

SEPTEMBER 2011

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► **Triathlon**

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► **Olympic fencing**

Valentina Vezzali

► **Olympic kayak**

Antonio Rossi

► **Ski**

Jimmy Cochrane



Zone athletes rise above the rest

By Mary Perry, MS, RD, LDN

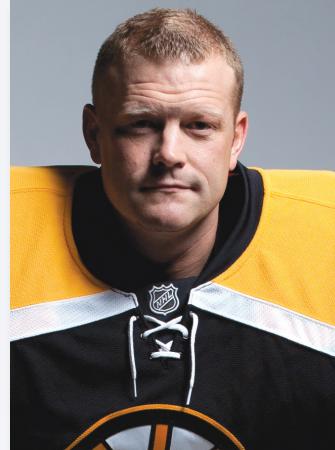
FOR THE PAST 15 YEARS Zone Labs has worked with world-class athletes to achieve their goals. Whether you're the elite athlete or new to the athletic scene, there's a reason why the Zone diet improves athletic performance. The secret lies in the 1-2-3 approach.

1. THE ZONE DIET: A common misconception held by most athletes is how the composition and consistency of their diet impacts their performance. For most it's viewed merely from a caloric standpoint for fueling needs, but composition and consistency are just as important as the training program used to get them to race day. This is because the diet controls the hormones that are essential for maximum performance. In a cross over study by Fontani et al, the authors compared the Zone Diet (40% carbohydrate, 30% protein, 30% fat) to a control diet (that typically recommended to athletes 55% carbohydrate, 15% protein and 30% fat), and found that those following the Zone Diet had greater reductions in inflammatory markers, LDL cholesterol, insulin levels and body fat composition compared to the control diet (1). This study exemplifies why the traditional high-carbohydrate diet that most athletes follow may actually work against their efforts, whereas the anti-inflammatory nature of the Zone Diet coupled with the loss of body fat may give athletes a competitive edge.

2. FISH OIL: Fish oil, rich in omega-3 fatty acids (primarily EPA and DHA), is well known for its anti-inflammatory properties, but it's a relatively new concept when it comes to improving athletic

Zone Athletes

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performance. Inflammation is a huge component of training and influences an athlete's ability to recover quicker. The study above also compared the effect of diet composition and omega-3 fatty acid supplementation on blood profiles, body fat and mood state in healthy, active individuals¹. The study participants demonstrated significant improvements in inflammatory markers in 35 days after supplementing with 2.5 grams of EPA and DHA per day. In addition EPA and DHA supplementation improved feelings of vigor, while decreasing negative mood associations, such as anger, anxiety, fatigue, depression and confusion. Another study by Fontani et al showed supplementation with EPA and DHA significantly improved reaction times².

3. POLYPHENOLS: Use of anti-inflammatory drugs among professional athletes or amateurs is not uncommon and following an anti-inflammatory diet will dramatically reduce the need for such drugs. The foundation of an anti-inflammatory diet is one that is based on a diet rich in fruits and vegetables. The reason is that the color found in fruits and vegetables is a result of compounds known as polyphenols. Polyphenols not only act as anti-oxidants to reduce oxidative stress (i.e. free radicals), but they also have anti-inflammatory properties as they inhibit the same enzymes that are blocked by anti-inflammatory drugs.

For ultimate athletic performance or to beat your personal best, you need the 1-2-3 punch of the Zone Diet, Fish Oil, and Polyphenols. Sometimes it's only a matter of seconds that separates first from second place, and the anti-inflammatory diet coupled with improvements in reaction time, mental focus, recovery and body fat composition may be the competitive edge that distinguishes the two rankings.



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THOR HUSHOVD claims dramatic stage victory over the Aubisque – Stage 13 Tour de France.



TYLER WINS! Stage 3 Tour de France

American Rider Tyler Farrar wins 198 km stage on the Fourth of July. "It's a dream to win today."



JOHAN VAN SUMMEREN delivered an emotional victory for Garmin-Cervélo in Paris-Roubaix as the team played a tactically perfect race with strength in numbers to win one of cycling's most prestigious and oldest one-day classics.



POOLEY WINS GIRO DONNE STAGE AND 2ND PLACE GC

The longest and hardest stage race on the Women's calendar is the ten-day Giro Donne. Second place on GC and a stage win for Emma Pooley made it a great result for Garmin's pro women.



GARMIN'S riders have worn the Giro's maglia rosa, the Tour de France's yellow and polka-dot jerseys. They proudly took victory laps on the Champs-Élysées when they earned the Team prize in the world's most prestigious cycling competition.



ALEX WETTERHALL

Selected for the World Championships Time Trials in Copenhagen the 21st of September, representing Sweden

¹Fontani G, Corradeschi F, Felici A, Alfatti F, Bugarini R, Fiaschi AI, Cerretani D, Montorfano G, Rizzo AM, Berra B. "Blood profiles, body fat and mood state in healthy subjects on different diets supplemented with Omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids." Eur J Clin Invest. 2005 Aug;35(8):499-507.

