

Malbaie training camp



Every August, the Quebec Team comes together for its second summer training camp--a joint training camp held with CNEPH. This event yields a great opportunity to get in some good high volume zone1 rollerski training, talk with CNEPH's awesome support staff, and experience what it's like to, essentially, be part of a training centre for one week. At last year's training camp in Jericho, Vermont, I had serious trouble recovering

between workouts, so going into this year's camp my goal was to improve upon this. I was not super happy with the location of the camp last year either, so when I heard that it was to be held in La Malbaie, I was happy for the change of scenery.

Monday dawned bright and early (with respect to my usual summer schedule at least), as I jumped out of bed at 5:15 am to meet up with the prodigy ski-twins Em and Kat Stewart-Jones. With the first training session of the camp at 2pm and a 7hr drive from Chelsea to Malbaie to tackle, time was of the essence!

It was my first time going farther up the St. Lawrence river than Mont Saint Anne, and the big thing I noticed as we neared our destination were the hills. They definitely didn't qualify as mountains, but they dwarf any hills around Gatineau, and they are a fair bit steeper too. As it would turn out, these hills would prove to be a reoccurring theme for the camp.

Shortly after discovering that the St. Lawrence gets tides in Malbaie (super cool!), we met up with the rest of the Team, and headed out for the first workout of the camp: rollerskiing hill reps on one of Malbaie's crazy hills. Unfortunately, a sharp pain started in

my shoulder partway through the workout, so, after picking up groceries and heading back to the auberge, I went to bed feeling injury-stressed.

Day two of the Malbaie camp continued the disaster theme that was started by my hurt shoulder. To make a long story short, the three of us in the Stewert-Jones-mobile got completely lost on the way to the morning workout and ended up returning to our lodgings to go for a late morning bike ride. To top off the disastrous day, I realized that my shoulder was going to be a problem for the rest of the camp and I cut my finger chopping vegetables for supper.

On Wednesday the situation reached the breaking point. Either I was going to give up and be sad about my shoulder pain or I was going to find alternative ways of completing workouts. Since giving up is for losers, I really only had one option.

From Wednesday to Friday, I set myself some specific goals to take advantage of the legs-only skiing situation: 1)good ankle/knee bend; 2)hips forward; 3)activate glutes. In the past I've never been as good as I should be at using my gluteal muscles when skiing, and the 6:20hr of legs only I completed on Wednesday through Friday of the camp were a great opportunity to change this!

After I centered my focus on Wednesday, the rest of the camp went by in a flash. High points in order of occurrence were: an awesome hike through the cloudy, surreal, boreal forest in Les Haute Gorge de Malbaie provincial park, Soccer and Ultimate with the Team on Friday afternoon, and, finally, a sweet running interval workout, to finish off the camp, with Alexis Turgeon from CNEPH on Saturday. Unfortunately, Alexis injured his hand during the week, so both of us were unable to race the time trial on the last day. Luckily, running intervals were the next best thing.

To sum things up, I completed my goal of recovering more effectively at this year's late summer camp than last year's, and I learned something too:

When life gives you lemons, what do you do?? **YOU GIVE THOSE LEMONS RIGHT BACK AND ASK FOR A FULL REFUND!!!!!!**

But actually, whenever an injury decides to rear its ugly head, there should ALWAYS be something positive that you can salvage. Sometimes it's harder to find than others, but

look for it, because it's guaranteed to be hiding back there somewhere behind the hurt and the pain. Besides, I like lemons.

