

Season's Greetings to the TriCATs and your families. With our race seasons over, we are now either resting (if you followed Mary and Al Delaney's advice at the last club meeting), or starting to work on our base for next year. For me, that means practicing swimming which is my weakest discipline. When I swim I feel as though I am pushing my way through glue. I was therefore intrigued to learn of an experiment where somebody tested what was the effect of swimming through syrup on performance. They took 300 kilograms of guar gum, a thickening agent found in salad dressing, and dumped it into a 25-meter swimming pool resulting in a 'goo' twice as thick as water. Volunteers swam laps in the goo. The results? "swimmers didn't go any faster in water than in the goo ... while the goo generates more drag on your body, it also lets you generate more force with each push and kick." Blast. There goes my excuse for bad swimming. Back to practicing my stroke this winter ...

Chris Bennett



Season's Greetings from a Real TriCAT

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Capital Area Triathlon Club

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Mark Your Calendars: **December 28:** Nations Triathlon registration opens at 9 a.m.



President's Corner

Jenn Brown
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As we bring 2007 to a close, I am honored to have served as TriCATs' President for the past year. My involvement on the club's board for the last 3.5 years has been both rewarding and positive but not nearly as much so as the people I've met and friends I've made over the last few years.

We all know how time consuming and selfish our sport can be and we are truly lucky to have like-minded individuals that not only share our common interest in triathlon, but share our lifestyles and passion for wellness. Training partners, motivators, teammates, encouragers, cheerleaders and friendly competitors; I hope all of you have found at least one of these in another member of our club, and hope that you continue to do so.

TriCATs provides an open forum and common ground for local triathletes to use in order to find both resources and support in a sport that can otherwise be a bit esoteric. It is a club who's membership is not determined by how fast you can ride your bike, how many laps you can do in the pool, or what your average mile per minute is on the track. We have so many resources among our couple-hundred members which is a huge benefit to being part of this club. It's just up to each of us to reach out and avail ourselves of these resources!

As 2007 ends, I am also resigning as President for the second half of my term. My hope for the club is that the 2008 Board can provide the new insight, more ideas and fresh enthusiasm that I'm confident it can. I'm truly thankful for the opportunity to have served as President and look forward to continuing my involvement in the club as a member. And because I know I may not always be fortunate to participate in triathlon, I'm further thankful to those friends within the club who have provided my support, motivation and teamwork in and outside of the sport.

Best of luck in 2008 and I look forward to seeing many of you out on the trails.

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The Reason for Bike Crashes

From: www.RoadBikeRider.com

Bob Mionske is a two-time U.S. Olympic cycling team member (4th in the 1988 road race) who now specializes in bicycle law in Portland, Oregon. He writes the "Legally Speaking" column for velonews.com, has a book called "Bicycling and the Law," and runs a website at <http://www.bicyclelaw.com>. In short, he's an expert on cyclists' rights and how laws affect them.

His legal work also makes Mionske, 45, savvy about crashes. According to his research, there are about 500,000 cycling accidents each year that result in an emergency room visit. Here's how they happen (numbers are rounded):

- 59% involve no object or other person
- 14% involve a fixed object
- 11% involve a moving motor vehicle
- 9% involve another bicycle
- 3% involve an animal
- 3% involve a pedestrian
- 1% involve a stationary motor vehicle
- 1% other

Considering only accidents involving a moving motor vehicle (11%), here's where they happen:

- 45% in an intersection
- 25% entering a roadway
- 14% riding with flow of traffic
- 8% riding against traffic
- 9% other

The lessons are obvious: Never stop working on your bike-handling skills, and be extra cautious where there can be cross traffic -- in intersections or when riding onto busier roads.

Who in the World is Julie Oplinger?



TNL: You just did the 8-mile Lake Champlain swim. How did you get interested in long distance swimming? What other swims have you done?

JO: I've always been intrigued by open water swimming. In 1990, at age 13, I was swimming for the Rockville Montgomery Swim Club in Montgomery County, MD. Our coaches had us sign up for the 4.4 mile Chesapeake Bay Swim. I found out years later that my mother was really nervous about it, but never wanted to hold me back from doing something I wanted to do. That year I completed my first Bay Swim in 2 hours and 3 minutes. I didn't do any open water swimming (except for a short while training in Puerto Rico during winter training in college) until after I graduated from college, but since then have done the Bay Swim a few more times, the Jim McDonnell swim, Lake Montclair swim, Chris Green Swim, and most recently the



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10K USMS National Championships in Huntington, NY and Lake Champlain 8-mile swim from New York to Vermont.

TNL: What are your long-range goals for the distance swimming?

JO: I just want to find out how good I can be at the longer distances and I want to keep challenging myself to swim as far as I can in open water. I really like the 10K distance, but also want to see what it's like to do a swim longer than that.

Next year I'll likely do the Bay Swim again, and for the first time I'll try it without a wetsuit since after the 10K and 8-miler I am so much more comfortable with the longer distances without the extra help that the wetsuit gives you. I'm also going to continue to do some swim meets and will be attending the short course Nationals in Austin, TX next May. In the pool I've always been a backstroker and have been swimming those events really well this year.



TNL: What is it about the marathon swimming that you like?

JO: It's really nice to be able to settle into a pace and zone out. At pool meets there is so much to think about with regards to pacing, flip turns, etc. Also, even though I was a sprinter growing up and specialized in the 100 back, I find that the 50 & 100s hurt way too much. I still swim in meets, and am getting closer and

closer to my times from when I was a kid. It's going to be a great day when I beat one of my childhood best times in a 100 or 200 backstroke! Also, I really enjoy the open water swimming format where wetsuits aren't allowed. I much prefer swimming without a wetsuit simply because of how good the water feels as you glide through it!



You are also a triathlete, so have you had to do less of that to be able to train more for the swimming?

Last year I tried to be good at both open water swimming and triathlon. I had a fairly good year for both sports, but I wasn't focused on the long swimming races like I am this year. I have spent most of this year focused only on swimming. As of today I have swum over 300 miles since January 1st. My biking and running are way behind though. I have completed two sprint distance triathlons this year but wasn't as prepared on the bike and run as I have been in previous years.

I haven't done an Ironman since 2004 but definitely see one in my future. I've always wanted to do Vineman in California and I will also go back to Lake Placid someday.

TNL: What do you do when you are not training?

JO: I am a National Manager for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Team In Training (TNT) program. Outside of work, I am a volunteer swim coach for my high school, Good Counsel, in

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Maryland and the also for the Fairfax County Masters. I also have a 2 year old Collie, Tucker, who likes to go on long walks and play fetch. I adopted him from Good Dog! Rescue and continue to volunteer at their adoption events and fostering dogs that need a place to stay.



