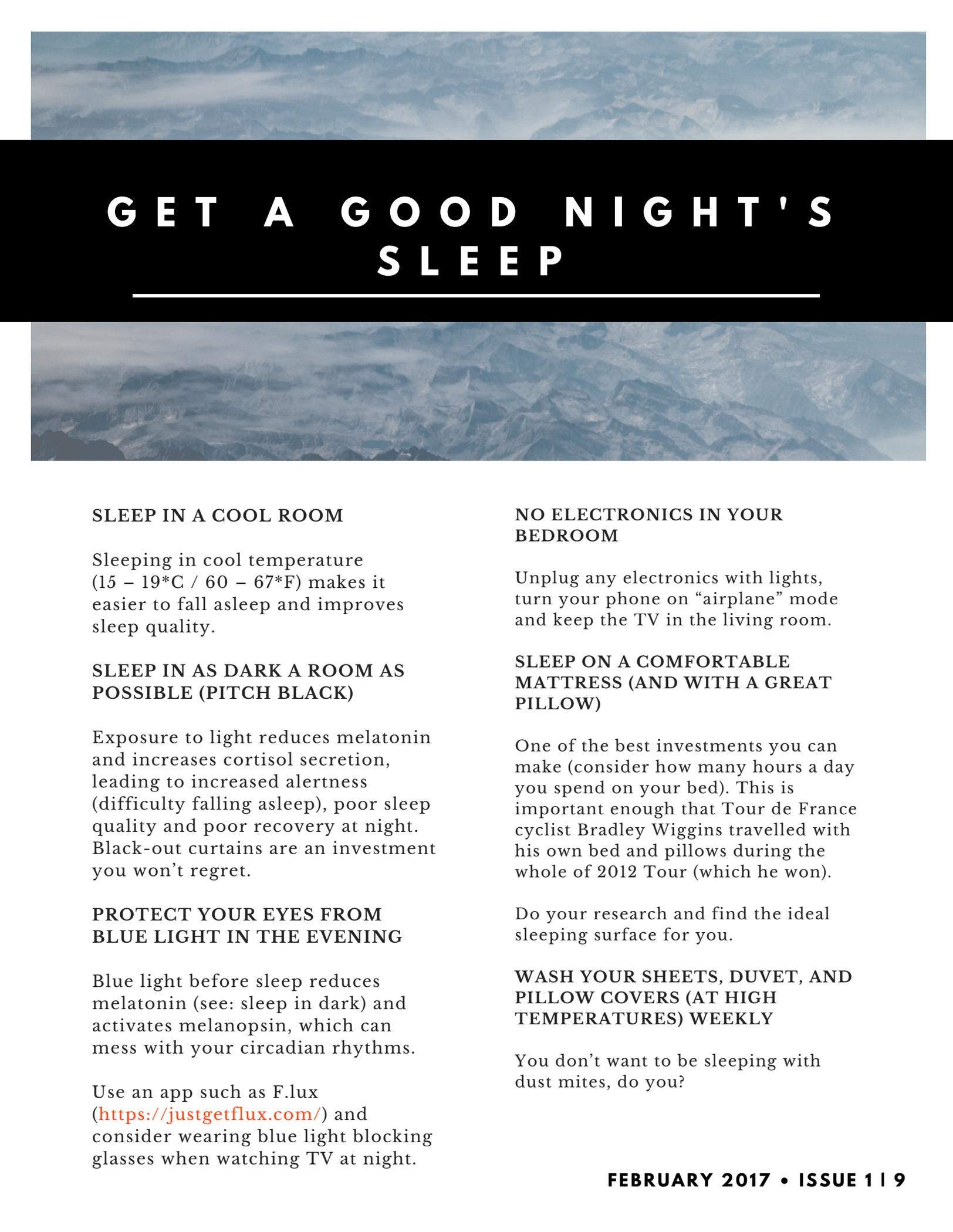
SLEEP

Why sleep?

Your body recovers its neurotransmitters, repletes energy sources, repairs tissues, renews immune system, releases growth-hormone, etc. all during your sleep. Insufficient (in quality or quantity) sleep means reduced brain, physical and immune function. Not enough sleep = poor performance and reduced ability to adapt to training stimulus (never mind poor health). Quite simply, great athletes sleep well, and you should too.

