



# CAT TALES

Winter 2006

[www.tricats.org](http://www.tricats.org)

Volume III, Issue 4

The BBC had a story on triathlons from a newbie that can be found at:

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/magazine/6159674.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/6159674.stm)

The author noted that: " ... the United States is thought of as a nation of fat people, wallowing in our Big Gulp fizzy drinks and Krispy Kreme donuts. And it's true, about 60% of Americans are overweight by some official measurement and alarms are frequently sounded by public officials about the "obesity epidemic."

But we are also a nation of grimly-determined aerobic warriors. Endurance sports, some time ago, were democratized - that is no longer the preserve of a sporting elite. Each year seems to bring a bigger, newer, more exotic challenge, drawing a bigger pool of calculated risk-takers. This may well be a reaction to the aforementioned obesity epidemic."

In this edition we have an inspiring interview with Vergil Arbuckle sharing how he went from being a participant in the obesity epidemic to Kona. A journey few of us could imagine. When we feel sorry for ourselves or uninspired to train, just think of the challenges Virgil had to overcome ... and then get moving! A different sort of journey is the 'Survival of the Shawangunks' which a few crazy TriCATs endured. Check out their story ... and register for the race soon!

As we enter our recovery season - at least for most of us - let's relax and rebuild our bodies, but most importantly, our passion for the great obsessive sport that we all enjoy - or is it endure?



*TriCATs at the Survival of the Shawangunks (pg 12)*

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## Capital Area Triathlon Club

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**Mark Your Calendars: TriCATs Holiday Party December 9th**



## President's Corner

Jenn Brown  
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As we bring the 2006 year and racing season to an official close, I am honored and excited to be elected as the TriCATs President for 2007-8. My triathlon experience for the last three years has been strongly influenced by my involvement in this club, and I hope to be able to continue to grow and strengthen the TriCATs in an effort to bring that same social and training benefit to more members.

TriCATs had an exciting 2006. Podium finishes by many members at Diamond in the Rough followed Age Group Wins at XTERRA Richmond in July. Michael Flanagan took the crown at the Reston Triathlon in September and then joined 35 "Savage" TriCATs on a challenging training trip in the hills at Deep Creek. The club was well represented at Ironman World Championship in Kona by Vergil Arbuckle, Gail Lohman and Melissa Merson; XTERRA World Championships in Maui by Dr. Kathy Couthino and Eric Sorensen, and Ironman World Championships 70.3 in Clearwater by Michael Flanagan. Obviously, the TriCATs are making their mark on the racing front, becoming a recognized club at both local and national events.

Even more impressive than our racing statistics, however, was the answer to the call to volunteerism, voiced by Chas Ryan at the beginning of the year. Members were on hand at the PF Kids Triathlon, Marine Corps Marathon,

### Lights and Tights

Join the TriCats for their winter runs:

**When:** 6:30 PM, Tuesdays and Thursdays  
**Where:** Wakefield/Audrey Moore Recreation Center. Meet in front of the center by the flagpoles, or inside the lobby if it's cold  
**Distance:** About 6 miles, with the option of turning back sooner if you want  
**Terrain:** Graded path around Lake Accotink, mostly flat  
**Pace:** All speeds welcome  
**Bring:** A flashlight or headlamp

Girls on the Run 5Ks, TriCATs mini-tris, and various local races as tent-schleppers, cooler haulers and sideline cheering squads.

I'd like to close 2006 and open 2007 with the same "call to arms" that Chas introduced last year. As a club, it is important that we not only promote racing through participation and results, but that we continue to support the race directors and organizers who make our passions and hobbies possible. If you have never volunteered for a race before, I challenge you to volunteer for ONE in 2007. Go to a race just for the sake of watching it, and stay at the swim exit until the very last swimmer gets out of the water. Volunteer to be a body marker and offer warm advice to the tri-newbie who has no idea why you are writing their age on their calf. Volunteer at a kid's race and watch their faces as they struggle from the bike to the run...and then sprint to the finish line, finally aware and understanding what they are about to accomplish. THAT is the true spirit of this sport. THAT is what drew many of us to triathlon in the first place and THAT is what will keep us from burning out from over analyzing our heart rate, nutritional intake and weekly miles. When you plan your 2007 racing schedule, throw in a couple of non-racing races...and go have some fun. Standing on the outside of something we put so much of ourselves into can often bring us an even better understanding of why we do it all in the first place.

Train hard, train safe...and go fast.

## Ex-President's Corner

Chas Ryan  
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This is my last opportunity to write this article to the Club but I do so with pride and mixed emotions as the new board of director's is about to take over and provide some new direction. The time I have spent on the Board has been

very rewarding and given me the chance to meet many people in the Club and multi-sport community. I am truly appreciative of my new friendships that transcend any personal accomplishments in the sport.

Many times I have asked myself the question as to the importance of the Club when compared to my job, friends, and family. In the end it is lower priority but it has had a significant impact on my life nonetheless. Triathlon and TriCATs energized me in many ways so it is not easy for me to discount the value I place on it. Triathlon on its own is fun and challenging but without the Club I am reasonably sure that my interest would have waned after a year or two and I would have immersed myself in something else



Just like many things, the sport and the Club are what we make of it. You can train without any goal or limited effort and you will likely be in better shape but you probably won't feel the joy and satisfaction that comes with working toward improving yourself from one year to the next and setting personal standards. My attitude is the same towards TriCATs because through the help of many motivated members we continue to improve and set new goals. What we will do in the future comes one idea or project at a time but we continue to grow and our influence in the community is becoming more prevalent.

Okay TriCATs, that is enough from me for now. The base-building season is here and I have to kick the dust off of my trainer, find my booties and balaclava, and then cut back on the french fries and chocolate waffles. Train hard.

## My Most Horrible Race

Chris Bennett  
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It seems quite strange to say that my most horrible race was the one that I did the best in—2<sup>nd</sup> in my age group and 15<sup>th</sup>/151 overall, but it is true. It was a race where I suffered more than I thought possible, a race that I will never do again. A race far worse than my marathon, any of the half-Ironman, Olympic or 10 miler road races—even the 128 mile Mountains of Misery bike race.

Am I talking of an Ironman? No. An ultra-marathon? No. I am talking real suffering—a 5 km road race. Yes, the distance may be short, but it was so bad I will never do it again. Let me explain ...

Like most endurance athletes I normally measure my races in the hours, not minutes. So when Jerry, my colleague and running partner from work suggested I run the Rockville 5k with him I was not keen. However, as Jerry is an ex-track star who was trying to get back into shape, I decided to support him and enter the race. We were joined by Simon—nicknamed 'Rabbit Boy' by Jerry for his penchant of running FAST during our lunchtime runs.

Jerry told me vaguely before the race that there is a simple strategy for running 5k. Go as fast as you can and hopefully you won't throw up during or afterwards. Sure. Jerry was famous for his hyperbole. Little did I know how right he would be...

### TriCats Discussion Group

<http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/tricats/>

Join the TriCats discussion group to keep abreast of the latest news and events.

Jerry chose the Rockville race because he told me it was a flat course, and it also gave him eight weeks to train. In week one he couldn't do 5k without stopping; by the day of the race he was aiming for a 23 minute run.

The day dawned perfect for a road race. Clear cool temperatures. Jerry took me for a short warm up jog and told me that he had run the course the day before—and it wasn't flat. We started immediately going up a hill and then there were several ups and downs before the finish.

Being the competitive types, we lined up at/near the front of the line. I was flanked by the Maryland team. Great incentive. The gun went and we were off. And that is an understatement!

Everyone ran like the blazes so I decided I'd better keep up with them. At the top of the hill I was already at 95% of my max heart rate. Hmm. Perhaps I'm going out a bit fast. Fortunately, the downhill let me recover slightly so at the mile 1 marker I was at an average of only 92%. The timing clock was wrong—it indicated a 5:23 mile. My watch said 6:04 which was more reasonable. Still too fast.

From there it was up and down a bit. Mile 2: 94% and a 6:13 mile. Pace was better but still working a bit hard. Mile 3: 98% and 6:16. Legs? I didn't feel them as the pain in my lungs was overwhelming. The last 10<sup>th</sup> of a mile was by far the most painful—especially when some 15 year kid, all lungs and legs, zoomed past me. I finished in 19:47 and proceeded to have an exercise induced asthma attack. For the rest of the day I was spitting stuff out of my lungs as if I was a lifelong smoker. Simon was at 20:57 and 3<sup>rd</sup> in his AG; Jerry got 23:38 and 4<sup>th</sup> in his AG.