²Fontani G, Corradeschi F, Felici A, Alfatti F, Migliorini S, Lodi L. "Cognitive and physiological effects of Omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acid supplementation in healthy subjects." Eur J Clin Invest. 2005 Nov;35(11):691-9.

If you have the will...and a little guidance, you too, can join the race!

By Lisa Zeigel

ON JUNE 5, 2011, more than 6,000 participants raced up the stairs in the second tallest building in the world, the "Taipei 101" in an event dubbed the "Taipei 101 Run-up." The fastest participant arrived at the 91st floor in just over 11 minutes. This year, the "run-up" raised \$85,000 to benefit the visually impaired in Taiwan including children and athletes, so it was fitting that a visually impaired (in this case, blind) athlete finished the race in 16:19! Although this was quite an achievement, it was all in a day's work for Henry Wanyoike of Kenya, as he is an accomplished "Paralympian." Wanyoike, born in 1974, lost his sight at the age of 21 when he suffered a stroke. After a period of despair, he entered a special clinic for the blind in his hometown, where he not only learned how to cope with his new way of life but also picked up a knack for knitting - - he became proficient at knitting sweaters! This gave him the self-confidence he needed and he decided to pick up where he had left off in his athletic career (he has been a competitive runner since his youth). Henry proceeded to enter and win marathons in the blind runner divisions as well as one-half marathons, as well as 10K and 5K races and has served as an inspiration to all who are visually impaired.

It is difficult to determine exact figures, but each year an increasing number of visually impaired runners participate in major races, such as the Boston Marathon, and the above-mentioned tower run-up right alongside sighted athletes.

Vision is, of course, an important part of moving our bodies around; we rely on our eyes to see the path ahead of us, to navigate around obstacles, to successfully coordinate complex movements with the hands and feet, and to keep us safe from anything that might harm us in our surroundings. But without "proprioception" we are not as efficient. This can be illustrated by the act of standing and balancing on one leg. Try it with your eyes open - - if you feel yourself wobbling, you can usually correct yourself and will be able to stand after an adjustment or two. Now try it with your eyes closed. It will probably become much more difficult, if not impossible! This is because without vision, we have no reference points to go on (you can't look at what your foot is doing to be able to adjust it, etc.). But if your eyes remain closed, eventually small "spindles" and organs in all of your supporting tissues (muscles, tendons, and your inner ear) will sense the tension or stretching in your body's structures and will react to offset these to bring you back into balance.¹ It is suggested that this skill can be enhanced when the sense of vision is taken away² (i.e., performing weight training exercises while blindfolded).



Runners usually start running using a sighted running partner or "guide." Ideally, a guide's running ability should be equal to or greater than the blind runner's because, obviously, he or she needs to be able to keep up with their partner! (In longer races such as marathons, blind runners can usually use up to four separate guides who run part of the way with the athlete). The guide starts out ahead of the runner, and the runner will put one hand in the crook of their guide's elbow. While they are running, the guide will be moving his or her arm back and forth while the runner maintains a light grip on their arm. In addition, the guides must communicate verbally with the runner to let them know about changes on the running path or obstacles coming up and when these have passed.

When the trainee becomes more comfortable and confident, a tether can be used. The runners hold each end of the tether, connecting them, yet giving the athlete more freedom of movement. A tug from either runner can communicate something different to each, for the athlete, a need for more guidance, or from the guide, a signal to the runner to stay closer. Through practice, some runners develop such a high degree of confidence that they choose to forgo the tether completely and will rely solely on verbal communication from their guide. There are also those who run without guides, but this can be hazardous. In races, blind runners without guides can lose their way off the trail or miss out on hydration stations, which can be dangerous if they do not get enough water. Still, it can be done. As you might imagine, they become finely tuned in to the sounds of the race and rely on asking fellow runners and bystanders for assistance, or they can use a "talking watch" that can be set to count out the distance markers and times as they run.

Guides for track and field competitors help their athletes get settled in their starting block and get positioned correctly behind the starting line. Guides for long jumpers will clap out a rhythm with their hands to help the athletes develop the proper cadence to complete their jump.

In Watertown, Massachusetts, the Perkins School for the Blind holds its own 5k run and walk and invites sighted runners to try the experience of running without sight by wearing a blindfold and running with a guide using a tether.

As I read about Henry Wanyoike and his success in life after suffering what many would consider a catastrophic loss of vision, I felt inspired to write about yet another example of empowerment through fitness. Whatever your physical challenge or mental challenge is, if you have the will...and a little guidance, you too, can join the race!

¹Proprioception: How and Why? Shannon Lee
<http://serendip.brynmawr.edu/exchange/node/1699>

²<http://www.higher-faster-sports.com/trainingblind.html>



How to get a 4.0 and avoid the Freshman 15

By Mary Perry, MS, RD, LDN

For many college freshmen the school year has already begun with orientations, getting their roommate assignments and move-in weekend. The more senior students went back to school at least two weeks before classes began to catch up with friends and for some pre-game celebrations.