TNL: How do you balance your life with your work and your training and your social life?

JO: Most of my friends are swimmers or triathletes so I don't really get asked too often if I'm crazy. My friends and I have been going to Silverado every Thursday night after swim practice to catch up with each other for over 8 years.

My boyfriend Jeff is also a swimmer, so we really understand each other on that competitive swimming level. He has done more Bay Swims and 10K swims than I have so it's nice to be able to learn from his experiences. Earlier this summer while we were swimming in an outdoor pool in Maryland, we jumped in the adjacent Lazy River after practice and swam backwards, against the current while dodging the oncoming inner tubes. It was so much fun and a hard workout- perfect training for open water! We have been participating in swim meets and open water races together this year and have had a lot of fun!

I travel quite a bit for work, which is nice because it gives me the opportunity to swim with masters teams all over the country. I've also gotten a lot of practice in open water as a result of the travel. This past May my work travel took me to Hawaii, Austin, and California twice. I had the chance to train in open water in all of these places. When I can't find open water, I often try to find a local masters team to swim with. I've met many really nice swimmers as a result.

TNL: When did you start competing in triathlon? Why? Were you a swimmer before that?

JO: I started competing in triathlon in 1997 when I was a junior in college. One of my friends wanted to do the Danskin Triathlon in Baltimore and about three weeks before the race I signed up. I hadn't been on a bike in years and the only running I had done was during pre-season training in college. I certainly wasn't good at either of those sports. The day after that race I bought a road bike and signed up for an Olympic distance race. I actually spent some time training for that one and did pretty well. I was hooked. What I liked the most about triathlon was that I wasn't expected to be good at it. I could go to a race and get last and nobody would say "what's wrong with Julie today?" I've been a swimmer since I was 5 years old and have been told I have a lot of

talent. My coaches always pushed me to develop that talent, but I hated to train when I was younger. It wasn't until college that I actually enjoyed swim practices. In the ten years in between my first and second Bay Swim I thought that I would never do another one. It just seemed so far. This year it felt like a sprint.

TNL: Do you have any superstitions or rituals you do before you race or compete in a marathon swim?

JO: Not really. I try to stay as calm as possible before my races so most of the time you can find me doing anything but getting ready to race in the 24 hours before an event. The night before a race (sprint to Ironman and 1-miler to 8-miler) I can often be found socializing with friends with a beer or glass of wine in hand. One drink the night before a race always helps me sleep better.

TNL: Tell our readers something about you that will surprise them?

JO: In junior high and high school I played the baritone saxophone in both the symphonic band and the jazz band.

Interview by Mary Delaney

Who in the World is Chris Bennett?



TNL: How did you get started in triathlon? How long have you been competing?

CB: I started in 2004. Every year I set myself new goals and it was a logical transition. I had run a few races in New Zealand including half marathons, and had done a lot of non-competitive cycling. For my 40th birthday I cycled San Francisco – Maine, for my 42nd mountain biked the Rocky Mountains Canada to Mexico. In 2003 when I moved to D.C. I did the Marine Corps Marathon and then decided to do triathlons.

TNL: Weren't you a marathoner before?

Nutrition Guide

Our new sponsor **Hammer Nutrition** have an excellent guide to optimizing your nutrition during training and races. It can be downloaded from:

<http://www.hammernutrition.com/downloads/fuelinghandbook.pdf>

CB: I still don't consider myself a marathoner – I've only done three. Although I guess since I qualified for Boston at this year's Marine Corps Marathon I can start calling myself one.

TNL: What do you do when you aren't racing or training for triathlon?

CB: Work or relaxing with my wife. I have a rather full on job working in China for the World Bank and that keeps me pretty busy. I use exercise as one of my main stress relievers and it works. For example, when we moved to D.C. I told my wife I didn't care where we lived as long as I could ride my bike to work so that gives me a free hour of exercise a day. When it comes to non-exercise activities I enjoy reading and working on my computer.

TNL: You have a busy travel schedule. How do you fit in your workouts?

CB: Actually, that is when it is usually easiest. I don't have my wife to spend time with so that can be used for training. I firstly choose hotels with a good gym or pool. Of course, when staying up country in zero star Chinese hotels that doesn't work. I have a bicycle that I leave in China so can get some rides in when I'm in the same place – but only before 06:30 when the traffic starts, otherwise I'd be toast. I also have a trainer I leave in a hotel for winter rides. In some cities I have running courses, but that depends on the pollution levels.

TNL: We all know that you trained for and competed in Ironman Korea without your wife Lis knowing. Tell us again how you pulled that off? Do you recommend it?

CB: Let me answer the second question first ... This is still a VERY sensitive subject with Lis, and probably reflects on the differences between how men and women perceive the situation so I don't recommend it. In fact she Skyped me in China as I was doing this interview and she asked if it included how I "lied to her" about IM Korea. Ouch. From my male perspective, I didn't lie to her; I just didn't tell her the full truth – like how long the race was. From her perspective, if I wasn't completely honest with her over this, what other deep, dark secrets have I kept hidden for the past 19+ years of marriage. As Lis says, we will go to our graves disagreeing about this. True, but I still don't see the big issue. So would I recommend it? To

other men, definitely not. Women? Definitely. Your husband will understand.

My blog www.tri-duffer.com explains the six key points to how I pulled it off:

- Be subtle
- Distract your spouse
- Don't make a big deal of training
- Be sharp (and lucky)
- Swear your training partners to secrecy
- Be honest, but give no more information than necessary



TNL: What tips do you have for newbie triathletes?

CB: Recognize that you may be going to the 'dark side'. For some inexplicable and irrational reason triathlons are incredibly addictive; far more than the individual sports. So you may get hooked on them. Your 'purist' friends, for example cyclists, will look down on you with disdain and contempt, but that's OK. After all, you'll be able to keep up with them and go for a run afterwards.

TNL: Do you have any superstitions or rituals you always do before or during a race?

CB: No superstitions. As a sort of ritual after a race my wife always suggests ice baths. I think it is self-serving. She has a wide grin on her face as she pours ice on me – probably thinking about IM Korea.

TNL: Tell the readers something that will surprise them about you.

CB: I'm doing IM Switzerland next year – with my wife's support.

TNL: What are you going to ask Santa to bring you for Christmas?

CB: A new Garmin 305. I dropped mine at the Marine Corps Marathon.

TNL: Anything else to add?

CB: Thanks to Mary for being such a stalwart with the newsletter!