It is absolutely beyond me why anyone would choose to run 5k races. I'll do a 5h+ half-Ironman any day. The problem is that Jerry has decided to do another one—with a goal of sub 22:00 and he wants some company...



*Jerry, Simon and Chris Still Standing After the Race*

## An Interview with Vergil Arbuckle

**"From there to here"**

Interview by Mary Delaney  
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*Vergil, with all of his man-like qualities agrees to an interview with Mary. In case you haven't heard—Vergil lost more than 200 lbs and is now tapering for the IM Championships in Hawaii. He is also frantically chasing M&Ms around the house... This interview was done on October 6, 2006 on the TriCATs Deep Creek weekend.*



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**Reston Town Center**  
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Reston, VA  
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(in Reston Town Center across from McCormick & Schmick)

**TN:** How old are you?

**VA:** 26

**TN:** Did you exercise as a kid?

**VA:** I played baseball and wrestled in HS (9<sup>th</sup> grade in CA)—189 lb weight class. As a freshman in HS I moved to Minnesota and didn't play sports any more. My dad got out of the Navy (14-15 years) and we moved closer to family. I was on the track team (threw shot and disc) never lifted weights—no running.

**TN:** What did you weigh at the end of HS?

**VA:** I graduated HS at 250 lbs. and went to college in ND State— Go Bisons!

Studied architecture in college; definitely no working out. Graduated college after lots of partying, eating at d-hall, drinking 6 nights a week followed by late night pizza- gorging. I tended bar. After work, bartenders head to Denny's for breakfast—constantly eating. I graduated college at more than 395 lbs. I was ashamed. I figured that I couldn't do anything about it.

**TN:** What did you do after college?

**VA:** A little before college, my dad was in the hospital with heart problems. He's my height and not extremely overweight. His arteries were pretty clogged—he almost died. I decided that I had to do something. I took a year off after college to try and get my life back in control. I started by walking around the block with a walkman. I worked up to 2 hrs. I was too big to use machines at gym. After a few months of eating home-cooked food I joined a gym with my mom. We decided to work together to lose weight. When I joined the gym, I weighed in at 340 and 37% body fat. We started working out on the treadmills and ellipticals. I couldn't run yet. I started the South Beach diet (and modified it as we went along.) I was diligent about the diet and exercising 2 hrs a day.

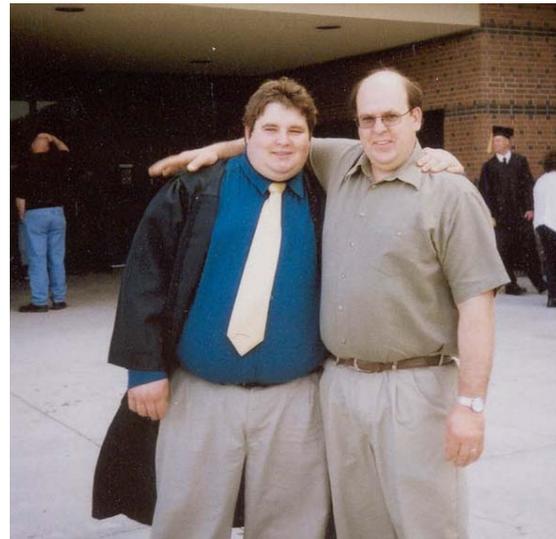
**TN:** Did you start to think this was a good thing?

**VA:** Yes I started to feel good about myself. I was never depressed, but I was the guy that was happy on the outside, shopping at the 'Big and Tall stores'. People would stare and I knew that. I went from a size 52 to a 36. In-between had to buy clothes at thrift stores because it wasn't worth it as I was losing weight so fast.

**TN:** How did you make the leap to triathlon?

**VA:** When I weighed around 270 I decided to look for a job. I got a job in the DC area and got down to 260 when I moved here. My first goal was to join a gym to keep up the momentum. I found a small gym that reminded

me of back home. One of the personal trainers was a triathlon coach (Jason). As I was walking and doing weights, I started to talk to him about triathlon. I saw IM Hawaii on TV and was inspired by the emotion of it all, but never thought that I could do one. Jason said that in a year, he'd get me ready for a triathlon. My first race was Virginia Run Sprint in Centreville. It was awesome! I took 3<sup>rd</sup> place in my age group. I did Bath County—my first open water swim. I had to rent a wetsuit. Then I did another sprint in Culpeper in August. No wetsuit—water was like 84 degrees. I did Reston in September and thought it was awesome. It was a really good race! I went a 2:43 and then ran Marine Corp that same year (2005). It was my first marathon.



*Vergil and Dad Before*

**TN:** You went from that to a marathon?

**VA:** It was a stubborn goal. I did it just to prove that I could do it. I was sore and tired. My mom flew out to see it.

**TN:** So your family is supportive?

**VA:** Very supportive. My dad even ran his first marathon at 50. He started because of me.

**TN:** Does that feel great?

**VA:** Yes. Between my mom, Dad, and myself we've lost 400 lbs.

**TN:** Wow. That's about 3 people.

**TN:** Now you're headed to Kona. How did you get to Kona?

**VA:** My ultimate goal was to do IM in 2008. I spoke with Jason and asked whether I should put my name in for Hawaii lottery.

**TN:** Did you have to write about yourself and why you wanted the lottery slot?

**VA:** Yeah. They ask about your race history and long course history. My ultimate goal was to prove to people (and to myself) that you can do whatever you want if you keep your mind to it.

I forgot that I signed up and on April 15 they announced the winners. I was about to head out for a training ride for Blackwater and checked the website. My name -starting with A—I was one of the first shown! I had to ask someone to read it and make sure. I ran outside and tackled Eric Sorenson! His group just got finished with a training ride (they all think I'm nuts). Then reality set in and my knees got weak. I had to sit down because I thought I was going to pass out. Then I called Jason to tell him that we had a lot of work to do. Then we talked and we decided that I would do Eagleman and figure out later. The next day I called the race organizers to double-check and make sure that it was me!



**Vergil and Dad After**

**TN:** It's probably about as much life-changing as a pregnancy test for a mother

**VA:** Then I had to do Eagleman to get long course credit. No pressure! (Vergil laughs out loud!) I enjoyed the swim even though it was rough. My dad was there and gave me the medal. My dad was standing at the transition when I was getting my bike and yelled "Buddy, you're going to Kona!" Of course no one believed him. Eric asked whether there was anything I needed and I asked Eric to arrange that my dad give me my medal at the finish line.

**TN:** Now that you've qualified for Kona after being overweight and sedentary—what is going through your head?

**VA:** Everything! It's crazy because I went from being a large person to a regular size person in a regular crowd and now I'm associated with athletes at this caliber and now I'm a big person again.



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**TN:** Does your perception of your size override your exceptional abilities?

**VA:** I have to remind myself that I can't compare myself to people who were always athletes or that started even 5 years ago.

**TN:** How does it feel?

**VA:** Awesome.

**TN:** You must be amazingly proud.

**VA:** Yes. Now I can go out and ride 50 even 100 miles without even thinking about. People at work do not understand triathlons. They are "uber-impressed" and are amazed to even know me. They have no idea. I am very proud of what I've done!

**TN:** We're proud of you too!

**VA:** Sometimes I have to step back and look at what I've done. I've been doing this less than two years. I'm happy every time I do a race; every time I wake up.

**VA:** When I'm tired and have a headwind and I'm out there on my bike, I have to remind myself that I am just so amazed to be here. My aunts, uncles, grandparents say they are proud of me. But weren't they proud of me before? It's awkward sometimes. I was the first person in my family to get a college degree.

**TN:** You've done amazing things and you're so young.

**VA:** Yeah. It's been a good trip.

**TN:** The race is October 21. What are you going to do afterward?

**VA:** Enjoy Hawaii. Do some snorkeling. Enjoy life.

**TN:** What's your five-year plan?

**VA:** Next year, I want to concentrate on losing more weight (50 more pounds.) My body is pretty comfortable where it is. I've met with a nutritionist. We're going to have a plan. There is some loose skin that may not go away without surgery.



