



This newsletter is brought to you by frigid cold in Boston, The Hard Parts (a book by Oksana Masters), and red lentil pasta with cheese. If you enjoy it, I'd be grateful if you could share with one or two others!

Race lotteries

Occasionally making it to the start line of a guaranteed race feels like winning the lottery. (A lot can go wrong in training!) But sometimes just getting the *chance* to be at the start line *is* winning the lottery.

The [Western States 100 lottery](#) for 2025 happens on December 7th. There are only 369 starters allowed at this race. This year there are over 68,000 tickets for nearly 10,000 entrants to the lottery. Each year you enter the lottery and don't get chosen, you get more tickets the next year. In 2017, for example, if you only had one ticket (it was your first year), the chances you won the lottery to step on the Western States start line in June was 2.5%. On the other hand, if you had been entering the race for 6 years, your chances were 55%. I bet the chances are lower now, but I haven't done the math.

Some lotteries are more internet-connection based. For example, the [Broken Arrow Skyrace](#) entries open on December 9th and are staggered over a few days "to avoid technical difficulties." But if you're interested, I'd approach this like you're trying to get concert tickets, game tickets, or a covid vaccine back in the day.

So if you haven't started thinking about races for next year, you probably should. The longer the race, the fewer slots, the quicker they fill. 100-mile trail races and Ironmans sell out pretty quick. At some point in the very far future when S.S. Endurance has some money, I'd like to sponsor athletes to do races since these longer ones can be pricey!

Coaching snapshot: goal-setting!

Question: I'm not sure where to start when you ask me what my goals are beyond "complete a marathon." What else am I supposed to add to that?

Let's start with [the definition](#) of a goal: a goal is "a desired future state coupled with a set of antecedent acts that promote the attainment of that end state (means)." You can think of the ingredients for a goal as 1. a will; and 2. a way. I'll refer you to minutes 4:43-8:50 of [this Huberman podcast](#) for an overview of the neural circuitry involved in goal setting and attainment if you're interested in that detail.

Clearly, there is biology and evidence behind setting goals. I remember first learning about "SMART" goals in medical school and thinking it was the stupidest thing ever. But we were forced to sit down, write some out, and submit them. By going through the process multiple times since, I've decided there's something to it. The evidence backs it up too. In this [meta-analysis](#) of 45 experimental studies, goal-setting improved physical activity outcomes regardless of goal delivery mode (i.e. over email or in person), prior activity level, or who assigned the goal (i.e. researcher, participant, or together). In this [randomized control trial](#), students who did core training and set SMART goals around it had better improvement in core strength endurance than students who only did core training.



S Specific	M Measurable	A Attainable	R Relevant	T Time-bound
- What will you do? How? - Use action words and numbers	- How will you evaluate? - Use metrics or data targets	- Is this achievable? - There should be doubt but also belief!	- Why are you doing this? - There needs to be a motivation	- When will this be done by? - Make a deadline

SMART goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound. They help you answer the what, how, why, and when of a goal; the will and the way; the end and the means. See this graphic I made for more specifics :)

Going back to this initial question, ask yourself if "complete a marathon" is a "smart" goal. What is it missing? In my mind, it's missing at least the R and the T, and part of the S. Why do you want to complete a marathon? When is the marathon? How will you prepare yourself for the marathon? Note: the answer to this last part may result in process-oriented sub-goals like "run four days a week for at least an hour each time between now and the marathon" or "visualize the finish line for 2 minutes before each training session" or "drink a 20-gram protein shake within an hour after interval workouts." Finally, there are [other aspects of goal-setting](#) to consider, like whether the goal is performance- or mastery- oriented, easy or hard, striving toward or avoiding something. [Setting both short- and long-term goals](#) can improve performance more than just setting one or the other or just "trying your best."

What questions do you have about training and racing? Reply to this newsletter or [email me](#), and I'll answer one in a few weeks (happily got a little backup now!).

