

Maximising Athletic Performance....with air conditioning

Ron Clarke

The most important elements in any athletic or sporting performance are:

1. Skills
2. Muscular capabilities
3. Ability to absorb oxygen
4. Mental concentration and confidence

Skills and muscular capabilities are a matter of training sensibly, patiently and with a purpose, combined with generic characteristics and appropriate up-bringing.

Mental concentration should be practised as assiduously as the skill techniques.

Training, both for fitness and to enhance skills, is too often approached haphazardly with no real purpose or concentration. A plan should be established for any workout prior to its start, which should fit into an overall program. And the plan should incorporate a goal – be it distance/time, number of hills or efforts, or the drills.

Whatever fun runner or professional, it has always made sense to me that when you practice you do so for a reason.

And I have always found that real confidence comes from preparation. The better prepared you are the more confidence you will have to perform any task.

My favourite way of demonstrating this is with connective circles:

The outer is what your body is ultimately capable of – no one can tell you where these extremes are.

The middle circle is what you believe your body is capable of in its present condition

The inner circle is what you actually achieve.

As your fitness increases so do the two inner circles expand towards the outer with the ultimate, of course, having all three over-lapping.

The point being nobody can so control the mind as to free it of all inhibitions - have a look at someone having an epileptic fit, it takes three to four people to hold them down.

There are many examples of how sometimes performance exceeds expectations, especially when inhibitions are overcome either by fear, or adrenaline, or determination.

Examples: Ewry (Determination)
Beamon (Adrenaline)
Syme (Fear)

For this reason I actually believe the Para-Olympics produce the most amazing athletic performances of all.

Because they know all about pain, and suffering, and determination, and

purpose. Interestingly they are also the fairest with the best displays of sportsmanship.

But I am here today to tell you about the third essential requirement for success in sport.

The use of oxygen has not been understood sufficiently as yet, its value has most certainly been underestimated, but I can assure you all that there is no more important element in training than to enhance the ability of the body to absorb oxygen.

Triathlon is the sport which has advanced most in recognising its value possibly because its participants need to be fitter than those for any other Olympic Sport.

In the main, these aerobic benefits which so improve performances, come from Hypobaric training, wherein the athlete is exposed to altitude, either natural or simulated, for extended periods of time so that their bodies adapt to overcome this lack of atmospheric oxygen by operating more efficiently. Normally the process is a stimulation of bone marrow by increased EPO (which occurs when the body is deprived of oxygen for a period) which results in more haemoglobin cells being produced so that more oxygen can then be collected from the lungs and distributed.

Consequently, in my day, athletes like Sebastian Coe spent months training and living at altitude (Coe's favourite location was St Moritz in Switzerland). More of this later.

The other major use of oxygen is in aiding recovery and circulation.

This technique is called Hyperbaric which means additional pressure. Ideally the pressure used should equate with 2 atmospheres and needs a special reinforced chamber (as this is twice the normal pressure).

Not only does this aid recovery from injury dramatically, it also relaxes and aids the brain and its function, amongst a host of other benefits.

I believe every athlete should, every day immediately after training, relax for 30 minutes in a Hyperbaric chamber. I have no proof but I project that this alone would improve performance by up to 5%. The profound effect of Hyperbaric treatment can be seen in this short video on some severely mentally debilitated children suffering from oxygen deprivation of the brain.

[Video to be shown]

Isn't that amazing. Imagine the effect on training recovery and athletic performance of fit and healthy athletes when it can have that sort of result with the mentally handicapped.

Now add that to the already enhanced performance the use of **Hypobaric** techniques, and I calculate we can artificially produce another Said Ouvia, Damien Komen, or Haile Gebrselasse.

In 1970, I predicted that for the next 5 decades world distance running records will be the exclusive domain of the mountain men.

Ever since 1980, every world record, except for Steve Cram's 1500 meters in 1985, has been set by them.

But the double whammy use of oxygen techniques in this way could level the playing fields.

Let me tell you more about the various ways we can tune up the haemoglobin via the use of Hypobaric techniques and what we are doing at the Runaway Bay Sports Super Centre to facilitate this.

We will be the only Sports Training Centre in the world to incorporate both techniques, that is have Hypo- and Hyperbaric chambers.

We will be the only Centre in the world where athletes can book in and sleep at altitude in normal hotel style accommodation.

And we cater for all sports, in particular, track (there is a 400 metre 8 lane international standard tartan track with pacing lights – again a world first), swimming (a 2 metre deep, 50 metre long, heated, 8 lane stainless steel Olympic pool as well as an indoor 25 metre 3 lane facility), road cycling (outside of the Gold Coast with hundreds of kilometres of roads), and many other sports. Our facilities include a 600 m² gymnasium incorporating free weights, Keiser resistance circuit, Nautilus, the whole range of aerobic equipment, and a Pilates “Gym within a Gym” (for stretching), spa, sauna, massage, hydrotherapy, and a fully equipped sports medicine clinic with physiotherapists, physiologists, sports medicine physicians, plus nutritionists, psychologists and chiropractors.

No Sports Training Centre anywhere in the world, matches us and we intend to continue to lead the way.

Two of our accommodation lodges will be fitted with special pump and monitoring equipment so that their occupants can sleep at altitude, up to 5,000 metres above sea level, 64 beds in all.

“Sleep High, Train Low” is a training program that has now been proven in many places throughout the world as the most effective way of building haemoglobin cells whilst retaining physical strength.

Add to this the effects from the Hyperbaric Chamber and, as I say, we're up with the Ethiopians, Kenyans, Moroccans, Algerians and Mexicans.

We have also incorporated a Hypobaric cubicle in the gymnasium to allow cyclists and runners to use ergometers and treadmills at altitude (as well we can alter the humidity), so as to give the option of training at altitude if they so wish, without the expense and time needed to travel there.

In addition, we have the Hypoxicator, which is a further unit designed both to raise haemoglobin levels and enhance the capacity of muscle tissue to absorb oxygen. This is a 14 day course that has given us some spectacular results.

Lastly there is the Cat Hatch individual Hypobaric beds, and both Hypobaric and Hyperbaric tents that we can hire out.

Believe me, get onto the Internet and study the research. Call us if you need

more literature. If you are ready to take the next step, and have the time, come down to Runaway Bay.

If you can't get down for an extended period, come and see us for a weekend, test out the theory, then work out how, in your particular circumstances, you can incorporate the use of oxygen into your programmes.

I have no doubt had I been able to use this stuff pre-1968, I would have won the two distance golds at the Mexico City Olympics instead of finishing flat on my back at the end of the 10K.

The fact I ran 6th in both races came about from the four weeks or so I was able to spend at Font Romeu in the Pyrenees. I broke the 2 miles world record, and ran the 2nd fastest ever 10,000m in gale conditions (the wind blew our numbers off our singlets it was so strong) en route to Mexico so the short time I spent there helped me no end.

There is no doubt about it ... If you wish to reach the top, you have to incorporate both methods ... or go live in Kenya.