How much sleep should you get?

Most adults need 7.5 – 8.5 hours of sleep a night (most includes you, unless you have a very rare genetic variant DEC2). Some research (together with anecdotal evidence) indicates that sleeping up to 10hrs can lead to an additional increase in sports performance.



GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

SLEEP IN A COOL ROOM

Sleeping in cool temperature (15 – 19°C / 60 – 67°F) makes it easier to fall asleep and improves sleep quality.

SLEEP IN AS DARK A ROOM AS POSSIBLE (PITCH BLACK)

Exposure to light reduces melatonin and increases cortisol secretion, leading to increased alertness (difficulty falling asleep), poor sleep quality and poor recovery at night. Black-out curtains are an investment you won't regret.

PROTECT YOUR EYES FROM BLUE LIGHT IN THE EVENING

Blue light before sleep reduces melatonin (see: sleep in dark) and activates melanopsin, which can mess with your circadian rhythms.

Use an app such as F.lux (<https://justgetflux.com/>) and consider wearing blue light blocking glasses when watching TV at night.

NO ELECTRONICS IN YOUR BEDROOM

Unplug any electronics with lights, turn your phone on “airplane” mode and keep the TV in the living room.

SLEEP ON A COMFORTABLE MATTRESS (AND WITH A GREAT PILLOW)

One of the best investments you can make (consider how many hours a day you spend on your bed). This is important enough that Tour de France cyclist Bradley Wiggins travelled with his own bed and pillows during the whole of 2012 Tour (which he won).

Do your research and find the ideal sleeping surface for you.

WASH YOUR SHEETS, DUVET, AND PILLOW COVERS (AT HIGH TEMPERATURES) WEEKLY

You don't want to be sleeping with dust mites, do you?

BREATHE



Breathing is a potent tool to down-regulate your sympathetic nervous system and enhance your recovery.

A simple way to begin cultivating your breathing practise is to develop your awareness of your respiratory diaphragm and your respiratory biochemistry. While this might sound fancy, the practise itself can be simple.

After trying these out for the first time, you can integrate them both (diaphragm drill first, followed by the functional inhale / exhale) into your evening routine. They will take about 5 minutes of your time and will go a long way to improving your sympathetic down-regulation and recovery.

FUNCTIONAL INHALE/EXHALE TEST

1. Standing up, take as long an inhale (breath in) through your nose as possible. Time how long you can make this inhale last.
2. Repeat step 1, this time focusing on exhale (breath out). Once again, time how long you can make your exhale last.

Note that you want to perform these tests without preparation (any excessive breath in or out), starting from your normal breathing pattern.

If either your inhalation or exhalation (or both) takes less than 5 seconds it is likely that your respiratory biochemistry has significant room for improvement and might be impairing your recovery.

We would like to see both of these in the 30+ seconds range for “normal” people and closer to 60 seconds for athletes. This indicates a level of control of your diaphragm and functionality of your respiratory biochemistry.

DIAPHRAGM AWARENESS DRILL

1. Lie supine (on your back) on the floor with your feet elevated against a wall or on a box.
2. Place one hand on your abdomen, the other on your chest
3. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths in. Ask yourself “where is the movement happening primarily? Where does it start, abdomen or chest?”.

A “normal” pattern would be initiation of movement in the abdomen, followed by a raising of the chest

4. Now place your hands on the sides of your ribcage. Ask yourself “How much movement am I getting on my sides? Is the movement symmetrical or asymmetrical?”

You can expect some differences right to left due to your liver (on the right side) but should feel movement on both sides.

You can increase your awareness of the breathing pattern by applying pressure on the area that is not moving or is moving very little (e.g. your abdomen or side of the ribcage).

ACTIVE RECOVERY

It is common in our sport for the athletes to miss out on the opportunity to speed up their recovery and to develop their aerobic endurance by ignoring the benefits of low intensity recovery work.

Adding 1 or 2 weekly 30 - 60 minute sessions of low intensity (HR between 110 and 140bpm or so, while maintaining a "in through the nose, out through the nose or mouth" breathing pattern) activity in a sports specific context is a simple way to speed up your recovery and to improve your conditioning.