Interview by Mary Delaney



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The Energy of Kona

Dan Hicok
Dan@danhicok.com

I was lucky enough to make it to the big show this year. Not as an athlete, but as a photographer and fan. This was made possible by the contributions of many triathletes in the DC area who chipped in to help pay my travel expenses. Here are a few thoughts on what it's like to be a part of the biggest event in our sport.



Ironman invades Kona (Friday)

I arrived late Thursday night before the race, so my first view of the race was Friday morning. The spectacle that is Ironman was still under construction, but it was close to completion. Friday is bike check-in day, and you could tell the energy was building. Kona has a unique check in process where all the athletes stand in line and funnel into a chute where bike inspections take place. This is also where all the equipment counters line up to see how many are using their company's equipment, a ritual made popular by Dan Empfield of Quintana Roo and SlowTwitch.com fame. Age groupers and pros alike enter the bike check-in funnel, surrounded by fans and press. This parade of triathlon elite continues for hours. Some of the athletes seem calm and ready, others are understandably nervous.



Banyan trees and expensive tri gear. A perfect match.

On one hand, the mix of triathlon and Hawaii seems incongruous. You take the type A personalities driven to the perfection required to perform at the top of the sport. Place them in a paradise known for its relaxed vacation attitude. Watch them in final preparation, riding up and down the Queen K or out for an easy run to loosen up the muscles and calm the nerves. Or even stranger, look at them out on the roads the day AFTER the event. Aren't we supposed to hit the snooze button and sleep in while in Hawaii? Apparently not the Ironmen. They are everywhere, testing the water, hitting the roads. From another perspective, Hawaii is the perfect place for the big event to take place. The islands are all about energy - the energy of the lava coming up from the ocean floor to sustain life in the middle of the ocean, the heat of the rocks

radiating up at you in the lava fields. The place is alive with energy. And that is where Kona seems the perfect place for the granddaddy of all triathlons. You can feel the energy of the fans, the athletes, the islands vibrating the entire time you are there.



Ironman takes over the small town of Kona. Is it really an Ironman without a Gatorade bottle?

The energy increases in intensity. It escalates throughout the pre-race prep as the anxious pre-race rituals are being played out. You hear the occasional tire explode; everyone jumps and hopes it isn't their bike that needs a quick tire change. Some scramble through the final details, others relax with plenty of time to spare. The intensity increases as the pack of 1700 plus athletes funnel into the unusually small beach entrance. It seems to reach a peak as the race gun sounds the beginning of the swim. It is when all that pent up energy of the athletes is finally put to productive use. But this is just the beginning of a long day that will climax at midnight.



Race morning boat launch

The most remarkable thing about the Ironman World Championships is watching the amazing talent at work. And not just the pros. The athletes represent the best in the sport. To see them running a marathon at a pace that seems impossible is awe inspiring. It does not seem possible for someone to push their body so fast, and yet they do it in way that seems effortless. Especially Macca, who foams at the mouth as he pounds the pavement. He seems so strong, as if

he still had another gear to kick into if he needed. Everyone looks amazing as they manage the pain and push their bodies to the limit.



The late hours finishers enter the finishing chute

The energy continues to build as the course gets dark. The glow rings bounce along Alii Drive around the necks of late finishers. The party atmosphere at the finish line intensifies as each victory is celebrated. One amazing person after another crosses the finish line. Some with plenty left, some absolutely spent. All of them hear Mike Reilly pronounce them Ironmen. The intensity peaks just before the cutoff as the final finishers are urged home. The whole crowd pulls that last competitor to the line. This year it was the inspirational double amputee, Scott Rigby. He was not able to finish CDA this year but would not be denied Kona. He became the first

double amputee to complete an IronMan race just before the time expired. The crowd erupted into the loudest cheers of the day. I was shivering from goosebumps and cheering him on at the same time. It was a moving experience. And that is the very peak. Soon after, the athletes and fans spent, the event done, the energy starts to wane. Another year, another Ironman. And even more abruptly than it came, triathlon leaves town for another year. Visit the town the day after the event and it is hard to tell it was there. Except for the Ironmen pounding out the miles on the Queen K and Alii Drive.

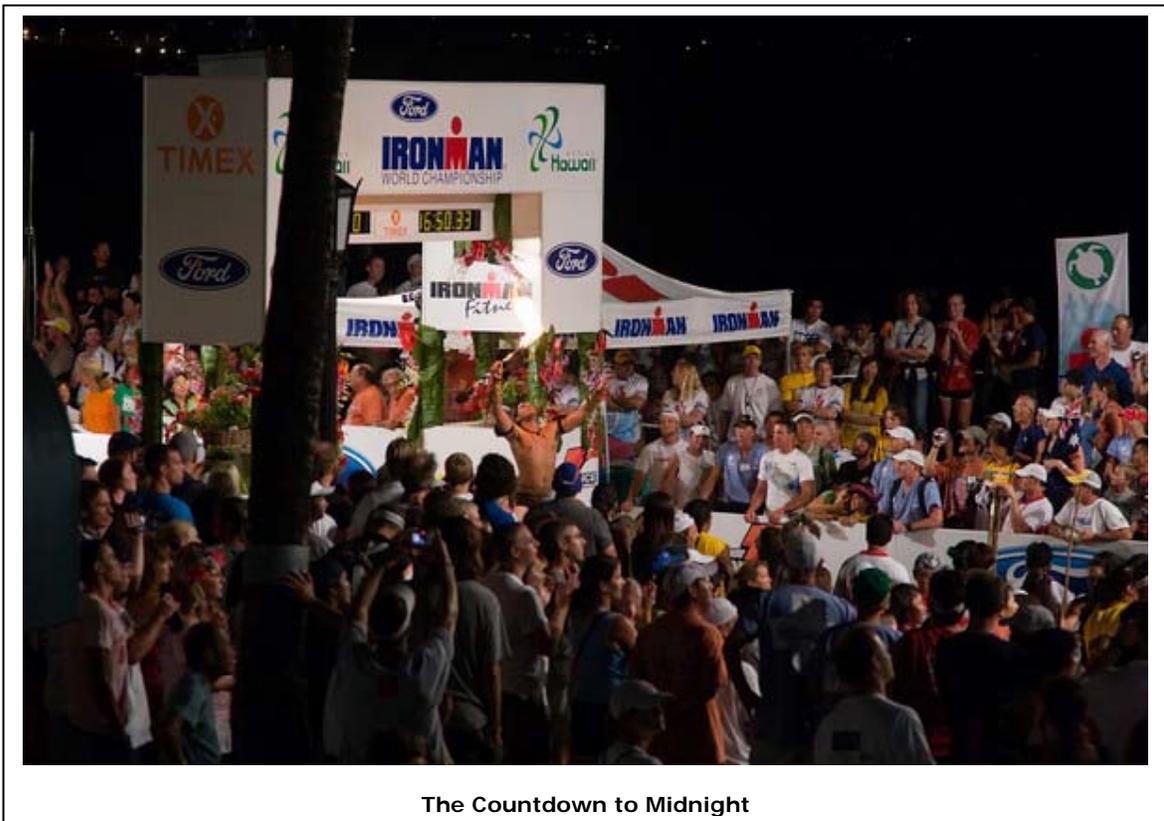
Look for coverage of area athletes competing in the Ironman World Championships in the "DC Kona Report" in the Winter issue of Tri-DC Magazine (www.tri-dc.com).