**TN:** Triathlon plans?

**VA:** Shorter races and have a little fun. I have a new found love as a spectator ☺ Bangers, blowers, and grass skirts (you had to be there). I'd like to concentrate on Olympic distance and run a marathon with my dad. He was thinking about Chicago. I was going to do Twin Cities marathon with him this year, but Hawaii got in the way.

**TN:** What else would TriCATs want to know about you?

**VA:** I want to study and get a professional license in architecture. I went up Mt. Fuji on my 4<sup>th</sup> birthday. I lived in CA for 14 years—born in San Diego.

**TN:** See, you were born in Triathlon Mecca!

**VA:** Moved to Japan for 2 years then CA for 13-14 then Nevada for a year then Minnesota and

college in ND. The only other time that I've been to Hawaii is on an 18 hour lay over on a navy plan. We're all looking forward to going back. We'll be staying away from the hustle-bustle.

**TN:** Tell me something that would surprise all of the TriCATs if they knew this about you?

**VA:** I'm a Venus guy (I like Venus razors.)

**TN:** What is the first thing that you will indulge in after IM?

**VA:** Ice cream! Any other indulgence will require a driver. We'll throw a rager! I'm very happy that I got through all of the training without getting hurt. I take recovery as seriously as my training. I feel very good about the race. I'm feeling confident. There is nothing else for me to do. This is the biggest thing I've ever tried to conquer. My friends have been out there helping me train (well, until recently)...late-season races suck.

**TN:** You've got your eyes on the prize.

**VA:** I can't wait to hear to here "Vergil—you are an Ironman." I really want to walk in the chute and really enjoy it. I went to Lake Placid with Eric (Sorensen) because I was getting bummed about whether I could do it. I went up to Placid and watched the finisher for the last couple of hours—that was motivating for my training. I want to take that emotion with me when I finish my race. I want to be able to see my parents!

**TN:** Savor the amazing feat. Remember that smiling stimulates endorphins!

**VA:** Goal number 1 is to finish. Goal number 2 is to have fun and smile.

*Editor's note: Virgil finished Kona – well done! You can find a story on him at:*

[http://www.ironman.com/events/ironman/world\\_championship/matthew-dale-profiles-vergil-arbuckle-who-lost-almost-200-pounds-getting-ready-for-ironman](http://www.ironman.com/events/ironman/world_championship/matthew-dale-profiles-vergil-arbuckle-who-lost-almost-200-pounds-getting-ready-for-ironman)



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## Tri Tips by Ann A. Robic

### Quasimodo goes Tri?

Loose lips may sink ships, but loose (and straight) shoulders make for more efficient running. No matter what running form you may or may not subscribe to (Chi Running, Pose, Evolution, "this is the way I've always done it", etc.), tense or hunched shoulders interfere with your breathing and rob your legs of some of their fuel. Wild arm swings (or too constrained) cause your upper body to rotate, sucking precious energy that should be used to make you go forward.

One of my clients a few years ago mentioned that during her longer runs she would get sharp pains around her collar bone and shoulders. Watching her run I noticed that she ran with her shoulders hunched forward and scrunched together and her arms went through a long wobbly arc from her side across her body. This also caused her upper body to rotate back and forth with each stride.

I had her work on keeping her shoulders back, which was actually straight but feels like "back" relative to her usual position, and limit the arm swing front-to-back and only slightly across the body. This in turn helped keep her upper body relatively still. The sharp pain vanished immediately and her perceived effort dropped because she could breath better.

Some runners try to keep their arms from moving much. They flex their elbows way past 90 degrees, stick their elbows out and almost lock their arms against their body. This gives them little or no arm swing but adds shoulder and/or upper body rotation instead and uses energy that would be better spent propelling you forward.

Ideally, your shoulders and upper back should be straight but not tense. Your arms should be flexed about 90 degrees but again not tensed. Wrists and hands should be lightly held in place (or allowed to flop a bit). Your arms should swing beside you body, with possibly a little motion across your body - the less crossing motion the better and definitely don't let your hands cross your breast bone. Every so often while running shake your shoulders, arms and hands to loosen them up. You want just enough muscle tension in your upper body to hold good form. Any more and you are wasting energy.

Warning - gross generalization ahead: Generally, faster runners have less of an issue with this as upper body efficiency tends to come hand-in-hand with being able to sustain faster paces. But everyone can benefit from trying to

maintain a "loose but firm" upper body posture and good arm swing.

Ann A. Robic is filling in for Bob Shaver, a USAT Level 1 and USAC Level 2 certified coach. He can be reached at [ShaverMultiSport@cox.net](mailto:ShaverMultiSport@cox.net).



## An Interview With Linda Nesbitt

Interview by Chris Bennett  
[chris@lpcb.org](mailto:chris@lpcb.org)

*Advertisement: I've been using Linda as a massage therapist since she became one of the club sponsors. It has been very helpful and undoubtedly was one of the factors that helped me survive a hard season without major injury. Contact Linda at (703) 201-5194 or [linda13@mindspring.com](mailto:linda13@mindspring.com) - you won't regret it!*

**TN:** How long have you been a massage therapist?

I've been a massage therapist for nine years and have enjoyed every minute of my practice. I treat many athletes and it is not a surprise to me that it came about this way because I too am an athlete.

**TN:** Tell us a bit about yourself. When did you start competing?

I started competing with cycling in my 40's doing cat 4 races and had lots of fun. I only did

it for one and a half seasons, but I ended up doing several races. Some I did well, considering I just went out there. I love cycling and have done other cycling related events. Running and swimming came later. I thought it would be good to learn to swim, as I never did as a child. Boy what a challenge this has been. I did a few duathlons but wasn't crazy about the double running so thought triathlons would be fun.

**TN:** Why should athletes bother with massage? After all, it takes time away from training!

We all know that massage relieves stress, improves circulation, promotes relaxation and the mind-body connection. Why is it so important for athletes? Well, besides relieving muscle soreness from training, regular sports massage helps identify tender areas before they develop into injuries, it stretches and relaxes muscles, frees muscle adhesions and softens scar tissue caused by injuries, improves range of motion, flushes out toxins that cause muscle stiffness and soreness, speeds recovery from exertion ... and it makes you feel great!

**TN:** Who do you typically work with?

I've worked with swimmers, cyclists and runners, as well as geriatric clients. I understand what athletes demand from their bodies and the experience of competition. I enjoy working with clients of all fitness levels and I take pride in helping athletes achieve the best level of performance possible.

**TN:** Tell us about someone who you really helped.

The latest client, who I worked on every week, is a long distance swimmer who was training for the N.Y. marathon swim which is 28 miles. Every week she came for massage and was always so grateful to get on the table. Her shoulders, as you can imagine, were so sore from hours and hours of swimming. It was remarkable to watch and work with her. She completed the swim with plenty of time to spare—I believe it was 8:49.

**TN:** Any advice for triathletes—besides getting regular massages?

My advice to triathletes is to not over-train of course. Even once you stop competing, keep on cross-training. I have found that to be the most wonderful way to stay really fit with much less injuries because with the cross-training you come to know your body so well. Triathletes seem to be very happy individuals.



## How to Perfect Your Riding Position and Technique

**Ed Pavelka**  
[www.RoadBikeRider.com](http://www.RoadBikeRider.com)

Cycling is full of prodigious numbers—the distances ridden, the calories consumed, the tires trashed. Another statistic that can seem astounding is the number of pedal strokes made.

Let's suppose it takes you six hours to ride a century and you pedal at the rate of 90 rpm throughout. As you cross the finish line, you will be making pedal stroke number 64,800.

Whoa, that's a lot! But it barely registers on the scale of what happens during a full season. For example, during the year in which I had my biggest mileage total, I figure that I got there by pushing the pedals around approximately 13,340,000 times.

Can you say, repetitive use injury? You can see why cyclists are good candidates, especially if we aren't pedaling from a nearly perfect position.

Your body and bike must fit together and work together in near-perfect harmony for you to be efficient, comfortable, and injury-free. The more you ride, the more essential this is. If even one thing is out of whack, it's a good bet that it will cause a problem during thousands of pedal strokes.

