

Sleep (or lack of it)

Sleep is in “cycles” each lasting about 90 mins

Deep (slow wave), light, and REM are the components in every warm blooded animal.
Deep repairs body, REM repairs and, in children, grows brain.

Lack of sleep consequences:

In a study of young soldiers, one night’s loss of sleep caused cognitive deterioration.
With 3 days of sleep loss - severe cognitive loss with paranoia, and hallucinations.
Lack of sleep causes fatigue, weariness, decreased attention, memory lapses, decreased judgment, increased irritability with danger of a sudden collapse into sleep.

What to do on your singlehanded race:

- Frequent naps, 20-30 mins or 90 mins (NOT ONE HOUR which interrupts the sleep cycle at the wrong spot).
- Plan schedule - if you are a “morning person”, short naps best - 20 mins
if “evening person” longer naps best - 30 - 40 mins.
- Try to get 4 hrs total sleep per 24 hrs.
- Carbohydrates are less sleep inducing than protein.
- Eat small meals and stay well hydrated.
- Use caffeine sparingly - the short term benefit is outweighed by the long-term detriment (decreases effectiveness of naps).
- Beware of sleep inducing drugs.

Ellen MacArthur’s Solo Around the World Race sleep records:

5.5 hrs total sleep per 24 hrs all in naps

Nap time average 36 mins

Number of naps: 891 in 94 days

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