No matter if you're a freshman or senior there are always some uncertainties that come with the start of the year, from if you'll fit in among your peers, how you'll manage your social life and studies, or trying to manage the intensity of playing sports and class work. Whether you're the academic, the athlete, or the partier, it's easy to get run down from lack of sleep and the stress you face throughout the year. It's important to stay healthy, and that starts with your diet.

It's no wonder the Freshmen 15 came to be with the decline in activity once school starts, staying up late and using food as fuel to keep studying, coupled with the unhealthy cafeteria offerings. Although it sounds like the odds are stacked against college students, this doesn't have to be a reality. With a few simple tips this is one course you can Ace and keep your energy high while maintaining your weight at the same time!

START YOUR DAY WITH BREAKFAST:

It's easy to skip breakfast especially with those early-morning classes, but you've just come off potentially six to eight hours with no food, and your body needs this nourishment to get through the day. Try to steer clear of the sugary cereals and carbohydrates and go for an omelet, cottage cheese, or plain yogurt with fruit to boost protein intake and have sustainable energy throughout the day. No time to stop in the dining hall? Simply grab some Zone Fast™ bagels, granola, or cinnamon buns to have on the go! (visit www.zonediet.com for more information.)

EAT SMALL, FREQUENT MEALS THROUGHOUT THE DAY:

By eating regularly throughout the day, such as three meals and two snacks, you'll keep your blood sugar constant. This will eliminate the urge to run to the university café for a coffee and pastry mid-afternoon.

AVOID THE SIMPLE CARBS:

When the majority of our diet is made up of simple carbohydrates in the form of candy, pastries, desserts, breads and pastas, it can wreak havoc on our bodies between making us fatigued, hungry, and causing our blood sugar to rise and fall rapidly. It's the hormonal imbalance

from eating these foods that packs on the pounds and keeps them on. Grab a bunch of Zone Protein™ items to have on hand. You can eliminate the thinking and guilt for these tasty snacks by choosing our cookies, granola, bagel chips, bars, pasta and pizza. No deprivation here!

MODERATE YOUR ALCOHOL INTAKE:

If I said to avoid alcohol, you'd stop reading, so instead try to limit your intake if you can. Stick with light beers as opposed to sugar laden-beverages that pack on a big-calorie punch (Long Island Iced Tea - 8 ounces, 275 calories!). Try to couple your alcohol intake with some type of protein (boneless chicken wings) to stabilize blood sugar and prevent alcohol-induced hunger. One of the big culprits in the weight gain department is the late-night food orders after a night of drinking. Not only do you have all the calories from the alcohol, but you can easily add another 1,000 in food. Typically it takes so long for the food to arrive that you've either fallen asleep or aren't even hungry by the time it comes! Opt to have a few lighter snacks on hand so you can have a small bite and go to bed instead.

DRINK WATER:

If you ignore the previous instruction to limit alcohol, at least counter dehydration with water. Studies show that drinking at least 16 ounces of water before a meal can curb your caloric intake at that meal. It's tempting to have soda or energy drinks for those late nights, but all these do is make you jittery and add on pounds. If you're eating consistently throughout the day and making sure you have protein at each meal, you'll be able to breeze through those late nights and retain more.

KNOW HOW TO NAVIGATE THE SCHOOL MENU:

When selecting an entrée, choose one that isn't drenched in dressings, cream-based sauces or cheese. Look for these key words when ordering as most likely it means they are healthier choices: Baked, Broiled, Boiled, Poached, Steamed, Roasted, Grilled, Stir-fried. Choose an entrée with lean protein like chicken or fish and ask for extra vegetables in place of starches or bread. For salads, add chicken, fish or even steak on top for protein and just get the dressing on the side.

OFF CAMPUS DINING OR EATING-IN:

I wish I had known about Zone Fast™ Foods when I was in college. Numerous nights I'd have peanut butter and jelly on English muffins or cereal because the meals in the dining hall were awful, or I didn't have time to eat. Don't fall into this trap. Nourish your body and brain for those late nights with Zone Fast™ pasta, orzo, pizza crust or flatbread.

STAY ACTIVE:

Pending how big your campus is, it's easy to get in the habit of taking the bus, especially when the winter months kick in and the campus feels like a wind tunnel. Fight the urge to become sedentary by walking to your classes, parking your car at a distance and maintaining your gym routine.

AVOID THE MINDLESS EATING:

Avoid having food around when you are just eating out of boredom versus being aware of how much you are actually consuming. Try not to have huge bags of chips or snacks around when studying as you'll finish the bag without even knowing it.

GET ON THE SCALE:

You might have to pop into the gym to do this, but hopping on the scale at the same time each week or biweekly is helpful to monitor trends. Establish a red zone. Once the scale hits the 5-pound mark, start cutting back and changing habits.