Fortunately, it isn't difficult to arrive at an excellent riding position. But it does take time and attention. You need to be careful with your initial bike set-up, then conscientiously stay aware of your body and the need for occasional refinements. As time goes by, your position will stabilize and you'll be riding in a smooth groove.

The following guidelines come from my experience and the advice of various experts.

One is Andy Pruitt, Ed.D., the director of Colorado's Boulder Center for Sports Medicine. Andy has probably solved more position problems than anyone during his years of work with elite cyclists.

As you work on your riding position, always remember Pruitt Rule No. 1:

**"Adjust your bike to fit your body. Don't force your body to fit the bike."**

**Frame:** Measure your inseam from crotch to floor with bare feet 6 inches apart, then multiply by 0.68. The answer is a good approximation of your road frame size, measured along the seat tube from the center of the crank axle to the center of the top tube. As a double check, this should produce 4 to 5 inches of exposed seat post when your saddle height is correct. When the crank arms are horizontal, the top tube should be right between your knees when you squeeze them together.

**Arms:** Keep your elbows bent and relaxed to absorb shock and prevent veering when you hit a bump or brush another rider. Hold arms in line with your body, not splayed to the side, to be more compact and aerodynamic.

**Upper Body/Shoulders:** Don't be rigid, but do be fairly still. Imagine the energy wasted by rocking side to side with every pedal stroke on a 25-mile ride. Save it for pedaling. Also, beware of creeping forward on the saddle and hunching your shoulders. There's a tendency to do this when pushing for more speed. Shift to a higher gear and stand periodically to prevent stiffness in your hips and back.

**Head and Neck:** Resist the temptation to put your head down when you're going hard or getting tired. It takes just a second for something dangerous to pop out of nowhere. Occasionally tilt your head to one side and the other instead of holding it dead center. Change your hand location to reposition your upper body and give your neck a new angle.

**Hands:** Prevent finger numbness by moving your hands frequently. Grip the bar firmly enough to keep hands from bouncing off on unexpected bumps, but not so tightly that it tenses your arms. For the same safety reason, keep your thumbs wrapped around the bar instead of resting on top. Move to the drops for descents or high-speed riding, and the brake lever hoods for relaxed cruising. On long climbs, grip the top of the bar to sit upright and open your chest for easier breathing. When standing, hold the lever hoods lightly and sway the bike side to side in synch with your pedal strokes, directly driving each pedal with your body weight.



**Handlebar:** Bar width should equal shoulder width to open your chest for better breathing. A bit too wide is better than too narrow. Make sure the hooks are large enough for your hands. Modified "anatomic" curves may feel more comfortable to your palms. Position the bottom, flat portion of the bar horizontal or pointed slightly down toward the rear brake.

**Brake Levers:** Move them around the curve of the bar to give you the best compromise between holding the hoods and braking when your hands are in the hooks. Most riders do best if the lever tips touch a straightedge extended forward from under the flat, bottom portion of the bar. The levers don't have to be positioned symmetrically—remember Andy Pruitt's rule. If your reach is more comfortable with one lever closer to you than the other, put 'em that way.

**Stem Height:** Start with the top of the stem about one inch below the top of the saddle. This should give you comfortable access to every hand position. As time goes by, think about lowering the stem as much as another inch (not all at once) to improve your aerodynamics. If your lower back or neck starts complaining, or if you notice you've stopped using the drops, go back up. Never put the stem so high that its maximum extension line shows, or it could be snapped off by your weight on the bar.

**Top-tube and Stem Lengths:** Combined, these two dimensions determine "reach." Depending on your anatomy and flexibility, your reach could be longer for better aerodynamics, or it may need to be shorter for back or neck comfort. For most riders, when they're

comfortably seated with their elbows slightly bent and their hands on the lever hoods, the front hub will be obscured by the handlebar.



**Back:** A flat back is the defining mark of a stylish rider. Notice I didn't say a great rider. Anatomy and flexibility have a lot to do with how flat you can get. Lance Armstrong, for instance, has a rounded back that's not picture perfect and yet he still manages to go down the road pretty well. The same was true for John Howard, once America's dominant road racer. I'm in their boat (back-wise, not speed-wise). Once you have the correct reach, work on flattening your back by imagining touching the top tube with your belly button. This helps your hips rotate forward. You don't want to ride this way all of the time, but it'll help you get more aero when you need to.

**Saddle Height:** This is the biggie. You'll find various methods for calculating this critical number. Here's the one I like best. It has become known as the LeMond Method, because Greg brought it to us from his Renault team in the 1980s. (Invite a friend over so you can help each other and both wind up with primo positions.)

Begin by standing on a hard surface with your shoes off and your feet about 6 inches apart. Using a metric tape, measure from the floor to your crotch, pressing with the same force that a saddle does. Multiply this number by 0.883. The result is your saddle height, measured from the

middle of the crank axle, along the seat tube, to the top of the saddle.

Add 2 or 3 mm if you have long feet in proportion to your height. If you suffer from chondromalacia (knee pain caused by damage to the underside of the kneecap), a slightly higher saddle may feel better. However, it should never be so high that your hips must rock to help you reach the pedals. If this formula results in a big change from the height you've been using, make the adjustment by 2 or 3 mm per week, with several rides between, till you reach the new position. Changing too fast could strain something.

**Saddle Tilt:** The saddle should be level, which you can check by laying a yardstick along its length and comparing it to something horizontal like a tabletop or windowsill. A slight downward tilt may be more comfortable, but be careful. More than a degree or two could cause you to continually slide forward, putting pressure on your arms and hands.

**Fore/Aft Saddle Position:** Sit comfortably in the center of the saddle, click into the pedals, and set the crankarms horizontal. Hold a weighted string to the front of your forward kneecap. For most of us, the string should touch the end of the crankarm. This is known as the neutral position. Loosen the seat post clamp so you can slide the saddle to get it right. Seated climbers, time trialists, and some road racers may like the line to fall a centimeter or two behind the end of the crankarm to increase pedaling leverage. On the other hand, track and criterium racers may like a more forward position that breeds leg speed. Remember, if your reach to the handlebar is wrong, use stem length to correct it, not fore/aft saddle position.

**Butt:** By sliding fore or aft on the saddle you can bring some muscles into play while resting others. This is a technique favored by Skip Hamilton, my teammate in the 1996 Race Across America. Moving forward emphasizes the quadriceps muscles on the front of the thighs, while moving back highlights the hamstrings and glutes—the powerful butt muscles.

**Feet:** Some of us walk like pigeons, others like Charlie Chaplin. Your footprints as you leave a swimming pool will tip you off. To make cycling easier on your knees, shoe cleats must put your feet at their natural angle. This is a snap with clipless pedal systems that allow feet to pivot freely ("float") several degrees before release. Then all you need to do is set the cleats' fore/aft position, which is easy. Simply position them so the widest part of each foot is centered on the pedal axle. If you experience discomfort such as tingling, numbness or burning (especially on long rides), move the cleats rearward as much as a centimeter.

**Crankarm Length:** In general, if your inseam is less than 29 inches, use 165-mm crankarms; 29-32 inches, 170 mm; 33-34 inches, 172.5; and more than 34 inches, 175 mm. A crankarm's length is measured from the center of its fixing bolt to the center of the pedal mounting hole. The length is usually stamped on the back of the arm. If you use longer crankarms than recommended, you'll gain leverage for pushing big gears but lose some pedaling speed.

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Only 150 athletes race the SOS each year, which requires qualification by having completed a half IM distance triathlon in 7 hours or less; the run within 2:10, the bike within 4:00 and the swim within :50. Results must be signed by the race director of your Half IM and sent with your race application. Now, if you have survived the application process, you are ready to take on this race.



<b>TriCat Photos</b>
A special thanks to Dan Hicok for the action photos in the newsletter. Check out his site at <a href="http://www.danhicok.com">www.danhicok.com</a> . Look for an interview with Dan in the next newsletter.

The idea of doing this race started at dinner before the Escape from Ft Delaware triathlon a couple of years ago. John Buechler and Al Delaney agreed that they were going to do it...figured it would be a great shirt to have (always a good way to chose a race!) Not to be left out, I agreed that if they could do it, I could do it, too. Then Chas Ryan and Dave Wiesenhahn succumbed to the lure of the race, or were talked into it...no one really knows. Since it is a point-to-point race, and the first leg is a 30 mile bike ride, you have to procure the services of a "bike Sherpa" to collect the bikes at T1. Our Sherpas were Susie and Randy Mouri and their sweet dog, Lucy.

