

Coach's Tips

Tip # 1

When pedaling focus on dropping your heel to make sure you engage your glutes with each pedal stroke. The glutes are the biggest muscles in your body and if you pedal with your toes pointed down, they don't get used. Dropping your heel at the bottom of each pedal stroke forces a momentary firing of the butt which adds power to your stroke.

Think of doing a single leg squat in the gym... you push through your heel right? Same thing on the bike! If it helps, think about keeping your quads relaxed (trust me, they will work hard enough without you even thinking about them!) and with each downstroke you are almost trying to extend out a little and kick the skewer of your front wheel.

Have someone watch you. If you rock your hips when you do this, you may need to drop your saddle just a titch. You shouldn't need to rock to get your heels down – we will cover that in the next tip. :-)

Tip #2

In the last one we talked about making sure you drop your heels to ensure you get your glutes firing with each pedal stroke. The thing you need to watch here is that your bike is set up correctly and the saddle is in the right position so you don't have to rock from side to side to get the heel drop we are looking for.

Your upper body should be relaxed and rock solid stable so that when you fire your glutes they have that solid core to push against and generate force. If you need to rock from side to side to get your heel down, the continual hinging of your back will lead to injury so have someone watch you to see if you are rocking. If so, you may need to drop your saddle a tad, or better still... go get a proper bike fit!

Tip #3 - Don't blow up

You are going to be riding for 6 days straight and each day would be a challenging ride in its own right, so pace yourself. As a guideline, if the pace feels too easy, it's probably just about right and I am betting won't feel quite as easy by the end.

Ride to your own pace and don't get caught up thinking you have to hammer the whole thing. The objective is to be able to complete each day just comfortably tired so you are ready to go again the next day!