| Photos |
|--|
| A big thanks to Dan Hicok who provided most of the action photos for this issue. |

Tips for Racing Ironman

Mark Fulford
Reprinted with permission from
www.endurancecoach.com

With Ironman New Zealand just around the corner for me and about 1300 other athletes, I thought I would put finger to keyboard (hunt



The Countdown to Midnight

and peck style) and wade in with a few tips and a bit of advice. It's a lot to absorb so I suggest you do it in two sittings.

I must stress that these tips, and this advice is based on experience, what I've seen, and what I've heard people say and recommend. I do not take the credit for thinking/dreaming up all that follows and have no scientific back up for it.

If you see something that may help you, try it out (preferably before race day). If you don't agree with what you see and have a better way of doing things I'd love to hear from you as Triathlon is an evolving organism and I'm interested in learning new ideas.

Here we go...

Get a Suntan: This one can't be taken care of the day before. If you have a bit of a tan it takes the pressure off you having to have sunscreen applied perfectly if it's a hot day. Personally, I can't remember ever applying sunscreen prior to racing Ironman. Really only applies to those who have the ability to tan. Otherwise apply sunscreen the night before so it soaks in, and during the event (transitions or from aid stations).

Mark Your Shoelaces: Once you start the run you don't want to have to stop to adjust anything especially not laces. There is a good chance you'll cramp. So mark your laces with felt tip so you know exactly where your toggle or fastening device must sit. Also, loose shoes often lead to blisters.

Wear Really Good Race Socks: Helps prevent blisters. Texture is important. Find a good pair of socks, and then buy 3 more pairs. Keep them only for racing and put them on at the start of the run. The Asics 'Ped' sock range is great.

Put Carbo Sachets in a bottle: Rather than tearing off the tops of 18 squeezies, gels, gu's or whatever you use during the ride (which believe me wears a bit thin once you've worn more than you've ingested), pour them all into a see-through drink bottle, mark off certain points (i.e. every 3 or every hours worth). Throw in a few extra for good measure or dilute with water. Just really make sure you have your markings correct so you do in fact take in the correct number of calories/carbos per hour.

Check All Gear: During the 180km ride in Ironman, assume that if something can move or come loose squeak, or rattle, it will. It may not slow you down but it will grate on you and annoy the hell out of you and stuff up your concentration. So check all moving parts and get a shop to service your bike thoroughly.



Stand and Stretch Whenever Possible When Riding: You should all have a comfortable position on the bike and you should be able to ride for hours on end down on your aero bars. Even so, it is good to have a bit of a stretch and a break from your normal position. So any incline where you have to change down and drop below say 28km/hr, take the opportunity to stand, ride out of the saddle for a few metres and stretch. Do this even if you don't need to. Prevention is better than cure.

Take a New Drink Bottle Before You Throw The Old One Away: Firstly, try and get a replacement bottle before yours is empty. Just in case you get a dud or you drop it. Secondly, make sure you have a new one in your hand before you eject your current one. You don't want to be left high and dry. At this years Canadian IM, during the ride I was given a bottle

A banner for 'Rehab To Racing' featuring a logo on the left with the text 'Rehab To Racing' and 'Helping injured athletes return to training'. To the right of the logo is a collage of three images: a swimmer in the water, a triathlete running with a stroller, and a triathlete riding a bicycle. Below the banner is the website address www.rehabtoracing.com.

that hadn't had its plastic seal under the nozzle removed. I couldn't get a drop out of it and I was completely out of fluids. It wasn't the first aid station so I should have planned ahead and taken one at the previous station.

Don't Carry Too Many Drink Bottles: Why lug extra kgs around the course. You really only need 2 bottles at any given time on the bike (unless it's really hot) and then one can be only half full. This is especially true on hilly, or hilly sections of courses. This takes a bit of planning, as one of your bottles may have your special high-octane carbo gunk in it and you don't want to be left high and dry. I've seen athletes who've spent thousands on lightweight bikes then carried four 750ml bottles on them!

Tape Your Feet: Before rocking up to IM, I'm guessing you've run a few miles so you'll know which parts of your feet are prone to blisters. I suggest you tape these parts prior to the event. I use Leukoplast strapping tape. It is best to tape them a few days prior to race day so the tape has time to stick properly. Blisters may be small but they can ruin your race. A blister tends to make you change your running gait, which in turn leads you to use muscles in a different manner to which they are accustomed, which leads to more pain and suffering. Classic snowball effect. Prevention is best.

Wetsuit Fit: This is the latest thing I've learnt. If you submerge yourself on race day in your wetsuit, then get out and let it drain, it sticks to you. So when you then get in for your warm up, your wetsuit is less likely to let so much water in, therefore, you don't end up carting half the lake around with you. Brilliant! (Bet I forget to do it). Also, make sure that the sleeves aren't twisted; this can help prevent shoulder soreness.

Being Efficient On The Bike: I have a checklist I go through when I'm on the bike. It keeps me focused; it stops me from pushing too hard and hopefully keeps me riding at my most efficient. It also stops me getting nervous as I have something to keep my mind occupied for the entire ride. Staying calm is a huge part of racing IM. The checklist is (pretty much in order of importance)

- ❑ Heart Rate (your coach should have you dialled into a 5 beat zone which you stay in)
- ❑ Cadence (optimal cadence differs between riders, usually between 85 and 95 revs)
- ❑ Nutrition (Important to get this right, often the cause of a "bad patch")
- ❑ How My Legs Feel (if your legs are aching, back off and check everything else)
- ❑ Gear (I have a good idea what kind of gear I can handle, if I'm above this gear (in a harder gear) then I need to monitor myself carefully)
- ❑ Speed (this is the least important as over the entire day you can race at so many speeds. If it's low I'll try to find a way to

increase it efficiently, or if it's high I monitor everything else to make sure I'm not overdoing it)



Using a HR Monitor In the Race: As mentioned above your coach should have you operating at an intensity you can keep up all day. Your HR monitor more often than not will confirm you are working hard enough. I use mine to slow me down especially at the beginning of the Bike and Run where the crowds are going nuts and your body just wants to let loose. By staying in my optimal 5 beat zone I will race efficiently, and all things being equal, I'll get to the finish line in the least amount of time.