The morning of the race, we all gathered at the Ulster County Fairgrounds, drank our coffee, got body-marked, wondered for the 100th time whose "brilliant idea" this was and lined up on the street to start. It was very informal, a mass start, with lots of goodwill between the racers. The bike course was rolling with a gentle incline until the last 5 miles where it headed up, up, up into the mountains.

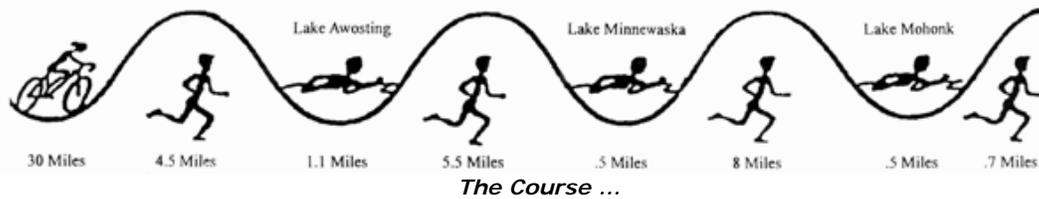
As we summited, the fog burned off and we were greeted with sunshine and the calling of our Sherpas, leading us into T1. Susie and

## Survival of the Shawangunks

**Mary Delaney**  
marytdelaney@cox.net

SOS...just the name conjures up the need for assistance. And why not? Not only is this race one of the most unique triathlons in the world, but arguably one of the toughest.

Located on the northern ridge of the Shawangunk mountain range in southern New York state, this race is point-to-point, traversing 50.8 miles, finishing at the Smiley Memorial Sky Top where there is a view of five states.



Randy had each of our gear carefully laid out, ready to put on. Since they are triathletes, themselves, they knew exactly what we needed... they were the BEST!

This is a race of **self-sufficiency**, as you have to carry with you anything you are going to need for the next 20 miles, 4 runs and 3 swims. In fact, part of the challenge of the race is to devise a system where you do just that. Dave carried only his goggles, swim cap and some gels. During the swim, he stuffed his shoes in the back of his shorts or wore them. Despite the 60 degree (maybe less) water, neither Chas nor Dave wore a wetsuit. Al, Chas and I wore an adventure racer's backpack with a hydration system through the runs and swims. During the swims we put our shoes in a ziplock bag in the pack in hopes of keeping the shoes as dry as possible. Al and I wore shortie wetsuits for the swims, so during the runs, we stuffed that into our packs, as well.

The first run, 4.5 miles, was pretty much uphill the whole way to Lake Awosting, all trail running. Felt good to get off the bike. Dave was not happy with his gearing on the bike and paid some dues on the first run, but recovered nicely. I had no expectations going into this race, and decided that I was going to spend the entire day feeling grateful that I was able to do this race..."run happy" was my mantra. Can't exactly say that I "swam happy" as the water was REALLY cold! Lots of folks without wetsuits had to get out onto some rocks part way through this 1.1 mile swim to warm up. I got out after the first swim right after Al. He was trying to put on his shoe and he was shaking so badly that his shoe flew about 5 feet away! The volunteers with the warm tea saved us! One gal was so cold, that she was pouring the tea on her legs.

Wetsuits off, shoes on and away we went on the 5.5 mile rough trail run overlooking the valley of beautiful Lake Minnewaska. And what a gorgeous run it was. At the summit, each of us stopped to take in the view! It was incredible! There was even an aide station there with water...amazing volunteers!

Arriving at Lake Minnewaska, the volunteers had rigged a line between the buoys so you didn't have to sight. Just swim .5 miles along the line and get the heck out of that cold water! Again,

at the end were pretzels, gel and warm tea...ahh! Stuff the wetsuit, don the shoes and up the stairs to the parking lot and downhill road to the next trail run. I was running like the tin man after a rainstorm. My knees would not bend. I thought, "If I can't get these legs loosened up, this is going to be the longest 8 mile run of my life!" Gradually, my quads warmed up and the knees began to work. This heavily forested trail run wound along a beautiful stream with waterfalls and bridges.

As I passed another aide station, a guy said, "You better catch up with Al, he has fallen and is all bloody. You need to make him stop racing!" I was confused. How did he know Al's name and that he was my husband? Why was Al bleeding? And, if this guy thought I could "make" Al do anything, he was really crazy! At the entrance to the last swim, I caught up with Al. He had fallen on a particularly rough section of trail, face down on the rocks and apparently was knocked out. His sunglasses may have saved an eye and were pretty well trashed. He was really in a bad mood, reminding me of a porcupine. Yes, he was quite bloody! But, he was definitely going to finish and fortunately the cold water cleaned him up pretty well. I didn't even bother to take my shoes off for this last .5 mile swim. I could see that I had blistered and worried that I might not be able to get them back on for the last run.

Meanwhile, Dave and Chas were having great races, didn't seem to mind swimming without wetsuits...does the phrase "no brain, no pain" apply here? Dave said that he got stronger and stronger as the race went on. He had done a lot of run training for this and it served him well. In fact, he and Chas ran neck and neck all day, finishing together.

To train for this race, I devised a brick where I would swim across the reservoir, run for an hour, swim  $\frac{1}{2}$  way across the reservoir and back, run another hour and then swim back across to the other side of the reservoir. Now, there is a good workout for you!

Al and I got out of that last swim together. He sat down to get his breath, but I was ready for this race to be over! I left my wetsuit on for that .7 mile run which was a sprint-climb to the finish (260'). Now we could hear the announcer at the finish line and there was a steady stream

Welcome To Our New TriCat Members		
Jody Bennett	Marj Hatzmann	Mark Mullen
Tom Cariota	Joanne Hopkins	Greg Safko
Ken DelRaso	Alisa Key	Pamela Sarzen
Andrea Emshoff	Schroeder Libby	Louis Smith
PJ Hambrick	Joan Mountain	Joanna Valdes

of finishers making their way, gingerly, down the steps that we were trudging up. "Way to go, you are almost there, you've got it!" Lots of encouragement coming our way and lots of bewildered looks from tourists who were just there for the view!

The finish line!! We did it! We are "Survivors!" Chas and Dave finished over an hour ahead of us, so they were cheering, as well! Sherpa Susie had to stay in the car with Lucy, as the Mohonk Lodge was not pet friendly, but Sherpa Randy photographed our final run up the hill (and I use the term "run" loosely.)

course, firefighter and police awards and other special honors.

I was ready to leave, as the wind was blowing and I was getting cold. Al said, "I think you might want to stay to get your award." Could not believe it...I won my AG!

This was a most amazing race; incredibly challenging and very beautiful. Would I do it again? Yes, I would. I think I could "survive" it again! But, next time, I would like to survive it for a shorter period of time!

If you are interested in racing, the website is [www.ulster.net/~sosnyta/](http://www.ulster.net/~sosnyta/).



The post-SOS feast was fantastic! It was catered by a local restaurant and the food was delicious! There was SO much food: barbeque, salads, breads, fruit, desserts, ice cream bar, beer, soda...you name it! It was there. YUM!

Shortly after the food was the award ceremony. The winning male ran 4:21 and the winning female was 4:58. WOW! They gave awards for being the fastest over various parts of the



## The Day I Used My Face As a Brake Pad

Ltjg. Michael Paulus

*Reprinted With Permission from Sea&Shore, Summer 2006*

I was less than two miles into my regular Saturday morning bicycle ride, doing my best Lance Armstrong impersonation. We just had finished warming up and were starting to pick up the pace. I got in the pace line, drafting about 8 to 12 inches behind the cyclist in front of me. I looked down at my bike computer, marveling at how effortless it felt to be riding at the brisk 22-mph pace that we were holding. It was going to be a beautiful day, with the birds chirping and

not a cloud in the sky-that was before someone called out, "Branch!"

The problem with that warning was that it came after I had watched my front tire run over the branch from a vantage point about three feet above and two feet ahead of my front tire. A slightly altered quote from an Adam Sandler movie ran through my head: "Perhaps that's something you could have told me 10 seconds ago!" Because I was so close to the rider in front of me, I never saw the branch and didn't have a chance to maneuver around it.