Using light load barbell movements and gymnastics at relatively low repetitions, combined with monostructural modalities, such as rowing or assault bike, helps maintain your breathing pattern and heart rate within control to make the most out of these sessions.

EAT AND HYDRATE

Getting sufficient energy (calories), macro (protein, carbohydrates and fat) and micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) is essential for your recovery and adaptation.

Remember to replenish the water you lost during training by drinking to thirst and adding a pinch of sea salt to your drinks a few times a day. If you train in a hot climate you might need to increase the amount of fluid you consume. Stepping on a scale before and after training allows you to estimate the amount of fluids lost and can be used to increase the accuracy of your re-hydration strategy.

See the nutrition section of this guide for more details on optimising your food intake.

Nutrition

While your overall training volume may dial down somewhat as we approach the Open, your intensity will still be high. So you should continue to eat normally. If anything, a decrease in activity, will further ensure you are consuming sufficient energy and nutrients from your normal intake.



What is a normal intake?

Sure, it's a little different for everyone.

But, everyone at least agrees on the basics, and so that is where we always start. **Not with numbers but with principles.**

You need enough energy to fuel bodily functions, daily activities, and exercise.

We start with a base requirement that you can work out with a calculator such as one at bottom of this page.

You need adequate protein to repair/build muscle, and maintain the quality of every cell in the body. Research suggests 1.7-2.5 grams/kg body weight (0.8-1.1 grams/lbs body weight).

You need sufficient fat and micronutrients to keep your body functioning at peak health. 1 gram/kg (0.45 grams/lb) of fat is a minimum, up to 2.5 grams/kg (1.1 grams/lb) for those who perform better on low/moderate carbohydrate intake. Micronutrients = veggies, eat as many as you can without affecting the necessary energy intake.

Calorie calculator: <http://www.calculator.net/calorie-calculator.html>

MyFitnessPal: <http://www.myfitnesspal.com/>

After these basic needs are met, we then consider that;

You need enough carbohydrate to recover quickly from workouts/events, and to fuel longer ones. An average training day will likely require between 2-4 grams/kg (0.9-1.8 grams/lb), up to as high as 7+ grams/kg (3.1+ grams/lb) for a heavy training day or competition.

Matching energy, carbohydrate and fat intake to our genetics, goals and daily activity level, allows us to not only optimise performance, but health and body composition as well. The above info gives us a starting template, but then we need to figure out how we respond individually and adjust as needed. This just takes time, and attention.

Supporting all of the above with proven supplements lets us access the final 1% of performance and health. Nutritional management of injury slots in here too.

To track the energy and macronutrient content of your food, you can use an app like MyFitnessPal (link below) .



Now, these calculations are only going to be as accurate as your input, and the database output. Between the two, you can easily be off by 10-20%. But with practice, you can get a pretty good idea of where you are at on a daily basis, and then evaluate intake against performance.

Are you managing fatigue through the day?

Are you performing well?

Do you constantly suffer from unexplained aches and pains?

Is your body composition staying stable, getting worse, or improving?

What are your hunger levels like?

Evaluate the results each week, and make adjustments based on them. Keep tweaking, keep improving

Protein

Once we've covered our basic energy intake, adequate protein intake is the next most important topic. Our muscles, our bones, our skin, our hair, basically every cell is made of protein, or more accurately, amino acids, which are the building blocks of protein.

We need to constantly rebuild, repair and replenish aging and damaged cells, and a constant supply of protein lets us do that.

Post workout protein is essential to optimise recovery. Ensure you eat a sufficient serving within 2 hours of your training, if not sooner.

Carbohydrates

They have long been the athlete's friend. Readily available and fast burning fuel to power moderate to high intensity activity, as well as speeding the recovery from those activities.

Most sports nutrition data comes from the endurance world, with carbohydrate recommendations on the very high side.

The demands of fitness competitions and training are trending towards a higher, more endurance-like, volume, but the constant variance of both exercises and training volumes, plus individual responses to food, mean you may have to experiment to find what's best for you.





Fat

From a performance perspective, we know that carbohydrate will improve performance. But we also know how important fat is for our health, management of inflammation and production of hormones. On average, for every 10 food diaries we see, more than half of them show less than optimal amounts of fat.