Pre Race: Have a written checklist with all the things you need to have on your bike, computer, spares, pump, bottles, HR monitor, tyres with air in them.....and so on. Don't leave this stuff on your bike overnight. Trust nobody!

Don't Panic and Go Hard at the Start of the Bike and Run: This is a no no. It's easy to get carried away, the crowd, the music, the other athletes etc, but you must remain focused. Run through your transitions mental checklist so you have everything, and then use the first 10-20 mins or so as a warm up. It is easy to chew up an inappropriate amount of energy in the very beginning of each discipline. Relax, get comfortable, and get your nutrition on track. I give myself a few chores to do at the beginning of the run to slow me down a bit and so I get into a good rhythm. This is when I put my Vaseline on possible points of chafing and I adjust my run gear so it is comfortable and on straight (sorry, your mother isn't there to dress you in transition). I also knock back a few liquid carbs from a sachet. By the time I do this I'm out of the crowds a bit and am settled into my running rhythm.

Don't Go Hard Up the Hills: This is a fundamental rule in IM. Hills are a time to dawdle both on the bike and the run. If you dawdle you are more than likely at race pace HR. I think of it in boxing terms. Every hill you go up too hard is like a body punch. Slowly they wear you down until you are floored. Heaps of people will pass you going hard up the hills, but odds are you will see them later in the race and they will be looking fairly grim. If you don't see them later in the day, they are probably a better athlete than you, so good luck to them.

Kick a Bit Before You Exit the Swim: This gets blood flowing to the leg muscles that you'll need to use to exit the water.

Don't Rush Out of the Water: After swimming for an hour or so it is not uncommon to feel disoriented when you stand and go through transition one. Take it slowly so you don't have an accident and to try and keep your HR under control. Losing a few seconds here won't make much difference. If you have cramp in your calf muscles for example just walk or you may jeopardize your run later in the day.

Apply Vaseline to Armpits, Nipples & Between Thighs: Self-explanatory really. Best to do this before things start getting testy. The aid stations should have supplies of anti-chafe products.

Stretch During Event: This can be achieved quite easily on the bike, just wait for a hill. In the swim roll over and do a few strokes of backstroke to loosen your shoulders if they start getting tight. Unfortunately if you stretch on the run you have to stop. If you have an ongoing injury that responds to stretching make that part of your race run plan. Perhaps at every second aid station plan to gently stretch to keep your injury from flaring up. Once again, start this regime before you really need to. Be careful though, sometimes stretching one muscle can lead to painful cramps in another one. In Aussie IM years ago I tried to stretch my Quad and

ended up with a huge cramp in my Hamstring. I won't do that again!



Tidy Yourself up For the Finish: You will have your finishers' photo forever. Make yourself recognisable by removing your cap (tuck it into the back of your shorts) and glasses. Straighten your gear and wipe off any excess crap from your face. Smile for the camera slightly before you cross the line and break the tape, the cameraman's timing is not always spot on.

Smile to Stay Relaxed: Tenseness will rob your body of a lot of energy as will nervousness. Smiling can help you to relax and stay calm. A good time to do this is during the start of the swim when chaos rules.

Race to Time Not Distance: The distances in IM can be rather daunting. I find focusing on time brings me more in line with my training. I know I can run for an hour easily off the bike in training, so at the start of the marathon I look to run for an hour. Once I get to the hour mark, I'm no longer doing an IM, my event has become a long run. I know how far I've run for my long run in training so I tune into that time and tick off every half hour. If all goes to plan I get to the end of the marathon in the same time I'd finish my long run. Just a mind game I play to make things easier.

Eat Whatever Takes Your Fancy on the Run: Aid stations on the run have a relative smorgasbord of things to eat. I find that if something looks really appealing you are best to take it. Maybe your body needs it but it also satiates your appetite. Often what you crave for at one aid station won't look so appealing at the next. No drama, eat something else, give yourself a treat. Be careful that you only eat a little at a time. No need to make a pig of yourself.

Hydration: Read the Information on the Ironman website regarding hydration and problems associated with drinking too much or not enough.

Spin easily on the bike over the last half km: As you enter transition two, spin easily to loosen your legs up for the run. Doing this over the last half km can free your legs up so you can

trot out onto the run looking like a million bucks rather than a duck with a carrot up it's butt.

Have Plenty of Warm Gear in Transition Bags: Plan for rotten weather. It's easy to not use it if it's a hot day or peel it off as you ride or run. You don't want to go out on the bike in particular under dressed as this can lead to all sorts of medical and performance problems.

Know the Brand Name of the Products You Want at the Aid Stations: Do your homework. Twice in last years NZ IM I had problems getting what I needed while racing due to calling out the wrong name of a product. At 150km on the bike I yelled "Shot", only to be greeted with puzzled looks. The product I was after was a "Gel". On the run I yelled "Moro". The reply from the volunteer "We don't have Moro bars.....(I disappointedly carry on running)We do have Mars bars". Luckily she chased me down and delivered me a Mars Bar! Lesson: Know the names of the products on the course.

Make Sure Electronic Gadgets Have New(ish) Batteries: I'm not really into electronic gadgetry. But one thing that does tick me off is when the gadgetry I do use goes on the blink. So make sure your bike computer and HR monitor are going to last through the day. I find most electronic products will let you down given half a chance when they are really needed.