The force of the collision vaulted me over my handlebars, and I hit the ground helmet-first on the left side of my head and on my left collarbone. The impact forced my helmet to the right side of my head, thus allowing me to continue sliding down the street on the left side of my face at more than 20 mph. Because we were riding so close to one another, the cyclist behind me ran over my head, further grinding my face into the road. The cyclist behind her ran over the inside of my left knee, grinding it down almost to the kneecap.

I was thankful at least the ambulance driver was nice enough not to run over me. I ended up with a three-quarter-inch gap between the broken ends of my collarbone, a few broken ribs, stitches in my left ear (where part of it almost was ripped off), virtually no skin on my left kneecap, and a severe case of road rash up and down the left side of my body.

Looking back, I did a few things right, but there were several things I could have done better. The best thing I did was to wear my helmet; it undoubtedly saved my life. Without it, I probably would have had a crushed skull, either from the initial impact or from getting run over. Despite the seriousness of the mishap, I didn't receive a concussion, suffer any memory loss, or have any other head injury besides abrasions. The part of the helmet that protects my left ear was broken off.

One thing I could have done to reduce my injuries was to adjust my helmet better. After the wreck, I realized I didn't have it on tight enough. The helmet was buckled, but the impact moved it to the side of my face. If I had had the nape strap adjusted tighter, the helmet most likely would have stayed in place, and my face would have been spared the abuse it received.

For the most part, cycling is a relatively safe activity, as long as you take proper precautions. It can be unforgiving, however, if you make a mistake and are in an accident. Drafting behind another cyclist is a part of the sport and one that certainly adds risk. If you're going to draft, you must stay alert and aware of your surroundings, or be prepared for the consequences of not paying attention.

Now that I've recovered from my accident, I'm riding more than ever, but I also am more vigilant. I always know what lies ahead of me, especially when I'm in a pace line. I check out my helmet's adjustment before every ride. Wearing the right safety gear saved my life, and it might save yours, too.

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## Triathlon Newbie: An Interview with Joanne Nickerson

Interview by Chris Bennett  
chris@lpcb.org

*Although Joanne isn't a member of TriCATs (yet!), I prevailed on her to share her experience of how she started triathlons. As a non-swimmer, she faced different challenges from many of us ... especially when the weather turned bad during her first tri and the swim was a nightmare...*

**TN:** What was it about triathlons that drew you to the sport?

**JN:** I was drawn to tri because I believed in the cross-training it imposed. I had been running for fitness for a few years, but never competitively. I wasn't bad. I could set the alarm for 4:30 and whip off a 10K by 6:00.

About 2-3 years ago, I took up cycling as a weekend cross-training activity and really liked the freedom of getting out by myself. Biking allows me to be nosy, scoping out ritzy Potomac neighborhoods with the innocence of the biker passing through. Biking also got me outside more, which boosted my mood and overall sense of well-being.

I did not know how to swim at all, but my daughter swam competitively on the neighborhood team and she loved it. I thought if I learned how to swim, it would be something we could do together.

So there I was: I could run OK, bike decently. All I had to do was learn to swim and I'd be ready to go ... at age 42.

**TN:** Having made the plunge, how did you go about training?

**JN:** I purchased three books on tri training and made myself a schedule to make sure I trained in all three sports three times a week (plus core and weight training which I had been doing for several years anyway).

I started swimming with the YMCA's Adult Beginner class in September 2005, learning to blow bubbles, then progressing to swimming across the pool, and eventually making a whole 25 yards in just a couple months. I practiced my Sunday swimming lessons 2-3 other days a week at the municipal pool in Rockville while my daughter participated in "Junior II" swim practices.

In November 2005, I signed up to participate in the St. Anthony's triathlon with the Leukemia Society's TNT program and trained with them. I watched a few of the big tris (St. Croix, Wisconsin, Coeur d'Alene) on OLN to get a sense of how the races were conducted.

**TN:** What did you like and dislike about the TNT training?

**JN:** I really liked meeting new people with the same goals: finish a tri and raise money to fight blood cancer. I loved having a daily plan to follow: no more thinking and planning about what to do on what day. Just follow the plan. I did great on the bike/run trainings on Saturday mornings. TNT also had clinics on injury prevention, bike maintenance and one on running at Potomac River Running in Burke – Shapiro HQ. Those were very useful and fun.

What didn't I like? I dreaded the Tuesday morning, 5:30 swim practices at the Lab School. I was terribly intimidated (OK, scared out of my wits). Some of my teammates had been swimming for years and years, not weeks like me. But the swim coaches were really patient and helpful, so I hauled myself in every week

after week, missing only one practice due to an arm injury. A few of the longer bike rides in the dead of winter were less than wonderful. I did one 2+ hour brick completely by myself after I got lost on the way to the Ashburn start on the W&OD. It was about 40 degrees that day. The feet didn't want to run after the 2 hour ride.

**TN:** Tell us about your first race. I understand that it didn't go as planned ...

**JN:** To say the least. St. Anthony's was my first tri. The day we got to Florida the weather was beautiful and calm and I swam out into the bay and bobbed around with my teammates. The water was so warm and nice, and the Florida sun felt really good.

Then the next day the wind whipped up with a vengeance, and continued to race start at 7:00. By the time my wave went off at 9:00, the wind was absolutely howling, turning Tampa Bay's normally calm water into ominous 5-foot high breakers. I swam out a little ways, but had to be pulled out by the race officials, who themselves were having great difficulty keeping afloat in their kayaks. (Some 50-60 athletes did not complete the swim that day.) When they got me back to the beach, I was not 100% conscious.

I spent the rest of the morning in the med tent getting back to normal. My body temperature had plummeted to 94 degrees with my wet suit on! Becky Lavelle, who won for the ladies, told Margie Shapiro, also racing that day, that that was the worst swim she ever did. Imagine me, a novice swimmer, fighting those waves!

**TN:** After an experience like that, how did you manage to pick yourself up and do another race?

**JN:** I was down but not defeated. I got back from Florida on a Monday afternoon, and went straight to my home practice pool to prove to myself that I could still get in the water and swim. After all that training, I just had to finish at least one race. Heck, I was in the best shape of my life at the end of last April. I couldn't let it go to waste. I also got a lot of support from my husband and from Chris [*your trusty TriCATs NL editor!*] and others at work who had donated to TNT. Margie Shapiro even took the time to write me a note which was I really appreciated. I felt like I had unfinished business to attend to: complete a tri.

**TN:** Was your second race better?

**JN:** Well, I finished it in 3:14, so yes, by definition, it was better. My second race was the Montclair Tri (Olympic distance) on June 30. The swim was in a very calm lake, and although I still felt panicky in open water, I took my time and finished the mile swim. The bike was easy:

4 loops of a six mile course. The run started with an interesting muddy, sloppy X-terra type climb in some woods, and was hilly generally, but I passed at least four of my fellow TNTers on the run, so I got revenge! I wore my TNT singlet and my TNT coaches and several teammates were there at the end to congratulate me, so I was all smiles.

**TN:** So what does the future hold for you in the sport?

**JN:** Since Montclair, I also did Irongirl Columbia in late August. I liked that race so I signed up for the real Columbia tri this coming year. I really like the cross-training aspect of the sport, and I've come so far on swimming and spent so much money on bike gear, I am just compelled to keep going. Tri is a great way to make and keep friends with the same life-long goals of staying active and fit.

Final note: Anyone considering tri should definitely consider signing up with TNT. You really do get all the support necessary: great coaches, training plans, workshops, group workouts. Just hope the weather cooperates on race day.

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## Hooked on Triathlons

Liz Sidoti  
sidoti99@hotmail.com



*Liz Sidoti is a journalist in Washington, D.C., a lifelong athlete, and a TNT team captain.*

I can't remember a time when I wasn't active. As a kid, I biked to the corner store for candy or played tag in the neighborhood or splashed in backyard pools. Basketball, volleyball and track defined high school. I was a gym rat in college. And, I explored the limitless world of outdoor recreation in my first few post-graduate years.

Then, I hit a wall.

