

# *Racing Tactics!!!*

## Realistic Goals and Strategies for Cross Country

1. There are two types of strategies....one for those that have a realistic shot at winning THAT day....and one for everyone else....build up racing (even paced) will be the most effective strategy for the majority of athletes...position only matters at the finish line.
2. Racing is like playing cards....make sure you have an ace ready when it counts....
3. Races are lost on up hills...they are won on down hills....
4. Strategies only work when used between athletes of similar ability/fitness
5. Prioritize your racing schedule
6. Plan your training for the entire season around the strategy/tactics needed for the KEY course you will race upon...
7. Large racing fields may need different strategies....
8. Visualize success...

## Realistic Goals and Strategies for Track

1. Keep with the leaders - Of course, this tactic should not be applied if the athlete is trying to run according to a specific pace or if the pace is so fast that it is likely to cause the athlete to over-extend him/herself.
2. Run in the inside lane – running in the second lane around one bend adds 3.61 meters to the distance. To run a whole lap in the second lane means covering roughly an extra seven meters. However, running in the inside lane can be dangerous in a large field, so may sure you establish position early in the race and stay aware of the other runners so that when you tuck behind a runner you do not get boxed in. This is extremely important in the 800 and 1600 meters.
3. Never overtake on the bend – Overtaking another runner in the bend will add additional distance. However, as few athletes expect it, a runner overtaking on a bend could gain a valuable element of surprise.
4. Do not look around – Looking back upsets the stride rhythm and can encourage pursuing runners to speed up if they suspect the runner in front is tiring. Try to focus on the runner in front, keeping in touch. It is easier to stay up with a runner than to try and catch up. If other runners go out at a faster pace then your primary goal is to close that gap before the last 400-600 meters. You have to remember what type of ace you have in your final kick.
5. Never give up during a surge or spurt – To try and pick up speed again after slowing down in a surge is very difficult, therefore a surge should be continued as long as strength is available. The goal of surging is to try and break other runners mentally, so that can not come back late in a race and overtake you.

## Tricks of the trade for Cross Country and Track

1. Draft whenever possible ....save 7% energy...
2. Race to the outside of the field to enable yourself to run your stride pattern and see the ground, especially in large fields
3. Use turns, trees, etc to create gaps with small surges...
4. Learn to run down hills effectively ...lean forward from the ankles, spin fast put no effort into it...rest AND run faster!!!
5. Apply pressure in a race when others want to rest...
6. Learn to monitor your system...internal vs. external focus.
7. Use oil in extreme cold/wet conditions.
8. Don't try anything new on race day!