

BEFORE THE BIG RACE

Fitness Trainer,

What specific training do you do before a big bike race?

John Platero,

Competing at the top level of any sport requires extraordinary effort. Cycling is often referred to as an aerobic sport, however, a race isn't won aerobically. Cycling requires the ability to cycle and think in an anaerobic state. This involves a lot of red blood cells. In order to increase my hematocrit level (red blood cells), I sleep in an altitude tent. Sleeping at high altitude and training at low altitude can be a tricky business. I get bloodwork done monthly to monitor the hematocrit levels, ferritin, iron, testosterone, free testosterone, growth hormone, DHEA and cholesterol levels. I also have to increase my VO₂ max. This involves bodyweight. VO₂ max is the amount of oxygen a person can process relative to one's bodyweight. I wasn't blessed with a naturally high VO₂ max. I was a baseball, football player—used to short bursts. In order to boost my VO₂, I have to lose weight. Since I'm very lean, my only choice is to lose muscle. For this, I do intermittent fasting. I eat supper on a Sunday night but not eat again until Tuesday morning. It's 36-40 hours of fasting. My normal weight is 167 pounds and 4-5% body fat. Fasting allows me to get to 150-154 pounds with the same % of body fat. Most people would never want to lose muscle, however, cycling doesn't require upper body mass. The key

is to lose muscles not needed for cycling but retain the power needed in the lower extremities to go fast!

Fitness Trainer,

What's your favorite aspect of training for a bike race and why?

John Platero,

Racing is my most favorite aspect of training. It's dangerous, exciting, tactical, tough and rewarding. Nothing beats racing to get in shape.

Fitness Trainer,

Do you eat differently while in training for a race?

John Platero,

Not really. I always eat pretty good. My races aren't that long, however, if the race is longer than three hours I will eat more carbs.

Fitness Trainer,

What's your go-to meal/snack after a big workout?

John Platero:

Within 30 minutes I eat a shake made with blueberries, strawberries, banana, vanilla whey protein and glutamine. If I feel like I need more food, I'll eat pasta with meat sauce about 45 minutes after that.

Fitness Trainer:

How many years have you been CEO of the NCCPT and how has it changed your life?

John Platero:

I created the NCCPT and have been the CEO for 20 years. It has been extremely challenging but extremely rewarding. The NCCPT is nationally accredited and accepted at every major chain in the country. We have certified thousands of personal trainers who have gone on to help thousands of people to get in shape. It doesn't get better than that!

John Platero

CEO

The National Council for Certified Personal Trainers
3481 Old Conejo Road, Suite 102
Newbury Park, Ca.

91320

Office: 800-778-6060 ext. 2780

Cel: 310-505-8116

Fax: 800-915-5545

www.nccpt.com/

www.facebook.com/NCCPT

www.johnplatero.com/

www.facebook.com/jplatero

John Platero, MA, is a fitness educator who has consulted both nationally and internationally. He is the CEO of the National Council for Certified Personal Trainers, an organization that has certified thousands of personal trainers all over the world. He is the "trainer to the trainers." He has obtained 35 personal training certifications, filmed over 30 fitness videos and infomercials and has been published in many prominent fitness magazines. As an athlete, John was a champion bodybuilder turned cyclist, winning multiple gold medals in road racing, mountain biking and the velodrome.

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