Turns out, I needed a reason bigger than myself to keep moving. I found that - and so much more - in Team In Training, a fundraising program for The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

A friend had been involved for years, participating in more than a dozen marathons, triathlons and century rides - and raising tens of thousands of dollars for cancer research along the way. I always donated to the cause, \$25 the first year, \$50 the next, and so on.

Once, I traveled with her as she competed in the Chicago Olympic distance triathlon. I was moved by the camaraderie of those athletes and supporters in purple shirts. I was amazed at the different skill levels, everyone from Ironmen to first-timers competing alongside one another, willing each other to complete the feat. And, I was humbled by the finish line where cancer survivors greeted the TNT athletes competing on their behalf. Getting choked up at the sight, I discovered I wanted to be a part of it and promptly signed up for my first event when I returned home.

My mission, to raise at least \$3,500 and get in shape enough to ride a century ride around Lake Tahoe. At that time, it was a daunting goal. I hadn't done any serious riding before - I didn't even own a bike - and the last time I did any sort of fundraising was selling cookies for Girl Scouts in elementary school! No worries, responded TNT alumni who were with me and my apprehensive novice teammates every step of the way. They guided all of us to success, walking us through the most effective fundraising strategies and the best training techniques.

It was an incredible experience capped by a thoroughly fulfilling event weekend. Not only had we, as a team, raised tens of thousands for cancer research, but we also had dared our bodies to go to the limit and we had a ton of fun making lasting friendships along the way.

I was hooked.

Then, a career development took me to a new city, Washington, D.C., and the intensity of my work required a hiatus from TNT. I promised myself I would get involved with TNT's local chapter as soon as I could.

A long two years later, I committed to raising \$2,400 and signed up for an Olympic distance triathlon even though I hadn't swum in a lane since high school gym class, even though I suffered from frequent bouts of IT band syndrome, and even though the only biking I had done in those years was on a fluid trainer in front of my TV.

Having been through the program before, I was confident the fundraising would come easily. It did. And, once again, I was floored at the generosity of people. Many, I learned, have money to give - they just need to be asked.

This time, it was the training I was worried about. But, again, my coaches, captains and

teammates, now friends, were there for me at every turn.

We fought through fatigue together. We celebrated together. We reminded one another of what's at stake. We focused on the mission. And, we bonded through it all, corny as it sounds.

All that took my endurance-event experience to an entirely different level. Before TNT, we were simply athletes. With TNT, we became athletes with a life-and-death mission.

One morning this summer, I struggled to get out of bed for a 5:30 a.m. workout. Then I got a call that reminded me of the mission and made my challenge even more personal. A friend of my family's, 7-year-old Zachary, had just been diagnosed with leukemia and the outlook was not good.

Zachary, the doctor said, was dying. He urgently needed a bone marrow transplant and, so far, the hunt for a match had been fruitless.

I crawled out of bed, grabbed my suit and headed for the pool. With each stroke, I saw my purple TNT bracelet under water Train, Endure, Achieve, Matter, it says. Then and now, it serves as a constant reminder of my goal, reaching the finish line, and Zachary's own challenge, beating cancer.

That night, I committed to another season with TNT. And, a few months later, another.

This time, I'm upping the ante - my first half Ironman in May and a \$4,400 fundraising goal. I do what I do because I can. Zachary can't. I train so he and others like him may have a chance to live. I needed a reason bigger than myself. I found it in TNT.

*If you are interested to learn more about TNT visit: [www.teamintraining.org/nca](http://www.teamintraining.org/nca) or phone 703-960-1100. They are currently recruiting for the following events:*

- St. Anthony's Triathlon*
- Gulf Coast Triathlon (half Iron distance)*
- Capital of Texas Triathlon*
- Escape from Fort Delaware Triathlon*



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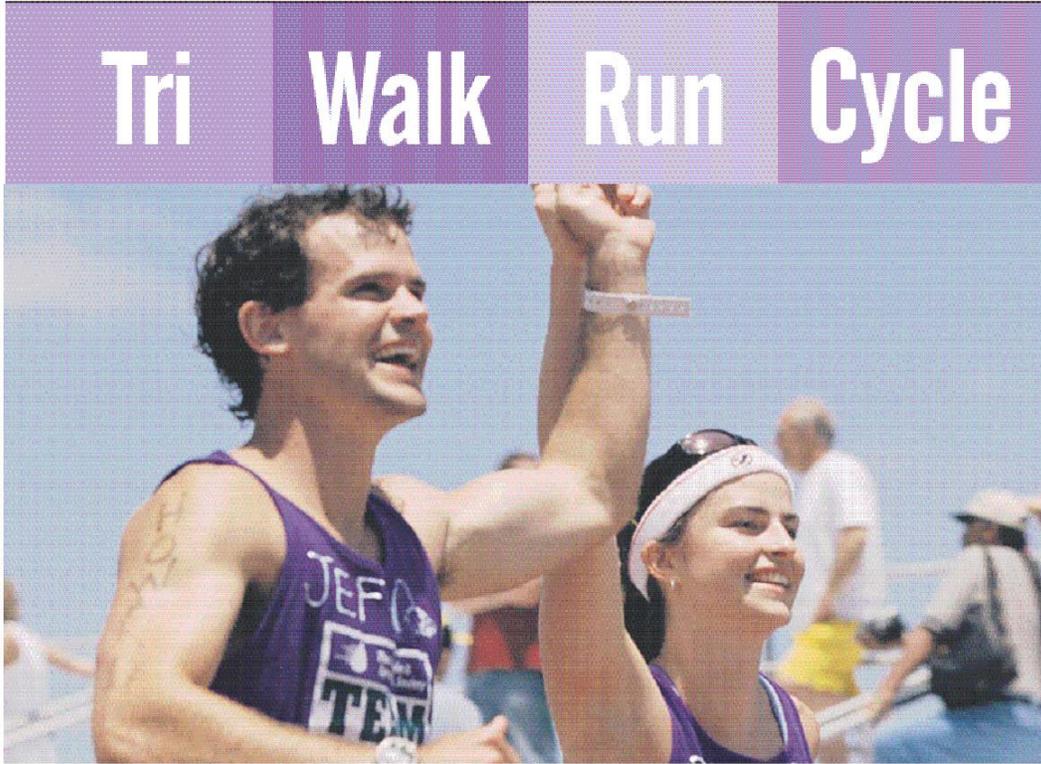
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## Race Schedule