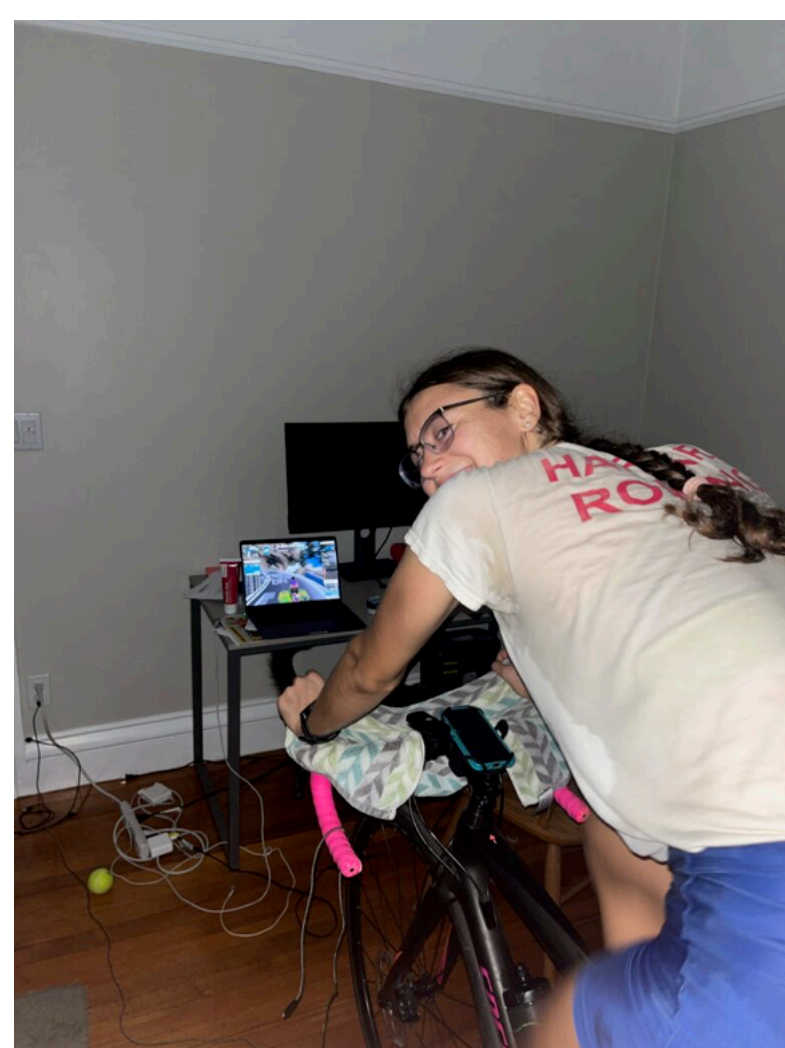
Let your friends know that I'm taking just a couple more athletes! I'm looking to work with runners and triathletes and depend on you to help spread the word :) Send them to my [website](#) to submit an inquiry or just pass along my email. Thank you so so much!

vEveresting Report

In case you missed it last week.

"The night before I set aside six shirts and four pairs of pants in anticipation of sweating a lot and switching clothes. I poured a pre-determined amount of Naak and Tailwind into portions for my bottles. I gathered 90-gram Precision gels, SiS gels, Gus, and bananas. I planned to have toast for "lunch" at the halfway point. The overall fueling plan came out to ~75 grams of carbs per hour. I figured this would be plenty as I planned to stay mostly in upper Zone 2..."

[Full report here!](#)



Ginger molasses cookies!

'Tis the season!

Ingredients: 1 stick butter, 7 tsp molasses, 1 cup sugar, 1 egg, 2 cups all purpose flour, 1 tsp cinnamon, 2 tsp ginger, 1/8 tsp cloves, 1/2 tsp salt, 1 tsp baking soda, (optional) decorative sugar.

Mix together butter, sugar, and molasses. Then mix in the egg. Add flour, spices, and baking soda. Optional to refrigerate for 1 hour to harden. Shape into balls. Roll in decorative sugar. Bake at 350F for 15 minutes. Cool 2 minutes, then transfer to rack. Chewiest when warm!



[Recipe here!](#)

Order pickup or delivery!

[Order online](#) 24 hours in advance for pickup. Remember, I also do pickup or delivery at spots determined by you! For updates, make sure to follow me on Instagram [@coach_serena326](#). For questions, feel free to email me by responding to this email!