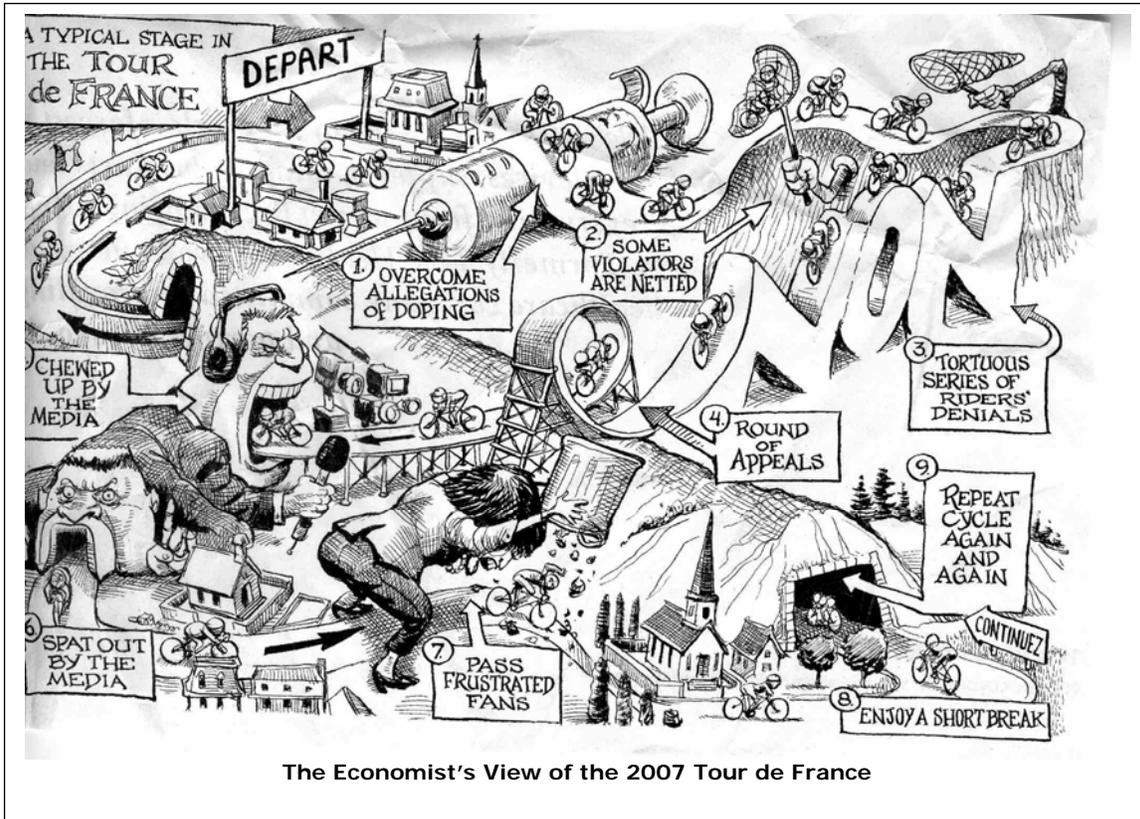
Take your own marker to number yourself: With over a thousand athletes on the starting line of any given IM, it helps to be self-sufficient. Rather than standing in lines waiting to get numbered, see if you can do it yourself. Be prepared to lose your marker, as every athlete and their dog will want to borrow it. So drop it and walk away.

Goggles under cap and wetsuit zip strap out: I'm a fan of having your goggles under your cap or caps if it is cold. If they are kicked there is less chance of them being lost. With your zip strap I have it out the top over the Velcro. This way if it is grabbed you don't get unzipped and become like the Titanic. Also apply plenty of anti-chafe product around your neck to prevent rash. Don't use Vaseline, baby oil is fine. Rub your hands in the sand as you enter the water to remove the oil from your hands so you can "feel" the water.

Tour de France Cyclists Have Hearts 40% Larger Than Normal

Riding the grueling Tour de France bike race takes strength, stamina -- and perhaps a heart nearly 40 percent bigger than normal.

Researchers who examined the hearts of former Tour bikers found that the athletes' hearts were from 20 to 40 percent larger than average, said



Dr. Francois Carre of the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Rennes, France, speaking at a meeting of the European Society of Cardiology.

The difference is attributable largely to rigorous training that expands the cyclists' hearts. But researchers have not yet determined whether the athletes' hearts were larger to begin with.

"They are a special breed," said Dr. Richard Becker, a professor of medicine at Duke University and spokesman for the American Heart Association. Becker was not connected to Carre's study.

Scientists have long noticed the phenomenon of the "athlete's heart." Athletes who train hard in aerobic sports, such as cycling, running or swimming, tend to have a bigger heart that pumps more blood throughout the body.

The heart's walls become thicker to be able to handle the increased blood volume. That gives the athletes an edge by increasing their oxygen levels and improving their endurance.

Carre's study, funded by the Brittany provincial government in France, is perhaps the first to track what happens to athletes' hearts when they stop training.

Medical tests done on all Tour de France cyclists before the race begins showed virtually all have enlarged hearts, Carre said.

To read the full article visit:

<http://sports.espn.go.com/oly/cycling/news/story?id=3002830>

Mapping Your Bike Rides

If you are interested in mapping your efforts check out the following sites:

www.bikely.com
www.cyclistnexus.com
www.gmap-pedometer.com
www.mapmyride.com
www.routeslip.com
www.runningmap.com
www.toporoute.com
www.veloroutes.org

Stay Warm in Cold Water

Mary and Al Delaney

During certain times of the year and in some parts of the triathlon world, water temperatures can be less than 70°F. As water gets colder more of us have problems with facial immersion causing perceived shortness of breath, especially below 65°F. We also have trouble just entering

the water, and are more likely to get hypothermic from swimming. Several athletes had real problems due to the cold water recently at the 2007 Xterra Championships, which occasioned this article. One of the authors particularly hates and had suffered in cold water. These tactics come from 30 years of practical experience with cold water swimming and SCUBA diving in water down to 30°F.

The number one adaptation mechanism we have, as triathletes, is a full neoprene wetsuit and cap designed for open water endurance swimming. Whether we are going to enter cold water for an open water swim event, triathlon, or just to practice, there are a number of strategies we can use to acclimatize to the cold water environment and make us less likely to get hypothermic.



1. Focus on body heat conservation. Make sure you have your car heater on en route to the water entry site. Wear warm clothes AND a warm cap. In cold environments, your head becomes a major avenue for heat loss. Science supports the fact that pre-warming oneself prior to a cold challenge allows you to go farther before becoming hypothermic.

2. Put your wet suit on early. How many times have you seen triathletes walking around in their racing suits and flip-flops, shivering with goose bumps and even purplish extremities, well before the start? These are the first signs of hypothermia. Some of those folks may end up with the medics, wrapped in a space blanket instead of crossing the finish line. So, if you are

still cool in your warm-up clothes, put your wet suit on and zip 'er up. The average modern competition wetsuit is far warmer than even two sweat shirts. If you are still cool, put your warm top on over the wetsuit and put your cap back on. Don't forget socks and shoes. No fashion statements here.

3. Take a large disposable bottle of hot water with you. The hot water should be protected from getting cold by placing it in the middle of your gear bag. An empty large sport drink bottle works well. Take the bottle to your water entry site and making sure it is not hot enough to burn you, pour it down the neck of your wet suit about 5-10 minutes before you enter the water. The reason to use a disposable bottle is that you may be in a starting corral with a thousand friends you never met before and you can toss the bottle in or near a trash bin. The warm water in your suit will largely prevent the in rush of cold water into the suit upon entering the water. Ahh, so nice!

