

Just a couple of items coming into the Birkie weekend.

A couple of tips on nutrition for this weekend:

- a. Don't do any radical diet changes or try anything really new. Stick with what you usually eat and drink. If you use Gatorade or other replacement drinks, water them down to about 1/5 of their bottled or recommended strength. The drinks are at maximum effectiveness and absorption watered down (this would be the actual effective strength, but it doesn't taste good, so they sell it too strong). If you are skiing the Birkie, chase a 1/2 cup of energy drink down with a cup of water to keep from cramping and nausea. Water is really the best option. If you need to eat something, carbohydrates are good. I like dried pineapple. The banana pieces they offer are good. If you take a goo packet, watch to see if it is caffeinated. If you are used to caffeinated beverages, go for it. If not, make sure you get one without.
- b. It is important to eat a good breakfast Birkie morning - it is a long race (as is the Korte) - you'll need a full tank. Pick fairly easy to digest foods, but ones you are used to.
- c. Stop at all of the aid stations and eat and drink, even if you don't feel hungry or thirsty. by the time you feel the hunger or thirst, it is too late and you are depleted.
- d. Michael Pollan just wrote a book that included some advice that I like about nutrition in general. Athletes, recreational or competitive, need good nutrition. I'll pass along Michael's tips for your reading and digestive pleasure. And remember, you wouldn't pour used cooking oil into a Ferrari's gas tank. If you want good performance out of your brain and body, put good fuel in it!

Michael's top ten tips on good eating (he calls it an algorithm):

1. Don't eat anything that your grandmother wouldn't recognize as food.
2. Avoid food products with more than five or six ingredients or with ingredients you can't pronounce.
3. Don't eat anything that won't eventually rot.
4. Shop the perimeter of the supermarket, where the food is least processed.
5. Avoid products that make health claims.
6. Eat meals and eat them only at tables. (And no, the desk is not a table.)
7. Eat only until you are 4/5 full (an ancient Japanese injunction).
8. Pay more, eat less.

9. Diversify your diet and eat wild foods when you can.

10. Eat slowly, with other people whenever possible, and always with pleasure.

I also liked his favorite theory on junk food - "Eat all the junk food you want - as long as you cook it yourself."

Eat well and ski long!

-Doug