A good starting point is 1g/kg (0.45 grams/lb). There is a general consensus that this is a healthy amount to ensure all bodily processes that utilise fat will operate effectively. So for our hypothetical 85kg (187lb) male athlete, that is 85 grams per day. Or for a 60kg (132lb) female athlete, 60 grams per day.

Athletes who feel they perform better on lower to moderate carbohydrate, should increase their intake of fat-based food sources to balance their total energy intake, which may be 100-180/80-120 grams of fat for our example male/female athletes respectively.

Vegetables

Rounding our intake of healthy, real food out, are the vegetables, which are rich in antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, fibre, and phytonutrients to maximise health. This means veggies, while not directly contributing to performance, will keep our immune systems healthy enough to fend off infection during periods of high volume training, speed recovery, and ensure processes such as digestion, nerve signal conduction and energy production are optimised.

Vegetables tend to be very very low in energy, and although officially a carbohydrate, contain very few of those too. The exception being starchy carbs such as potato, sweet potato, yams, turnips etc. From a performance standpoint, veggies can sometimes displace the carbohydrates necessary for fuelling and recovering from training and competition. From a health standpoint, too many carbs get in the way of veggies! We need to find a balance here.

Easy option to increase your vegetable/micronutrient intake without having to chew for hours is to make green smoothies.

Here's two great recipes to try:
<https://youtu.be/Ys86ZgjQQYg>
<https://youtu.be/JLQ63y5aTpo>

Alternatively, a high quality greens powder is another easy way to increase your intake.

Gut health

Scientists are understanding more than ever now, the importance of gut health. What happens in your gut can have knock on effects in so many areas of your body through sickness and inflammation.

Did you know that over 90% of our serotonin is produced by gut bacteria?

Eating the right foods can have a powerful effect on gut health and associated health problems.

So how do we ensure our gut is functioning optimally?
Be aware of the negative effects of too much grains and processed oils.

Eat plenty of fibrous vegetables
Eat and drink fermented foods such as kimchi, bone broth, sauerkraut, kombucha and fermented dairy (yogurt, kefir, cheese)

Take a probiotic supplement
Look for brands that contain strains of Lactobacillus and Bifidobacterium at 8 billion/dose.

Manage your stress levels
Yes, that horrible feeling in your stomach when you let stuff get to you is not just psychological!!

Get more sleep
A no brainer right?



SUPPLEMENTS

Remember that there are still only really three supplements that have consistently been shown to significantly improve performance,

- Carbohydrate
- Caffeine
- Creatine.

Creatine

This molecule buffers ATP (our energy currency) to increase power output and prevent fatigue, thus it is highly recommended. A loading phase is unnecessary and in fact may cause cramping and water retention.

Take 5-10 grams per day from now until the end of the Open. Post workout will likely ensure the best absorption, but any time that is practical is fine. An extra dose the day of an Open workout may help.

Carbohydrate

Quite simply, it's a fuel. Eat more = do more. Of course that's not exactly the science, but consumption of carbs before and after training should be standard practice. The amount eaten before tends to vary based on genetics and preference. After workouts, anywhere from 40-100 grams depending on the volume of training, usually paired up at a 4:1 ratio with protein, eg. 60 grams CHO: 15 grams PRO.

More information on creatine: <https://examine.com/supplements/creatine/>

More information on caffeine: <https://examine.com/supplements/caffeine/>

Caffeine

Everyone's favourite stimulant, caffeine increases power output, boosts anaerobic endurance, and may decrease fatigue from a neural perspective.

Dose at 2-6 milligrams/kg (0.9/2.7 mg/lb) bodyweight depending on tolerance. The actual amount of coffee depends on the brewing process.

Also, while pre-workout drinks are another source of caffeine, be sure to check for banned substances against the CrossFit Games Drug Testing Policy.

Other supplements you might consider

Fish oil
Zinc
Magnesium
Vitamin C
Glutamine
Curcumin

"If we are intentional about what we repeatedly do, we can practise who we want to become and through practise we can become who we want be."

- Eric Greitens



THANK YOU FOR READING THE 1ST ISSUE OF THE TRAINING PLAN **SHERPA**

We appreciate your time and hope you found the information in The Training Plan "Sherpa" useful.

We wish you the best of success in The 2017 Open!



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