NACoA's *Run for the Children*®

Marathon Tips

October 8, 2004

Sunny and 70˚ sounds just about perfect and here in D.C. that is the forecast for the next several days and what we have been enjoying all week. But that is the mid-afternoon temperature. In the mornings when I get up to take the dog for a walk it is a completely different story – I need my jacket and my hat because it is only 45˚. Therefore, I went looking for tips to help you prepare for the change in seasons.

I know how hard all of you are working to reach race day and hope the tips are helpful and are keeping you motivated. If you need help with anything let me know. NACoA is forever grateful to you and all your hard work.

Be well and keep on keepin' on.

Jackie

Dressing To Be Comfortable During Cold And/Or Wet Weather

Man, in the sense of a species, is tropical by nature. When we are at rest, a temperature of 85-90 degrees Fahrenheit with a 40-60% relative humidity is just about right. That is comfort. How often do we have those conditions in our area? When we are uncomfortable, it is because of too much or too little heat. The primary function of clothing is to control evaporative, conductive and convective heat transfer.

The feeling is that:

- It's never bad weather; you are just not dressed properly for the weather.
- We have more control over our environment now than during the summer, at that time of year, you can strip down just so far, and then it is still hot and humid.

During colder weather we each have our own comfort zones. Comfort, the lack of discomfort, depends upon the environment, the level of activity, the clothing system, your physical condition, and your perception of what is comfortable and what is uncomfortable. This helps dictate how much you wish to wear at different times

Layering is the key

We seek the balance that sufficiently keeps the elements out while providing adequate warmth and allowing our moisture build-up to escape due to the breath-ability of the garments. Remember, if you step outside the door and are perfectly warm and

comfortable, you probably are overdressed. Turn around and go back in, and remove some clothing. The act of running is similar to standing motionless in a temperature that is 20-30 degrees warmer. As the temperature rises or your activity level increases, you can take off layers; add layers as you get colder or the temperature drops. Taking off your hat or gloves is a quick way to vent. As much as 70% of your body heat escapes through your extremities.

Transfer of Heat

- Conduction - transfer caused by direct contact.
- Convection - transfer caused by the movement of air.
- Evaporation - transfer caused by perspiration turning to vapor.
- Radiation - transfer from the rays of the sun.
- Respiration - transfer from our breathing.

Considerations For Garments

- Water protection - a garment's ability to prevent water entry.
- Breath-ability - a garment's ability to allow heat and moisture to pass through.
- Wind Protection - a garment's ability to prevent wind entry.
- Warmth Retention/Insulation - a garment's ability to trap a layer of warm air between you and the cold.
- Moisture Management - a garment's ability to pull moisture away from the skin and push it through the fabric's surface for evaporation.

Base Layer

Layer One: Bodywear next to the skin that is hydrophobic (water hating). This moisture wicking layer gives elemental winter protection. Vapor has the tendency to go from a warm humid environment to a cooler less humid one. A good base layer helps transport vapor and moisture away from your skin. It enables you to more effectively utilize the heat that your body produces and reduces or prevents chill because damp skin through conduction loses body heat twenty three times faster than dry skin. This clothing may be in bras, briefs, socks, shorts, or tops and pants. Coolmax, DryLine, DryLete, DriFit, Polypropylene, Intera and Thermastat are some of the processes or materials that help transfer moisture from the skin. If you expect to sweat, wear a water hating material next to your torso or extremities. Your activity will be more enjoyable.

Mid Layer

Layer Two: This is your insulating layer. It may be thermalwear by itself (3SP) or over bodywear in varying amounts to correspond to the weather conditions. It continues to move moisture to the outer layer, but it also traps warm air. Moisture moving and heat retention are priorities. Shirts, pants, and tights commonly make up this layer.

Outer Layer

Layer Three: This protects you from wind, rain, and snow and completes moisture transfer by releasing perspiration into the atmosphere. Conditions that affect your choice of clothing are your intended activity, your physical condition, and the external environment. Again, you have your own comfort zone. Going out for a short, easy stroll differs from a vigorous workout that dramatically elevates your heart rate. During one hour of walking or running, you may perspire a pint or more of water. Jackets, vests, and pants made of Microfibers, PolarTec, Activent, Gore-Tex are some of the materials used.

Accessory Layer

Layer Four: In conjunction with the other layers this layer protects specific body parts by wicking moisture and retaining heat. Gloves, Mittens, HeadGators, Hats, Caps, and Headbands are used.

Thanks to RunningSpot.com a service of Bob Roncker's Running Spot a premier specialty running and walking store for the above helpful hints.