

RED BULL – ENERGY DEPOT FOR ATHLETES

Tips from Toni Hasler,
Natascha Badmann's
trainer



Red Bull is definitely more than just a party drink. The original energy drink also has a lot to offer for athletes. What's in it, how does it work and how can it be used effectively for sports? Toni Hasler, trainer and nutritional counsellor, provides the answers.

There is no doubt for Toni Hasler: "Red Bull fills vital gaps in every athlete's nutritional plan." He should know, for he trains the world's best triathlete, Natascha Badmann, as well as some twenty other top endurance athletes. Toni Hasler is also a professional nutritional counsellor.

WHAT'S IN IT?

The contents of the silver-blue cans have given rise to a few discussions and rumours. The composition is in fact not at all obscure: caffeine, taurine, carbohydrates and vitamins (B6, B12) are the main ingredients and essential components of performance factors. Firstly, caffeine (one can contains about as much caffeine as a cup of filtered coffee) stimulates circulation and the brain, leaving you feeling alert and ready to perform. Secondly, taurine, the substance which has contributed to the myth about Red Bull, is an amino acid which is actually produced by the human body, though considerably broken down during endurance sports. Thirdly, carbohydrates, which Toni Hasler describes as the "super fuel" in the human motor. Thanks to glucose, saccharose and glucuronolactone, the energy value of a can of Red Bull is 135 kcal. Lastly, the B vitamins aid metabolism, namely in the distribution and use of energy

suppliers. Consequently, Red Bull can be put to optimal use by the organism during athletic performances.

RED BULL BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER SPORT

Optimal use of Red Bull as part of an athlete's diet varies, depending on the discipline. Athletes whose sport demands resiliency and coordination need nourishment which stimulates and enhances concentration, whereas endurance athletes rely especially on ample energy reserves. A combination of the two is ideal for athletes who play ball sports, team sports or compete in tournaments, athletes who have to perform precise sequences of motion for longer periods of time, be it shooting a ball through the hoop or performing a series of jumps on the snowboard.

The first and most important rule, however: Red Bull is not a substitute for an adequate intake of fluids! Endurance athletes in particular should mix their energy drink with water (a 1:1 ratio). It is generally known that the intake of staple foods should occur four hours prior to major competitions involving endurance. In contrast, a marksman or chess player who consumes the energy drink ten minutes before the start will benefit from the vital kick. Bear in mind that a brief surge of sugar during a competition has a negative effect on

an athlete's performance: the ultimate drop in the level of blood sugar results in an increased feeling of being drained. "As soon as you begin taking sugar, you have to refuel regularly to maintain the effect until the finish, although it can actually work to your advantage when taken in the end phase," explains Toni Hasler. Mixing it with water and consuming it at regular intervals over a longer period of time will level out the effects of sugar. Alternatively, the energy drink works like an added boost—and if timed properly, it will carry you right to the finish.

"Sport is both exertion and relief; the right proportion is the key to success." Toni Hasler knows what it means to take on and cope with an iron man or cycle race. Regeneration also means replenishing the depleted energy depots. This is where Red Bull can also be of service – not only after lengthy competitions, but also during and after training sessions.

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