4. Purchase a neoprene swim cap. These are great heat loss prevention devices. You want to get one that looks like a bathing cap with a Velcro chin strap. Don't get a full hood. Put the cap on under your colored wave cap. The blood vessels to your head can't constrict the way the ones in your feet and hands do in the cold, so your head becomes a major avenue for heat loss, especially in cold water. If your brain blood vessels did constrict, you'd pass out from lack of circulation to your brain, which is never good. The neoprene foam cap will largely prevent this problem.

5. Before race day, experiment and find out whether the water temp you'll be swimming in makes you dizzy. As water temperatures fall below 65°F, increasing numbers of swimmers experience dizziness due to cold water entering their external ear canals. This is especially true as temps reach 60°F and below. If you are unfortunate enough to get dizzy, then you'll need to swim with some form of ear plugs. You

should experiment and find out which ones work for you, in the pool, well-before the race. The inexpensive ones sold for use in construction are made of foam and if they get lost in T1, no matter as they cost less than \$2 per pair. The other kind is wax ear plugs and they are available in most drug stores. They mold to the inside of your ear and may be more comfortable. Both kinds should stay in place under your cap. This is cheap insurance against a cold water swim DNF.

6. Avoid a "warm-up" swim more than 5-10 minutes before the start or don't do one at all. The last thing you want to do is "warm-up" long enough before your race start only to get cold.

7. Get your face wet before you start. If you aren't going to take a warm-up swim, thoroughly splash water on your face before entering the water or if it is an in-water start, while you are waiting for your start. This tactic will largely eliminate the shortness of breath many of us experience when we first put our face in the chilly water.

8. If you are doing a triathlon in cold/wet weather, take time to towel off, and consider use of arm warmers, vest, long sleeve jersey or gloves. Expect to be cool as you start your bike leg, but as you get rolling, you should warm up. Your feet will be the last to warm. You should race in a top just a little lighter than one you would use in a practice ride with the same weather conditions. Heading out on the ride in racing singlets or swim suits with no shirt when the temps are low and/or when it is windy can put you right on the path to hypothermia and a possible DNF. Better to have to peel down the arm warmers or unzip the vest than have a miserable ride at best, and maybe something worse. Small women with low body fat and slower competitors are at greatest risk of hypothermia, but no one is immune. Remember, even if you aren't as thirsty in cold weather, you are still losing fluid, so drink your electrolyte beverage!

Beer a Good Re-hydrater

News flash: The UK 'Derbyshire Daily Mail' reports: "Providing the perfect excuse for heading to the pub after a game of football or rugby, researchers have demonstrated that a glass of beer re-hydrates the body more effectively than water following physical exercise, the London Daily Mail reports. The findings emerged from a study by researchers at Granada University in Spain, who measured the hydration levels, motor skills, and concentration abilities of 25 students who were asked to run on a treadmill under 104-degree-Fahrenheit conditions until they were close to exhaustion. Afterward, participants received two half-pints of Spanish lager or water to drink and were subsequently permitted to drink as much water as they wanted. The researchers found that the re-hydration levels of students given beer were slightly better than the levels among participants who received only water, possibly because the carbon dioxide in beer helps quench the thirst more quickly; the carbohydrates in beer may also help replace calories expended during exercise, according to the lead researcher. In light of the findings, the researchers recommend moderate beer consumption roughly 500 milliliters daily for men and 250 milliliters daily for women as part of an athletes diet. Another researcher, however, adds that drinking a sports beverage containing sugar, water, and salt is still the best way of re-hydrating after exercise."

9. Be prepared to warm your wetsuit naturally. In physiology, there is a well-known phenomenon known as "cold immersion diuresis." That means that your body makes lots of extra urine when you go swimming or SCUBA diving in cold water. The wetsuit will survive, so you may need to just get over it, if you're horrified by this idea. In longer swims in very cold water, it is practically unavoidable. Thoroughly rinse your suit out afterward with mild soap and water, it'll be just fine. An additional strategy here is to remember that in longer swims, cold immersion diuresis may contribute to greater fluid losses and hence greater fluid needs, and you will need to drink more after the swim. Note of caution: wait to fire up the wetsuit heater until you are in the water."



10. Try to find an opportunity to practice in cold water. Practice all these strategy tips in training sessions. Beware however, especially on the East coast, in and near larger cities, that you don't become a criminal by going swimming in someone's reservoir. Legal concerns posed by the owners of the body of water or the shoreline have made unsupervised swimming in many clean lakes and rivers a crime. So check the rules out before going for a swim. One substitute is early season practice in an unheated outdoor pool. In the wild wild west or more rural areas, no one seems to care what you do, so have at it. But remember the number one rule of open water survival... don't swim by yourself! Besides, it is never fun to shiver alone!

The techniques and tactics listed above are tried and true and have helped numerous competitors overcome cold water swim problems and actually come to enjoy some race venues that in the past had been the site of miserable swim experiences or worse yet, a DNF.

If you have comments or questions, please contact us at:

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For this and other articles of interest to triathletes visit our website:

www.rehabtoracing.com

Winter Cycling

Chris Bennett
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December is here and we had our first snow. This means it is time for winter cycling. Yes, cycling in snow is not only possible but it is a wonderful adventure. Sure, it is cold, but to cycle through newly fallen snow with the white beauty all around in the early morning quiet is a real treat. The commute becomes a bit of a grind when the bike path becomes pitted by frozen footsteps in the snow, but I still ride my bike almost every day. Here are some tips for those who want to ride their bikes throughout winter.

Tires



Firstly, I use my winter tires. These have studs in them to improve traction on snow and ice. With a very aggressive tread pattern, and 168 studs, they grip like nothing else on a snow covered or slippery road.

Unfortunately, it is like driving a tractor because of the additional rolling resistance. Sill, it is a tradeoff that I'm quite happy to make. Check out

<http://www.peterwhitecycles.com/studdedtires.asp> as they have a good description of studded tires. I got mine from [Bike Nashbar](#) but they no longer seem to carry them.

Brakes

I upgraded my mountain bike to have a front wheel with a disk brake. Regular brakes can cause real problems stopping when the ice and snow build up. A rear brake would also be useful, but not as necessary as the front.

