Are you ready for an adventure race?

Reading part 6
Tania Rodas



Rebecca Rusch has competed in several Eco-Challenge races, where teams of four men and women race non-stop over a 500 km course which includes trekking, canoeing, horse riding, scuba diving, mountaineering and mountain biking.

Obviously, I did not feel so ready for the early races in my career as the races we have done recently. There is a lot to be said for just gaining experience. Just getting out there and getting your feet wet teaches you the right skills and attitude.

It's often not the most physically prepared or the fittest teams that win. The ones who come first are the teams who race intelligently and adapt to unexpected situations. 1 The only way to develop those qualities is to get out and race or do long training trips with your team-mates and friends.

Adventure races are such a huge challenge that when you enter a race you always think, "Am I ready? Did I train enough? Did I forget something?" I remember one race in particular, my very first Eco-Challenge and only my second race ever. 2 A 24-hour race seemed like an eternity to me. My background was cross-country running in high school and college where a two- or three-mile race seemed long. Most of my fear was due to lack of experience and knowledge. I really had no idea what I was getting into because I had never done a 24-hour race before. 3

In preparation for Australia, I tried to approach my training in a methodical way. Looking back, I wasn't methodical at all. In fact, what I did involved simply running, biking and paddling a kayak as much and as hard as I could. I was also working at the same time. In reality, I was training a couple of hours a day during the week to get fit and at weekends training with the team for perhaps four hours. 4 I spent the rest of the time worrying about how slow I was.

So, we went to Australia and entered the race. We didn't plan a strategy at all, but just ran as fast as possible from the start. I just tried to keep up with my team-mates, who were more experienced than I was. 5 It was a furious 36 hours. We arrived at a few of the check points in first place and were among the top five. I knew we didn't belong there.

To cut a long story short, two of my team-mates decided not to continue the race after just a day and a half. One was suffering hallucinations and feeling ill. He was just too tired to carry on. 6 We had been going so fast that he felt uncomfortable asking us to stop so he could take care of his blisters. The other two of us, feeling fresh still, had to drop out with the rest of our team. Four days later, we watched in disappointment as the winners crossed the finishing line. I knew that our team had not been prepared or realistic about the pace we could keep, but not finishing that race was the most valuable lesson I could have learned.

I promised then to come back one day and finish the race. That was seven years (and thousands of race miles) ago.

Adapted from *Adventure Sports Journal*

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Are you ready for an adventure race?

Reading part 6
Tania Rodas

3 Six sentences have been removed from the article. Read the sentences below one by one. As you read each sentence:

- underline words and phrases which you think refer to something in the article
- decide which gap (1–6) it fits.
  There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

A Another had severe problems with his feet.
B I kept my mouth shut and followed them.
C We won it even so, and were invited to compete in the Eco-Challenge in Australia.
D His encouragement helped me to complete it.
E That was how much I had prepared.
F When I did it, I felt totally afraid and unprepared.
G To achieve this, you have to be flexible and patient.

Grammar

Infinitive and verb + *-ing*

1 These sentences (some of which are from the article you have just read) are examples of when to use the infinitive and when to use the verb + *-ing* form. Decide which sentence (a–i) is an example (1–10) for each of the rules on this page. You can use some of the sentences as examples for more than one rule.

a **Not finishing** that race was the most valuable lesson I could have learned.
b I promised then **to come back** one day and finish the race.
c In fact, what I did involved simply **running, biking** and **paddling** a kayak as much and as hard as I could.
d There is a lot to be said for just **gaining** experience.
e I was training a couple of hours a day during the week **to get fit**.
f There are medical teams **to take care of** injured runners.
g He was just too tired **to carry on**.
h It's no use **entering** a race if you haven't prepared properly.
i Two of my team-mates decided **not to continue** the race after just a day and a half.

Using the infinitive and verb + *-ing*

The **infinitive** is used:

1 to say why you do something (sentence ...e...)
2 to say why something exists (sentence .....)
3 after *too* and *enough* (sentence .....)
4 after these verbs (there is a more complete list on page 166): *agree, appear, ask, arrange, decide, expect, fail, help, promise* (sentences ..... and .....)
5 The negative is formed by placing *not* before the infinitive (sentence .....)

The **verb + *-ing*** is used:

6 after prepositions (sentence .....)
7 as subjects or objects of a verb (sentence .....)
8 after these verbs (there is a more complete list on page 166): *admit, enjoy, finish, involve, mind, postpone, risk, suggest* (sentence .....)
9 after these expressions: *it's no good, it's not worth, it's no use, it's a waste of time, spend time, can't help* (sentence .....)
10 The negative is formed by placing *not* before the verb + *-ing* (sentence .....)

LIVEWORKSHEETS