

## GRAND CANYON AND OTHER EXTREME HIKES WEEKLY TRAINING TIPS

by Coach Ron Gunn

1. **Your primary training goal** is to condition your body for the challenges that you will meet hiking in the Grand Canyon including altitude, steep downhill, long up canyon climbs (reverse mountaineering), severe temperature changes, dehydration, protrusions on the trail, and long hours on feet (HOF).
2. **Your first priority** is to do at least one long comfortable distance (LCD) hike at least once every two weeks. These LCD hikes should build up to about 11 HOF by the Manistee river Valley test hike. Most hikers do their LCD hikes at our weekend training sessions. What do you do on the off weekends? Take a shorter hike (1-3 hours) or rest if needed.
3. **Your second priority** is to get in a mid range hike of 1-2 hours. This hike is usually done in the middle of the week and is done at a steady tempo.
4. **Fill in the remainder of the week** with hikes of shorter distances at a steady to fast continuous run/walk (FCR) tempo.
5. **Use the *tear 'n repair* training system** and work a couple of rest days into your week. These are important to keep hikers strong and healthy for the tear days. Good activities for repair days are swimming, biking, and walking short distance at a *gone fishing* tempo. Any activity that promotes circulation but takes the weight off the weight bearing joints is good (you can use your imagination). Listen to your body to determine repair days. Obviously, the day (or days as you get deep into the training schedule) after a good LCD hike will work.
6. **Do not break up your training hikes.** It is much better to do one hike of 8 miles on one day than to do two hikes of 4 miles on two days. The Grand Canyon treks are one continuous day hike!
7. **Perform core strength and peripheral strength exercises** regularly after your training hikes at least three times per week.
8. **Wear your day pack** loaded with 10-15 pounds on your training hikes. This is a great conditioner and will make you stronger for the realities of the *below the rim* hikes.
9. **Precede workout** with easy walking to raise the core body temperature and then perform static stretching routine. Conclude each workout with a cool down walk and then do stretch routine again. This stretch session increases flexibility and speeds recovery time.
10. **Never increase** your mileage, HOF or tempo more than 10% of your best. Build your conditioning base gradually.
11. **Be flexible** and listen to your body – this *tear 'n repair* schedule is just a guide.