

3-Time Champion Matias Saari's Preparation Advice

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Here's Matias Saari's advice on how to prepare to run your best on the big day.

I try to do most of my challenging workouts on the Equinox trail itself (although since moving to Anchorage, I now have few chances to get on the Equinox trail before the race).

I like to divide the course in thirds (roughly the relay legs) and do each section as a tempo run at slightly faster than projected race pace. I think it is especially important to practice running the Out-and-Back hard immediately after a challenging climb of Ester Dome. This helps combat the inclination to slow down in relief after cresting the big hill. Because of its undulating nature, I consider the Out-and-Back to be the crux of the race and developing any kind of rhythm there requires simulating the effort in training.

One aspect of Equinox training that many runners neglect is running hard downhill on pavement. It can be miserable, but doing so a couple times on Henderson and Goldhill Roads will help prepare the quads for the beating they will incur on race day! And many minutes can be gained if the legs hold up well during the downhill portions.

Thanks, Matias!