Brian Kennedy  
brian\_j\_k@yahoo.com

Race length	Name	Location	web site
<b>April</b>			
10 mile RUN	Cherry Blossom 10 miler	DC	<a href="http://www.cherryblossom.org">www.cherryblossom.org</a>
Sprint	Angels Race Sprint	Lynchburg, VA	<a href="http://www.set-upinc.com">www.set-upinc.com</a>
½ Iron	Kinetic Half	Spotsylvania, VA (Lake Anna)	<a href="http://www.set-upinc.com">www.set-upinc.com</a>
Sprint	Kinetic Sprint	Spotsylvania, VA (Lake Anna)	<a href="http://www.set-upinc.com">www.set-upinc.com</a>
<b>May</b>			
Sprint	Smith Mountain Lake	Huddleston, VA	<a href="http://www.set-upinc.com">www.set-upinc.com</a>
½ Iron	White Lake Triathlon	White Lake, NC	<a href="http://www.set-upinc.com">www.set-upinc.com</a>
Sprint	White Lake Triathlon	White Lake, NC	<a href="http://www.set-upinc.com">www.set-upinc.com</a>
½ Iron/Sprint	NJ Devilman	Millville, NJ	<a href="http://www.piranha-sports.com">www.piranha-sports.com</a>
Oly/Sprint	Luray International Triathlon	Luray, VA	<a href="http://www.set-upinc.com">www.set-upinc.com</a>
Sprint	Ocean City Triathlon	Ocean City, NJ	<a href="http://www.lmsports.com">www.lmsports.com</a>
½ Iron	Odyssey Off-Road Nissan Xterra	Sherando Lake, VA	<a href="http://www.oarevents.com">www.oarevents.com</a>
Oly	Columbia	Columbia, MD	<a href="http://www.tricolumbia.org">www.tricolumbia.org</a>
2 Mile SWIM	Reston Lake Swim	Reston, VA	<a href="http://www.restonmasters.org/2miow.html">http://www.restonmasters.org/2miow.html</a>
<b>June</b>			
Sprint	Breezy Point Tri	Norfolk, VA	<a href="http://www.breezypointtri.com">www.breezypointtri.com</a>
Swim	Chesapeake Bay Swim	Stevensville, MD	<a href="http://www.lin-mark.com">www.lin-mark.com</a>
½ Iron	Eagleman	Cambridge, MD	<a href="http://www.tricolumbia.org">www.tricolumbia.org</a>
Oly	Escape from Ft. Delaware	Delaware City, DE	<a href="http://www.lin-mark.com">www.lin-mark.com</a>
Sprint	Marathon Sports Tri	Middletown, DE	<a href="http://www.lmsports.com">www.lmsports.com</a>
Sprint	Charlottesville Sprint	Charlottesville, VA	<a href="http://www.cvilletriathlete.com">www.cvilletriathlete.com</a>
Oly (0.5 sw) & ½ Iron	Tinman Triathlon	Tupper Lake, NY	<a href="http://www.tupperlakeinfo.com/tinman/">www.tupperlakeinfo.com/tinman/</a>
Sprint	Bath County	Warm Springs, VA	<a href="http://www.set-upinc.com">www.set-upinc.com</a>
Oly & ½ Iron	MedExpress Mountaineer	WEST VIRGINIA !	<a href="http://www.mountaineertri.com/index.php">www.mountaineertri.com/index.php</a>
Iron	Ironman Coer D'Alene	Core D'Alene, ID	<a href="http://www.ironmanidaho.com">www.ironmanidaho.com</a>
Sprint	Virginia Run Sprint Triathlon	Manassas, VA	<a href="http://www.finswheelsfeet.com/">www.finswheelsfeet.com/</a>
Oly	Philly Triathlon	Philadelphia, PA	<a href="http://www.lin-mark.com">www.lin-mark.com</a>
<b>July</b>			
Oly	Xterra East Championship	Richmond, VA	<a href="http://www.xterraplanet.com">www.xterraplanet.com</a>
Oly	Diamond in the Rough	Perryville, MD	<a href="http://www.piranha-sports.com">www.piranha-sports.com</a>
Oly	New York City Tri	New York NY	<a href="http://www.nyctri.com">www.nyctri.com</a>
Oly	EMS Off-Road Tri	Cumberland, MD	<a href="http://www.ex2adventures.com/">www.ex2adventures.com/</a>
Sprint & Oly	New Jersey State Triathlon	Princeton, NJ	<a href="http://www.lin-mark.com">www.lin-mark.com</a>
Sprint	3Sports Triathlon	Richmond, VA	<a href="http://www.set-upinc.com">www.set-upinc.com</a>
Iron	Ironman USA	Lake Placid, NY	<a href="http://www.ironmanusa.com">www.ironmanusa.com</a>
Sprint	Staten Island Tri	Staten Island, NY	<a href="http://www.lin-mark.com">www.lin-mark.com</a>

## On the Web: Sites of Interest to TriCATs

<a href="http://www.analyticcycling.com">http://www.analyticcycling.com</a>	Technical methods for evaluating and estimating cycling performance
<a href="http://www.virturace.com">http://www.virturace.com</a>	Check the results for competitors in a variety of different races
<a href="http://www.washrun.org/dcroutes/dcroutes.html">http://www.washrun.org/dcroutes/dcroutes.html</a>	Running routes in and around D.C. area
<a href="http://bikewashington.org/">http://bikewashington.org/</a>	Information on recreational cycling around the D.C. area

Please send your favorite web sites to: [editor@tricats.org](mailto:editor@tricats.org)

## Gadgets and Gifts

	<p><b>What:</b> Tri-gear Bag</p> <p><b>Title:</b> Zipp Gear Bag</p> <p><b>Cost:</b> \$125 from tri stores or <a href="http://www.zipp.com">www.zipp.com</a></p> <p><b>Why:</b> Designed for triathletes, can carry a helmet, four bottles and two pairs of shoes with a vented bottom wetsuit compartment. Includes pockets for ID and keys—even a transition towel.</p>
	<p><b>What:</b> Muscle Revitalizer</p> <p><b>Title:</b> Kool 'N Fit Sport</p> <p><b>Cost:</b> \$20 from <a href="http://www.koolnfitsport.com">www.koolnfitsport.com</a></p> <p><b>Why:</b> External muscle spray for better warm-up, increased endurance, and faster recovery. It is liquid, non-staining and easy to use. Leaves no messy residue and has a refreshing aroma-therapy scent.</p>
	<p><b>What:</b> Handlebar Extender</p> <p><b>Title:</b> Topeak BarXtender</p> <p><b>Cost:</b> <a href="http://www.topeak.com">www.topeak.com</a></p> <p><b>Why:</b> Attaches to handlebars or bar stems to find the perfect position for computers or other gadgets.</p>

## TriCATs Sponsor Directory

Sponsor	TriCATs Member Benefits
<b>Potomac River Running</b> 5715 Burke Centre Parkway Burke, VA 22015 (703)-978-0500 20630 Ashburn Rd. Ashburn, VA 20147 (703) 729-0133 <a href="http://www.potomacriverrunning.com">www.potomacriverrunning.com</a>	10% discount off everything in the store; free PRR Dri-Release T- shirt with shoe purchase (1 per customer); free video gait analysis; discounted training programs including in-person, coached track workouts.  <i>Watch the TriCATs listserv emails for additional promotions and discounts.</i>
<b>Principle Fitness</b> 925 Rogers Drive Falls Church, VA 22042 (571) 278-4581 <a href="http://www.principlefitness.com">www.principlefitness.com</a> <a href="mailto:eric@principlefitness.com">eric@principlefitness.com</a>	Discounts on all group training programs; \$50 off the start-up fee of any coaching program from any Principle Fitness coach.  <i>A good coach needs to know not only "how", but more importantly "why" the athlete is training.</i>
<b>Big Wheel Bikes</b> 3119 Lee Highway Arlington, VA (703) 522-1110 <a href="http://www.bigwheelbikes.com">www.bigwheelbikes.com</a>	5% discount on bikes; 10-20% off on accessories for all regularly stocked items; free bike fitting; priority repair service and special order service.  (Discounts will be honored at all four locations, but for repair and special order services, please visit the Arlington store.)
<b>Positively Chiropractic and Dynamic Kinesiology</b> 5105A Backlick Road Annandale, VA 22003 (703) 642-8685 <a href="http://www.posichiro.com">www.posichiro.com</a>	Complimentary Sports Injury Prevention Examination; 10% off Running-Specific Orthotics.  <i>Always Moving Forward</i>
<b>Old Town Massage Center</b> 312 South Washington Street, 3C Alexandria, VA 22314 (703) 518-8484 <a href="mailto:OTMCMassage@aol.com">OTMCMassage@aol.com</a> <a href="http://www.oldtownmassagecenter.com">www.oldtownmassagecenter.com</a>	\$10.00 off any massage of 60 minutes or longer (includes the purchase of gift certificates). Appointments are best booked in advance, especially for evening appointments.  <i>Your Partner in Performance</i>
<b>L.T. Therapy, Inc.</b> Circle Towers Office Building 9401 Lee Highway, Suite 102 Fairfax, VA 22042 (703) 309-7624	10% off the hour massage price  <i>Activating stabilized movement patterns through therapeutic exercise and massage</i>
<b>Transitions Therapeutic Massage &amp; Bodywork</b> Circle Towers Office Building 9401 Lee Highway, Suite 102 Fairfax, VA 22042 (703) 385-4785 <a href="http://www.transitionsmassage.com">www.transitionsmassage.com</a> <a href="mailto:barb@transtionsmassage.com">barb@transtionsmassage.com</a>	10% off each therapeutic massage session with TriCATs ID card  (Please be aware that you will need to schedule in advance as I am often booked out 2-6 weeks depending on the time of year.)  <i>Geared toward injury prevention, rehabilitation and recovery of the endurance athlete and chronic pain client</i>
<b>Linda Nesbitt Sports Massage</b> 5555 Columbia Pike, #207 Arlington VA 22204 (703) 201-5194 <a href="mailto:linda13@mindspring.com">linda13@mindspring.com</a>	<i>A triathlete who understands the sportsman's body.</i>  \$70 for a one hour massage

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