Bottom Bracket Guard

One problem that I had forgotten last year was the build up of ice around the bottom bracket of my bicycle. When this freezes we lose our ability to change gears and use the back brake as the cables are



covered by a thick layer of ice. To solve this, I went to Performance Bike later in the day and purchased a mud guard <http://www.performancebike.com/shop/Profile.cfm?SKU=1237&item=00-2331&slitrk=search&slisearch=true> <http://www.performancebike.com/shop/Profile.cfm?SKU=1237&item=00-2331&slitrk=search&slisearch=true> With the help of a hack saw, I was able to modify it to protect the bottom bracket area. This will solve the problem for me in the future.

Clothing

Besides having your bike prepared, you need great clothing. The first rule, of course, is layer/layer/layer. I had picked up in China some great cycling clothes with Goretex Windstopper so when it is about 25 and above I need this with a vest; 35 and above just this. Below 25 I use ski pants and a heavier jacket.

The feet take quite a beating in the cold. I use Lake MX-255 shoes which are excellent, supplemented by some nylon shoe covers (which also keep my trousers out of the chain's way). One thing you've got to check is that the bottom of the shoes are sealed properly. Most shoes have a place to attach cleats but if you don't put silicon around the cleat plate your feet will get wet (and cold).



It's always good to get shoes like these a little large as that leaves room not only for large socks, but also for putting in toe warming

packets. In fact, you can even buy soles that are designed to have these warmers inserted.

Last year I had a lot of problems with face numbness. I tried headbands, scarves, but nothing seemed to work. I then discovered the [Seirus 'Ultra Clava' at REI](#) which is a waterproof, windproof and breathable balaclava. This has



been one of the best purchases in years as it keeps me very toasty on even the coldest days. Highly recommended.

Mittens complete the ensemble (unless it is about 40 degrees or above when I wear gloves). With the right gear you'll have a hoot cycling through the snow, skidding around corners, doing figure eight's in the open spaces - and riding is possible even on the worst days.

Tax Benefits for Volunteers

Kenton Pattie
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Members of Tricats who drive for Tricats' volunteer work should take advantage of the 14 cents per mile IRS allowance for charitable work.

The IRS has issued the 2008 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes.

Beginning January 1, 2008, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (including vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be:

50.5 cents per mile for business miles driven;
19 cents per mile driven for medical or moving purposes; and 14 cents per mile driven in service of charitable organizations. The new rate for business miles has gone up two cents from a rate of 48.5 cents per mile for 2007. The new rate for medical and moving purposes has gone down a cent from 20 cents in 2007. The rate for

miles driven in service of charitable organizations has remained the same.

The standard mileage rate for business is based on an annual study of the fixed and variable costs of operating an automobile; the standard rate for medical and moving purposes is based on the variable costs as determined by the same study. Runzheimer International, an independent contractor, conducted the study for the IRS. The mileage rate for charitable miles is set by law.

Revenue Procedure 2007-70 contains additional information on these standard mileage rates.

PRAY FOR 50°

IF ENDURANCE RUNNERS COULD CONTROL THE weather, it would always be between 36°F and 52°F. One study reported that athletes exercising in 36°F temperatures took 30 percent longer to reach fatigue than those exercising in 68°F, and 65 percent longer than those in 104°F heat. Another study suggested that 52°F was optimal. Here's an example of how changes in temperature affect a 44-minute 10-K runner.

| TEMP | STRATEGY | RESULT |
|------|---------------------------|----------------|
| 104 | Live to race another day | Go for a swim |
| 88 | Add 5% to 7% to goal time | 46:12 to 47:00 |
| 68 | Add 2% to 3% to goal time | 44:52 to 45:19 |
| 52 | Go for a PR | 43:45 10-K |
| 36 | Go for your goal | 44:00 10-K |
| 25 | Add 2% to goal time | 44:52 |

Source: January 2008 'Runners World' magazine.

On the Web: Sites of Interest to TriCATs

| | |
|---|---|
| http://www.timetriallingforum.co.uk/ | Excellent site for learning how to be a better triathlon bike rider |
| http://bikeconnection.net/page.cfm?pageID=76 | How to take care of your carbon fiber bicycle |
| http://bikeoverhaul.blogspot.com/2006_08_01_archive.html | How to overhaul your bicycle (after all, it's winter!) |
| http://www.biketoolsetc.com | Great source for hard to find bicycle tools |

Please send your favorite web sites to: editor@trcats.org

Gadgets and Gifts

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>What: GPS which gives audio progress through your MP3 player</p> <p>Title: The ADEO Fitness Trainer</p> <p>Cost: \$99 from http://www.motionlingo.com/dsp_adeo.cfm</p> <p>Why: Who can have too many gadgets?</p> |
|  | <p>What: Bodyweight Training System</p> <p>Title: The TRX Trainer</p> <p>Cost: \$149 - \$199 from http://www.fitnessanywhere.com</p> <p>Why: The TRX is a revolutionary bodyweight training system and fitness program that was developed in the field to achieve and maintain the highest level of physical conditioning—strength, agility and endurance. It is designed for travelers – will fit into a small bag.</p> |

TriCATs Sponsor Directory

| Sponsor | TriCATs Member Benefits |
|--|--|
| Conte's Bicycles | 15% off of accessories 5% off bikes 10% off bike fits |
| Principle Fitness 925 Rogers Drive Falls Church, VA 22042 (571) 278-4581 www.principlefitness.com eric@principlefitness.com | 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> |
| Bonzai Sports http://tribonzai.com 2826 Fallfax Drive Falls Church, VA 22042 Phone: (703) 280-2248 | 10% off of accessories 10% off bikes 5% rebate to TriCATs for ALL web sales (does not include sale or closeout items or wetsuit rentals) Website Discount Code: tricats2007 (all lowercase) |
| L.T. Therapy, Inc. 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> |
| Old Town Massage Center 312 South Washington Street, 3C Alexandria, VA 22314 (703) 518-8484 OTMCMassage@aol.com www.oldtownmassagecenter.com | \$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> |
| Positively Chiropractic and Dynamic Kinesiology 5105A Backlick Road Annandale, VA 22003 (703) 642-8685 www.posichiro.com | Complimentary Sports Injury Prevention Examination; 10% off Running-Specific Orthotics. <i>Always Moving Forward</i> |
| Rehab to Racing Mary DeLaney, PT and Allen DeLaney, MD (703) 409-3844 or (571) 213-0254 www.rehabtoracing.com | Injury evaluation and training for athletes. Helping you get back in the game! Train Smarter! Tri Longer! 15% off initial evaluation and regular monthly training with a current Tricats ID card/membership. |
| Transitions Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork Circle Towers Office Building 9401 Lee Highway, Suite 102 Fairfax, VA 22042 (703) 385-4785 www.transitionsmassage.com barb@transtionsmassage.com | 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> |

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